

An Interview with LICONY Board Member Jason D'Angelo



The Life Insurance Council of New York asked Jason D'Angelo, Executive Vice President, General Counsel at Mutual of America, a few questions about his career as he begins his term on the Executive Committee of the LICONY Board of Directors.

What drew you to LICONY's Board of Directors?

My predecessor as General Counsel at Mutual of America, Jim Roth, served on the LICONY Board. When I joined the Company in February of 2022, I was asked if I would complete Jim's term upon his retirement. Honestly, I would have been honored to do it simply because of my respect and esteem for Jim, who helped me transition to my new role at Mutual of America. But I still did my due diligence, and I feel that LICONY's mission to foster an environment that supports the growth of the life insurance industry in New York is critical to the health and survival of this industry that is so important to people.

You have been an active member of the LICONY Board of Directors for about a year. How has your experience as a Board member prepared you for your transition to the Executive Committee in your newly appointed seat as Secretary-Treasurer?

What I didn't know when I joined LICONY's Board is that the people who serve on the Board and the officers and staff at LICONY are truly wonderful people who are passionate about their mission. While the individuals who have made an impact on me are too many to list here, I am particularly grateful to Mike Zarcone and Rich Loconte, who took me under their wings from the start. They taught me that, encompassed within LICONY's mission, is the fundamental pillar that everything we do is done with the best interests of our member companies' customers in mind. This approach is very much in line with our thinking at

Mutual of America, and it is something that will help guide me in this new leadership position.

Is there something that you learned as the Senior Law Clerk to the Honorable David Edelstein that has stuck with you throughout your career?

Well, now we are going back in time! Speaking of which, did you know that Judge Edelstein, who passed away in 2000, was nominated for a seat on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York by President Truman? Anyway, there are so many things I learned while serving as his law clerk that have stuck with me, but perhaps the one that really stands out most is something he used to say about the importance of not only developing a professional network of people but also maintaining those relationships.

One day, I answered the phone in the Judge's chambers. The caller worked with the Judge many years ago. As the Judge was unavailable, I asked the caller if he would like to leave a message. He asked that I inform the Judge that he called about obtaining a recommendation for a position he was seeking. Later, when I relayed the message to the Judge, he said, "I have not heard from that person for 20 years. You can't collect on the insurance policy if you haven't paid the premiums."

Mutual of America is a long-standing member of LICONY. How has LICONY helped Mutual of America make an impact on the lives of New Yorkers?

Our close connection with LICONY goes back decades. We have found our partnership with LICONY to be an invaluable component of staying on top of the complex regulatory environment in which New York insurance companies operate. Our membership and participation in LICONY ensure our ability to provide our policyholders with insurance products that are not only responsive to the marketplace, but pass regula-

continued on next page

Interview with Jason D'Angelo continued...

tory scrutiny as well.

How has Mutual of America's business changed in recent years, and why?

Mutual of America was founded nearly 80 years ago by a group of business leaders who were dedicated to supporting the nonprofit sector and believed every worker deserved a financially secure and dignified retirement. This thinking remains a key part of our DNA, even as we now provide retirement services to thousands of clients and well over half a million employees from both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors.

In recent years, the Company has made significant investments to modernize its technology platform and record keeping systems, along with its retirement solutions, to benefit customers for years to come. We also reimagined the structure of our client support services to provide an even more customer-centered experience that benefits from both technology and personal interaction.


On the latter point, the one thing that hasn't changed over the decades, even in this digital age, is the Company's core commitment to provide personal service to our customers. They've told us that what they really value is the human connection that we provide. This approach has distinguished us from others in the financial industry and is fundamental to who we

have always been as a Company.

Last month, the insurance industry celebrated National Retirement Security Month. How did Mutual of America support and raise awareness for this important campaign?

The Company has actively supported and promoted National Retirement Security Month for years, as its goals align with our long-standing commitment to help our customers build and preserve assets for a financially secure future. But, for us, retirement security is more than a one-month campaign; rather, it's a year-round endeavor, especially as we recognize that there is a retirement saving crisis in the country.

This year, we published educational newsletters and articles for our clients and plan participants that focused on specific actions they can take to strengthen their financial literacy, as well as to plan and save more for retirement. We also introduced new workshops for our client representatives to use for participant education sessions that center around four key financial concepts: investing, budgeting, Roth vs. traditional contributions, and diversification.

Ultimately, we want to provide helpful ways to deliver the tools, information and support that our customers want, in the ways they want, to help improve their retirement and investment outcomes. 



Jason D'Angelo (left) speaks with Scott Rothstein at LICONY's Annual Conference (right).