

Alumni Reflections: A Tale of Friendship

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While there remains some debate as to what they were doing when they first met, the bond between [Jinyoung \(Jin\) Joo](#), a partner in Proskauer's Corporate Department and a member of the Finance Group, and Proskauer Alum, [Fabio Tarud](#), Director, Assistant General Counsel, Intellectual Property and Litigation at [Etsy](#), is unmistakable. In the following Q&A, Fabio and Jin reflect on their career paths, their shared time at Proskauer, and their friendship.

When did your paths first cross? What were the circumstances?

Jin: Fabio and I started law school together in the same section at Georgetown in 2007. We met at either the very first or second orientation event—during either a volunteer event packing food or at a professor's house the weekend before orientation—and we have been friends ever since, almost 15 years now. Fabio had just graduated from college and moved down to Washington, D.C. from New York. I'm five years older than Fabio and was already married at the time. Fabio is a little bit of an old soul. Even as a young 22-year-old, Fabio seemed mature and was serious about law school, unlike some of our classmates who thought of law school as an extension of college. We started a study group together with two other older students. The study group didn't last very long though because we realized we studied better alone but our friendship continued.

Fabio: We met the first week of orientation during a volunteer event. I seem to recall it was during a volunteer event where we were packing food items, but my memory could be failing me!

What made you choose Proskauer? What qualities of the Firm are important to you?

Fabio: I chose Proskauer because it was an opportunity to work and learn from the very best. I think the most important quality of the Firm is the people that make up the Firm – lawyers, paralegals, and staff alike. I was able to make very meaningful and valuable connections with my colleagues who were always there to help and support me.

Jin: Every law firm claims that they have a great culture but while it's easy for anyone to claim to have a great culture, it is difficult to live up to it year by year. A firm's culture is ultimately a reflection of the people who make up the firm, and Proskauer has great people and a leadership that encourages and fosters teamwork and lasting interactions, and as a result has a great culture. I wanted to work at a place where colleagues hang out with each other outside of work and take interest in each other's lives and form a community. That's what drew me to Proskauer and has kept me here.

How did your career at Proskauer begin?

Jin: I would not be at Proskauer if it weren't for Fabio, actually. Fabio began his legal career at Proskauer and me at another firm. We would meet occasionally to commiserate over drinks, but Fabio always seemed happy being at Proskauer, which was unheard of among NYC law firm associates. One day I got a random recruiter call who said Proskauer was hiring. I had been interviewing for in-house positions at the time, and I was not looking to lateral to another law firm. If it were any other firm, I would have passed. But I called Fabio and asked about the capital markets and finance group at Proskauer. Proskauer was the only law firm I interviewed with, and it was an easy and quick decision to join Proskauer soon thereafter.

How did you work together and/or socialize with each other when you were both at Proskauer?

Fabio: Although Jin did not work on the same matters when I was at Proskauer—I was in the Litigation Department and Jin was in the Corporate Department—we would socialize and catch-up frequently, for example, lunches at the cafeteria, and at Firm events. Of course, Jin and I also caught up outside of Proskauer.

Jin: Fabio being a patent litigator and me a corporate finance lawyer, we did not have any clients in common. But we would see each other at most of the Proskauer events, cocktail parties, summer events, alumni events, holiday parties, et cetera. When it came to summer recruiting and mentoring, having two vastly different practices helped us to cover a lot of ground just between the two of us with the summer associates. Fabio would refer summer associates interested in corporate work, and I would refer summer associates interested in litigation. We were supportive of each other's "extracurricular" activities within the firm, whether it be our affinity group meetings or pro bono activities.

How did your decision to leave Proskauer come about? What brought you to Etsy?

Fabio: I decided to leave Proskauer because I was looking to have a stronger connection with the business and explore a different career path. Leaving Proskauer was a difficult decision because I really enjoyed the work I did and working with my Proskauer colleagues. I ultimately decided to join a New York start-up that was expanding its Legal department. After a couple of years of being in-house, I joined the Legal team at Etsy. I had always wanted to work in-house at the intersection of law and tech; this was a great opportunity to join one of New York's most well-known tech companies doing both Litigation and IP—my main focus areas.

How has your friendship with Fabio evolved since his departure from Proskauer?

Jin: We remain close and hang out often, together with my family and Fabio's husband. Fabio is a great godfather to my son, and we recently got to dog sit Banjo, Fabio's Yorkie Poo, over the holidays.

What does it mean to be a Proskauer alum?

Fabio: It means belonging to the very best network of colleagues and professional support system. It's a privilege being part of the Proskauer family.

How has your time at Proskauer impacted your career?

Fabio: I started my legal career at Proskauer and I was there during my most formative years as a lawyer. I was trained by the best lawyers which helped shape my professional development.

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- **Jinyoung Joo**
Partner