SpencerFane®

Spencer Fane Celebrates International Women's Day with Sarah Thomas

Spencer Fane recently hosted its annual International Women's Day event for both employees and clients featuring Sarah Thomas, the NFL's first female official, on March 8.

Attendees were inspired by Sarah's story of changing the game in the world's most quintessential male-dominated sport – football – when she became the first female NFL official. She officiated her first NFL game on September 13, 2015, between the Kansas City Chiefs and Houston Texans – and on February 7, 2021, she became the first female to officiate a Super Bowl.

During the hourlong presentation, Sarah outlined her background as a paralegal and starting her career in a law firm. She also shared stories covering everything from an NFL scout scouting her, walking on field the first time as an official in 2015, and handling becoming "the first."

"The first year, you have to learn to compartmentalize. Media is going to sensationalize everything, but you just have to focus on your craft. Don't have self-doubt and stay true to yourself," she shared.

Sarah also handled questions from the audience, explaining the importance of having a mentor, how to handle criticism, learning how to say no – and how to say sorry, and handling the judgement and expectations from others.

Since joining the NFL's roster of officials, she has become a trailblazing inspiration to women everywhere, and she keeps the mindset of being the best you can be – no barrier or ceiling is shatterproof. The event was sponsored by the Spencer Fane Women ADVOCATE group, whose mission is to foster an environment in which our

female attorneys and members can develop, engage, and thrive.

Learn more about Women ADVOCATE and all of the firm's DEI efforts here.