

### Black Cyber Lawyers See Racial Diversity as Key to Data Safety

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*Bloomberg Law* reports that an increase in global cyberattacks spotlights a workforce shortage in the cybersecurity space, and highlights new initiatives that aim to train, mentor diverse talent. One such initiative is Sheppard Mullin's Privacy and Cybersecurity Fellowship program for a small group of experienced lawyers eager to dive into the field.

*Bloomberg Law* spoke with Sheppard Mullin Privacy and Cybersecurity practice group leader and co-leader of the Fellowship program Liisa Thomas: "The fellowship will last 18 months with the lawyers most likely going in-house to meet the increased demand from businesses."

Thomas had the idea for the program for over a decade as she rose to partner and saw younger lawyers seek her mentorship. "People began to come to me and say, 'Can you help me? You're biracial, you're a Black woman. Help me out with my career,'" she said. "There are very few Black women partners. I moved up in the ranks; it's something I've always been thinking about."

Further, Thomas says, "It's one thing to have a diverse team. Your diverse team needs to feel comfortable and able to provide their perspective. If you as a firm haven't created that culture and that environment, then you've lost a lot of that benefit."

#### Attorneys

Liisa M. Thomas

#### Practice Areas

Privacy and Cybersecurity