

# MEMBER *Spotlight*



Adam Halper, Esq.



Tejash V. Sanchala, Esq.

**Tejash:** How long have you been a member of the WCBA and what have been some of your contributions?

**Adam:** I have been a member of the WCBA for three years and I co-chair the ADR Committee with Russell Yankwitt. For our public service program, the ADR Committee presented to the staff at Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) about ADR. LSHV represents thousands of clients every year and receives inquiries and calls from thousands more. If any group can amplify the message about ADR throughout the County to people who could really benefit from knowing more about it, its legal services organizations.

**Tejash:** What is your current job and practice area?

**Adam:** I started my solo practice in October of 2019. Most of my work is serving as a mediator in matrimonial/family, trusts and estates and employment cases. I serve on mediation rosters in the Southern District of New York, Eastern District of New York and numerous state court rosters. I also serve on the AAA roster. In addition, I represent clients, mostly in the areas mentioned above. My office is located in White Plains.

**Tejash:** Can you talk about one of your favorite success stories?

**Adam:** I mediated a separation/divorce for a young-ish couple with two children. Initially, there was disagreement as to practically every point. There was too much anger in the room. Over a series of mediation sessions, that anger turned to sadness and then to feelings of possibility. In December, they called me to clarify a point in their separation agreement. They and their children were doing well. By the end of our phone conversation, they were laughing together. When people come to me, they often say that they are not the best versions of themselves. It's deeply rewarding to see that in mediation, that vision of self can change.

**Tejash:** Who are some of your mentors?

**Adam:** I've been fortunate to have excellent mentors in my life: Kathleen Riley, my high school English teacher; Steven Telzak, former Executive Director at Legal Services NYC Bronx; Jan Hudis, Deputy Director at The Family Center; Alan Dubow, an excellent attorney in White Plains; Bart Eagle, a colleague, friend and writing partner; and Donna

In this feature, Tejash V. Sanchala interviews WCBA members about their experiences and insights.

Tejash is Co-chair of the Employment Law Committee, a former member of the WCBA Nominating Committee and a former WCBA Board Member.

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Erez Navot, a Professor at Cardozo. Above all, I consider my wife, Jennifer, my mentor. She's the smartest, toughest and most thoughtful person I know.

**Tejash:** What might people be surprised to learn about you?

**Adam:** I worked as an art class model during my college days at NYU. No one is more surprised by this than me or that I was actually got paid for it. Before I started my solo practice, I worked for twenty years in the non-profit sector as a staff attorney at Legal Services and later as Director of Legal Services at the Family Center in New York City.

**Tejash:** What is the best hour of your day?

**Adam:** In the evenings, I love to reconnect with Jen and exercise. I've recently become addicted to HIIT workouts. Whatever challenge or anxiety I carry from the day vanishes as I just try to survive 30 minutes of pain.

**Tejash:** What are some interesting things that you are reading, watching or listening to?

**Adam:** I am halfway through the new Serial podcast, "The Trojan Horse Affair."

In many ways, it's a story within a story—much like a mediation. Also, I just finished reading, "The Ministry of the Future," by Kim Stanley Robinson. Robinson's sci-fi book is about climate change. I won't give away any spoilers, but the story he tells is that of hope. I think we could all use a story with that message right now.

**Tejash: What are some of your favorite vacations?**

**Adam:** Jen and I spent the first week of our honeymoon in Paris. Months later, we spent the second week in Cambodia. Honestly, if I close my eyes right now, I can still hear the notes of a Paris piano jazz trio. I can still taste a spicy, delicious soup that I shared with Jen on a hot day outside the temple city of Angkor Wat.

**Tejash: When is the last time you were outside of your comfort zone?**

**Adam:** This article, Tejash.

**Tejash: What are some of your favorite things to do in Westchester?**

**Adam:** I live in Hastings-on-Hudson, one of Westchester's Rivertowns. The Rivertowns have a high density of artists, musicians, writers and performers. The Rivertowns host music festivals, book readings, artist studio walk-throughs and more.

**Tejash: What is the best advice you have ever received?**

**Adam:** Say yes to everything. This is especially important when you are building a practice.

**Tejash: What is one of your future ambitions?**

**Adam:** One day, I would love to live in another country with Jen, at least for a few years.

**Tejash: What is your favorite part of being involved with the WCBA?**

**Adam:** Participating in Bar Association Committees and events has been a wonderful part of my career. You meet great people all of whom are very much invested in the profession, making it better and supporting others. I think my favorite part of the WCBA is that it is a great opportunity to be with many people who live in the world of ideas. It's energizing. It's infectious. For any lawyer who may be reading this and is somehow not a member of the WCBA, I encourage you to join. If you are a member then get active. If you're not a member of the ADR Committee, join us.

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