

**AMANDA KOOL:** Hello. My name is Amanda Kool, and I have nominated an attorney who inspires me named Navjeet Bal.

I came to know Navjeet when I worked as an associate at a law firm she eventually joined as counsel. As she made her way around to introduce herself to everyone on the floor, she recognized the photos on my wall as having been taken in Kenya, which began a fascinating conversation about her childhood there-- in the very same little town where I lived for a few months during law school.

During my time at the firm, Navjeet became not only a great source of work and an intelligent, yet kind superior attorney for young associate to work under, but she also became a trusted mentor for life in general. It always struck me how Navjeet had carved the career path that was right for her, with time spent as the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue under Governor Patrick, bookended by jobs at big law firms while maintaining a clear commitment to public service and as a champion of access to justice.

I soon strive to follow in her wake, meaning that I now believe that I, too, can do what I want, believe in what I believe, and still come out strong, respected, and successful. Because I've seen through Navjeet that it can be done. Even since my time at the firm has ended, Navjeet has remained a trusted advisor and a treasured friend. She says what she thinks and stands behind the issues and people and what she believes. And I'm thankful for this opportunity to nominate her for the International Women's Day photo exhibit.