

## Featured Alumna: Sarah HASNANI, Class of 2003



**Sarah HASNANI '03** is a Houston-based attorney. Her practice, Hasnani Law, specializes in real estate and commercial law. It also provides title and escrow services in both residential and commercial real estate transactions through Fidelity National Title. She established her practice in 2023, after returning to Houston from Dubai, where she had spent several years as an international mergers and acquisitions and transactional law attorney, and most recently with EY Law. She maintains a professional presence in Dubai through an affiliate office.

Though she has familial ties to the UAE, Sarah, a Houston native, attributes her global curiosity to her formative years at Duchesne. When she joined in grade six in 1996, she found herself amongst classmates who “came from different cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds.” Rather than set the girls apart, “it sparked a curiosity to learn and understand more [about each other and the world].”

Inspired by her grade eight school trip to Washington D.C., Sarah pursued a degree in government at the University of Texas at Austin. She graduated in 2007 on the Dean’s List and returned to Houston to earn a JD from South Texas College of Law in 2010.

The inquisitiveness nurtured at Duchesne carried through to her higher education. She spent an undergraduate semester studying Spanish in Andalucia, Spain. In law school, she took a summer study abroad in London, and traveled to Vienna, Austria, to represent South Texas College of Law at the International Arbitration Competition. Upon completion of her second year of law school, Sarah interned with the office of Mayor Bloomberg in New York City. An internship opportunity with a firm in Dubai had presented itself during law school, opening the door to a permanent role upon graduation.

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In Dubai, Sarah's legal career flourished. She worked in international M & A, representing Coca-Cola in a nearly \$1 billion merger deal with a Saudi beverage company, and in real estate transactions representing Emaar Malls Group (the developer of the iconic Burj Khalifa) to restructure their real estate assets leading up to their \$1.5 billion IPO. Despite the demands of her career, she dedicated time to embody Goal III of the Sacred Heart: a social awareness which impels to action. She attributes this delicate balance to the guidance of her teachers at Duchesne, who “not only pushed academic excellence, but also encouraged active participation in extracurricular activities. Navigating these demands during my school years laid a solid foundation for success in college and, subsequently, in my professional life.”

For Sarah, “Social Awareness has probably been the single most important driving force in my life.” Growing up in a family that emphasized giving back to the community, Duchesne “further instilled the importance of social justice.” Over the past 14 years, she has undertaken more than 300 pro bono cases, a testament to her dedication to justice and community service.

Sarah is married to her high school sweetheart who shares her sense of global adventure. They have traveled extensively: from Japan to Masai Mara, to Bali and beyond, exploring 23 countries together. To unwind, Sarah enjoys cooking and developing recipes; she finds both to be therapeutic. She also loves to read, which she humorously acknowledges is “probably a good quality to have as a lawyer!”