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Attorney Profile: Mary Wu Tullis

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By John Ferguson



When asked to describe the most surprising aspect of practicing law, Memphis Associate Mary Wu Tullis says, "We're all human, we all have issues, and we all have different quirks about us. In spite of that, we are all able to be successful and well respected in our field." This ability to successfully transcend historical barriers has been instrumental for Wu Tullis at every stage of her career.

Born and raised in Memphis, Wu Tullis attended Vanderbilt University as an undergraduate. She notes the many opportunities she had to participate in events centered around diversity and inclusion and the fact that, although diversity was a focal point among the administration, there was little integration among diverse groups on campus. Wu Tullis acted as a catalyst to help redefine inclusion on campus, and through her involvement with the Asian-American Students Association, she encouraged all students to attend AASA's events, especially its annual Asian New Year Festival, which featured a variety of food, cultural dances, singing, and theatrical performances.

After graduating in 2009 with cum laude honors, Wu Tullis attended the University of Alabama School of Law. Not only was she attracted by their extensive efforts to enroll out-of-state students, but she also felt she would receive exceptional instruction at great value. Moreover, she was intrigued by Alabama's smaller class size as she anticipated it would foster a more intimate learning environment. Throughout law school, she developed extensive mentor relationships with diverse professors, got involved with the National Asian Pacific Bar Association, and served as notes editor and managing board member for the *Alabama Law Review*. She remains involved in NAPABA, serving as co-chair of the Social and Networking Subcommittee of the Young Lawyers Network since 2016.

Upon graduation from law school, Wu Tullis joined Baker Donelson's Memphis office where she practices financial litigation, mainly involving risk exposure and commercial disputes. She has received many accolades, including being nominated by Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland to sit on the Memphis Minority Business Development Oversight Commission, a group designed to monitor the city's commitment to creating opportunities for diverse contractors, as well as being named president of the Young Lawyers Division of the Memphis Bar Association. She is also currently participating in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity Pathfinders program, and was named a Rising Star by *Mid-South Super Lawyers* in 2016 and 2017. Wu Tullis credits two factors for her success: having great mentors who give her candid advice, including Baker Donelson's own Mark Baugh and Bruce McMullen, and self-identifying as a "sponge," someone who is tirelessly motivated to discover and interpret new information.