

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



At Sheppard Mullin, we work hard to ensure that all the pieces are in place to achieve lasting diversity and inclusion — whether it's the pipeline to law school and the profession or retention, advancement and leadership. — *Guy Halgren, Firm Chair*

Law firms repeatedly claim that they value diversity and inclusion. But it's much more important to actually be diverse. We are.

Diversity and inclusion are essential to us and to our clients. Diverse attorneys bring different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences. We want that kind of creativity working for our clients.

Our goal is to maintain a culture in which diverse approaches are applauded. Teamwork is important, but that doesn't mean our attorneys must change who they are or be like everyone else. We know that it's the differences, as well as the similarities, that help make us strong.

And our attorneys shouldn't have to concern themselves about access and opportunity. It's our job to make sure that everyone is fully equipped to succeed. That starts with year-round guidance and education. We want our associates to know where they stand and what skills they need to develop. We provide training and online tools to help them focus on professional development and career planning.

Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Our Diversity & Inclusion Committee has been in place since the 1990s, helping us to stay abreast of best practices and creating programs designed to recruit, retain and promote diverse attorneys. The Committee has devoted countless hours over the years to improving and sustaining diversity in the Firm and in the legal profession. The Chair, an African-American woman partner, knows first-hand the importance of these issues to a legal career. A diverse group of attorneys and staff who represent every U.S. office and numerous practice groups sit on the Committee. They are joined by representatives from our Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Council led by the Firm Chair, who is actively involved in diversity and inclusion efforts both inside and outside the Firm. The Committee and Council meet regularly to ensure that the Firm's commitment to diversity and inclusion is communicated broadly and are supported by full-time Diversity & Inclusion staff.

Affinity Groups

Even though Sheppard Mullin is a large firm (850+ lawyers), everyone has plenty of opportunity to connect with others who share similar backgrounds and experiences. The Firm has a number of very active, attorney-led affinity groups that serve to promote community and provide additional opportunities for mentoring, professional development and personal growth. These include Women Lawyers Groups in each of our U.S. offices; the firmwide Diversity & Inclusion Attorney Network for attorneys of color; and Out At Sheppard, the firmwide LGBTQ attorneys group, which provides information to its female and male members on parenting, work-life balance and other relevant issues. All of these groups are led by attorneys, creating a community of support and ensuring that Firm leadership hears everyone's voice.

Internal Initiatives

We do our best to provide an inclusive workplace and welcoming environment for every attorney. A 2016 study co-chaired by our Firm Chair with a woman partner to study firm data and women attorney retention issues recommended a number of significant changes that were unanimously approved by our Executive Committee and implemented in 2017. A similar study on attorneys of color and LGBTQ attorneys was launched in 2017 and presented to our Executive Committee in 2018. Those recommendations were also unanimously approved. Gender neutral parental leave and protocols for inclusive pitch teams are among the many best practices emanating from these studies.

Diversity Rankings

- 2018 *Working Mother* "60 Best Law Firms for Women"
- Awarded Mansfield Certified Plus designation for 2018 – one of only 27 firms recognized for success in diversity leadership and promotion
- *Law360* 100 Best law Firms for Minority Attorneys – Ranked 4th for minority attorneys and 9th for minority partners in 2018
- 2018 *HRC Corporate Equality Index* – 100% rating of LGBT workplace benefits (8th consecutive year)
- American Lawyer Top Firms for Diversity/2018 Diversity Scorecard – #32
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity – Top 50 law firms recognized by LCLD in 2017
- Recognition by prominent clients – For Diversity & Inclusion based on client surveys

External Initiatives

Our lawyers are leaders in community and nationwide diversity programs. They receive billable hours credit for their involvement, but the great benefit is their contribution in critical areas such as the diversity pipeline to law schools and progress in retention and promotion of diverse lawyers. We sponsor many external efforts each year. We provide financial sponsorships and attorney leadership to local, state and national diversity bar associations and other organizations that seek to enhance diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. For example, we are members of MCCA, LCLD, IILP and CMCP, and our attorneys hold leadership roles within each of these organizations.

Recruiting

Diversity at our firm starts with recruiting and is central to our entire recruiting strategy. We seek to build strong, lasting relationships with law schools and student groups to help us find diverse and talented future attorneys for Sheppard Mullin.

In addition, members of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and our affinity groups participate in all our recruiting activities, and many are members of the Recruiting Committees in their local offices. They also help us coach attorneys who conduct student or lateral interviews.

We welcome questions about Diversity & Inclusion at Sheppard Mullin. Contact us any time at D&I@sheppardmullin.com. Also please visit our Diversity & Inclusion pages at sheppardmullin.com.

KEY SHEPPARD MULLIN DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVES

- Sheppard Mullin Women Lawyers Groups
- Diversity & Inclusion Attorney Network (attorneys of color)
- Out At Sheppard (LGBTQ attorneys)
- A remote work policy for associates
- A flexible work arrangement policy for associates

