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ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL MEETING
October 22, 2024

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Chicago Committee seeks racial and ethnic diversity in the legal profession by collaborating with its law firm and corporate membership to:

- Drive sustainable institutional change at law firms and corporate legal departments;
- Provide professional development; and
- Cultivate the community of minority lawyers through programming and leadership opportunities.



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Chicago Committee Members,

During my time on the Board of Directors, significant events have influenced diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession. The ripple effects of the Black Lives Matter movement following the murder of George Floyd, a global pandemic, and the U.S. Supreme Court's 2023 affirmative action decision and subsequent litigation has shaped our conversations and goals nationally and in the legal community. In my first year as Board Chair, bringing together the community, integrating lessons learned, and continuing to advance our mission has presented challenges and opportunities. While I am dismayed to see a retreat from commitments made just a few short years ago, I am heartened by the continued resolve of the Chicago legal community to stand behind the mission of the Chicago Committee. The Chicago Committee remains steadfast in its efforts to support and cultivate the next generation of diverse attorneys and leaders in the profession. Highlights from our year are listed below and described in this Annual Report.

- This summer, we hosted our annual partner dinner to celebrate and strengthen the connections between our partners and member firms.
- Throughout the year, we work to advance the pipeline into the profession, including with events and programs such as the Summer Soiree, LegalTrek, and outreach to law schools.
- We stay in touch with member firms with our spring and fall editions of our Connect event where we bring together diversity professionals and diversity committee members from member firms to discuss challenges and important developments. Our Associate Board is active hosting multiple events to network with in-house counsel, a CLE, the Mid-Level Associates Forum, and the Junior Associate Boot Camp.
- We look forward to closing out the year with our Rainmaker Insights program in November, which will bring together a panel of successful partners to share their business development insights with attorneys of our member firms.

The Chicago Committee's work is made possible by our member firms, passionate attorneys, corporate legal departments, board members and our excellent team. We thank you for your contributions and look forward to continuing to work together to fulfil the Chicago Committee's mission and, in so doing, to strengthen our profession.

Sincerely,

Steve Flores
Chair, Board of Directors, Partner, Cooley LLP

2024 PROGRAMS

University of Illinois College of Law Diversity in Practice Panel

March 20

Associate Board members spoke to law students about law firm recruiting, how to excel as a summer associate, and practice as a diverse lawyer.



Associate Board Connections Committee Happy Hour

April 18, The Game Room

Associate Board members and Liaisons met to network and strengthen their connections.

Conversations & Collaboration Spring 2024

April 30, Jones Day

The evening of networking included roundtable discussions led by in-house counsel and law firm attorneys about current topics in the legal profession. The event was co-sponsored by the Cook County Bar Association, Korean American Bar Association of Chicago, Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois, and Muslim Bar Association of Chicago.



2024 PROGRAMS

Chicago Committee Connect

May 22, Cooley LLP

Associate Board members spoke to law students about law firm recruiting, how to excel as a summer associate, and practice as a diverse lawyer.

Mid-Level Associates Forum

May 29, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

The Associate Board hosted panel discussions on the lateraling process from recruitment to integration, and on managing your work and personal life as a mid-level associate. The panelists were Amber Carpenter (Ferrara Candy), Edwin Cruz (DLA Piper LLP US), Yoshi Haynie (Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP), Rachel Myung (DLA Piper LLP US), Breanna Smith-Bonsu (Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP), and Aris Suarez (JP Morgan).



Summer Soiree

June 12, DLA Piper LLP US

The Chicago Committee hosted its signature networking event for member firm summer associates and attorneys to meet and celebrate diversity.



2024 PROGRAMS

LegalTrek

June 18 - July 24, DePaul University College of Law

The Chicago Committee hosted our LegalTrek program this summer with DePaul University College of Law. LegalTrek is a program that introduces the basics of being a lawyer to diverse, undergraduate students who are interested in going to law school during six class sessions. Students had the opportunity to enroll in a free Princeton Review LSAT Prep course sponsored by Chapman and Cutler LLP. The students heard from attorneys about different practice areas, visited Chapman and Cutler LLP, participated in mock negotiations, and conducted a mock trial. The students were also paired with an attorney mentor.



Associate Board Connections Committee Event

June 27, DLA Piper LLP US

The Chicago Committee hosted its signature networking event for member firm summer associates and attorneys to meet and celebrate diversity.

2024 PROGRAMS

Partner Dinner

August 14, Tanta

Member firms partners gathered for an evening of networking and lively conversation.



Diverse Associate & In-House Counsel Bash

August 15, The Godfrey Hotel

The Chicago Committee's Associate Board hosted their signature event at the Godfrey Hotel. Associates and in-house counsel were able to meet and network. The event was sponsored by Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Angela Oldham, Partner at Kirkland & Ellis, gave insightful remarks.



2024 PROGRAMS

Associate & In-House Counsel Fall Dinners

September 26, Bazaar Meats and October 3, Seville

The Chicago Committee Associate Board hosted two group dinners for associates and in-house counsel to socialize.

The New Form of Law Firm Alliance CLE

October 1, Jenner & Block LLP

The Associate Board program included a discussion about how competing law firms unite as allies to fight racial injustices in upstream and downstream ways with leaders from the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance, Alliance for Asian American Justice, and the Alliance for Inclusion and Justice. The program was approved for 1.25 general Illinois MCLE and PR-Diversity & Inclusion credits. The panelists were Ali Alsarraf (Jenner & Block LLP), Alliance for Inclusion and Justice, Wilson Chu (McDermott Will & Emery LLP), Alliance for Asian American Justice, Benjamin Weinberg (Dentons), Law Firm Antiracism Alliance, and Sumaya Noush (McDermott Will & Emery LLP).



2024 PROGRAMS

Junior Associate Boot Camp

October 15, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

The Associate Board invited first to third year-associates to learn about how to succeed their first years of practice. Topics included adding value to your matters, building relationships in the firm, making the most of feedback, and navigating your workload. The panelists were Elsa Andrianifahanana (Jones Day), Meredith Eng, Nasir Hussain (Winston & Strawn LLP), Bianca Valdez (Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP), and Brandon Villa (Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP).



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Conversations & Collaboration Fall 2024

October 23, Seyfarth Shaw LLP

The Associate Board will host the fall edition of the event with roundtable discussions led by in-house counsel and law firm attorneys about relevant topics in the legal profession.

Rainmaker Insights

November 7, Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP

The Chicago Committee will host a panel discussion with successful, rainmaker partners sharing insights about business development and their path through partnership. The evening will include a networking reception.

Associate Board Connections Committee Dinner

December 5

The Associate Board Connection Committee will host their last event of the year for the members and Liaisons.

2024

DIVERSITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you to the following firms for completing the Chicago Committee's annual Diversity Questionnaire:

ArentFox Schiff LLP	Locke Lord LLP
Banner Witcoff	Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP
Barnes & Thornburg LLP	McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Ltd.
Benesch Friedlander Coplan & Aronoff LLP	McGuireWoods LLP
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP	Perkins Coie LLP
Cooley LLP	Polsinelli PC
DLA Piper LLP (US)	Quarles & Brady LLP
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	Reed Smith LLP
Fox Rothschild LLP	Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP
Jenner & Block LLP	SheppardMullin
K&L Gates LLP	Shook, Hardy & Bacon, L.L.P.
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	Sidley Austin LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

The Chicago Committee invited member firms to complete the annual Diversity Questionnaire. Twenty-six of the firms completed the Questionnaire. The purpose of the Questionnaire is to obtain valuable information in order to analyze meaningful racial and ethnic diversity in Chicago law firms. The Chicago Committee utilizes the information when strategically planning annual goals, programs, and events.

Chicago Committee is recognizing three law firms for their effort in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within their firms. The Chicago Committee considered a number of factors, including, hiring of diverse attorneys, racially and ethnically diverse attorneys in firm leadership and partnership ranks, work allocation systems, programming and training for diverse attorneys, and inclusive client teams and succession planning. The Chicago Committee believes these factors show a meaningful commitment to the advancement of diversity within the firm.

2024

DIVERSITY AWARDS

Commitment & Investment: Cooley LLP

The criteria evaluated for this award is based on the firm's racially/ethnically diverse associate hiring, partnership ranks, diversification of client teams, and inclusive succession planning.

Cooley

Cooley is a firm with the concepts of diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and justice woven tightly into our identity, culture, brand and core business. In 2020, Cooley's board of directors approved a robust DEI Action Plan, which sets forth specific objectives, metrics and actions to articulate and deliver on the firm's pledge to fight systemic racism, bias and injustice and build a firm and workplace that reflects equality for all. Our commitment includes active and creative partnerships with clients, local and national law organizations serving historically underrepresented populations, as well as involvement in diversity pipeline projects, law school diversity programs and community outreach.

2024

DIVERSITY AWARDS

Law Firm Leadership: K&L Gates LLP

The criteria evaluated for this award is based on the firm's racially/ethnically diverse attorney representation for their executive and management committee leadership positions and leadership and partner-focused programs.



K&L GATES

K&L Gates' commitment to diversity and inclusion is a core value that drives and inspires our team. As a global law firm operating in over 45 offices across five continents, we have cultivated a workplace that is intrinsically diverse in experiences, perspectives, and ideas. We firmly believe that the diverse and collaborative nature of our firm not only leads to stronger teams but also enhances client relationships and the quality of the services we provide. As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we pledge to listen, be educated, take action, and work together to help in the fight to end inequality and foster a more inclusive society. Please visit <https://www.klgates.com/diversity> to learn more about how we drive diversity and inclusion at the firm, in the industry, and within our communities.

2024

DIVERSITY AWARDS

Change Agent: Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

The criteria evaluated for this award is based on the firm's mentoring, professional development programs, work allocation systems, DEI billable hour credit, and partner business development programs, and diverse attorney ratios.



Faegre Drinker's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is reflected as a core value and is embedded throughout the life and policies of our firm. Through our commitment to progress and innovation in this area, Faegre Drinker is equipped to better understand the needs and objectives of our clients and communities. And by promoting the perspectives of professionals that span all dimensions of diversity, we create an inclusive workplace for our employees that helps address underrepresentation in the legal profession and fosters an environment of creativity, innovation and mutual respect. A firm-wide advisory committee led by Chief Diversity Officer Maria Lewis and a full-time diversity staff guide our initiatives designed to: foster mutual professional and personal respect; create an environment in which all individuals are valued; attract the best and brightest legal talent from all backgrounds; promote education and awareness on topics of diversity and inclusion; develop, retain and advance the careers of our diverse lawyers.

2024

MEMBER FIRMS

Thank you to the following firms for continually supporting our mission:

ArentFox Schiff LLP	Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP
Aronberg Goldgehn Davis & Garmisa	Mayer Brown LLP
Baker McKenzie	McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Ltd.
Banner Witcoff	McDermott Will & Emery LLP
Barnes & Thornburg LLP	McGuireWoods LLP
Benesch Friedlander Coplan & Aronoff LLP	Michael Best & Friedrich LLP
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP	Much Shelist, P.C.
Cooley LLP	Neal Gerber & Eisenberg LLP
DLA Piper LLP US	Perkins Coie LLP
Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	Polsinelli, PC
Foley & Lardner LLP	Quarles & Brady LLP
Fox Rothschild LLP	Reed Smith LLP
Greenberg Traurig LLP	Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP
Ice Miller LLP	Seyfarth Shaw LLP
Jenner & Block LLP	Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP
Jones Day	Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.
K&L Gates LLP	Sidley Austin LLP
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
King & Spalding LLP	Vedder Price
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP	Winston & Strawn LLP
Locke Lord LLP	

Thank you to the following firms giving additional event sponsorships:

- Chapman and Cutler LLP
- Kirkland & Ellis LLP

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Siddesh Bale, Reed Smith LLP

Corporate, Capital Markets, Emerging Growth & Venture Capital

Siddesh Bale focuses his practice on mergers and acquisitions and emerging company/venture capital transactions. He has experience representing public and private companies, private equity firms, and investment and hedge funds in an array of corporate transactions, including mergers, acquisitions (both asset and stock), divestitures, financings, fund formation and general corporate matters across multiple industries. Additionally, he regularly represents founders and investors (strategic and financial) in a variety of emerging company transactions, including angel and series investments. Sid serves as a member of the firm's executive committee and the vice chair of the Business and Finance Department.



Steve Flores, Board Chair, Cooley LLP

Compensation & Benefits, ERISA

Steve Flores focuses his practice on a broad array of complex executive compensation and employee benefits matters. He regularly advises private and public companies, private equity sponsors and their portfolio companies on a wide range of employee benefit and executive compensation matters in connection with mergers & acquisitions, carve outs, private equity and minority investments, restructurings and lending transactions. Steve also assists clients of all sizes with the design, implementation and termination of a wide array of employee benefit plans and compensatory arrangements - including equity and cash-based incentive plans, nonqualified deferred compensation arrangements, retention and change-in-control plans, employment and severance agreements, and retirement and health and welfare plans.

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Steven Hunter, Quarles & Brady LLP
Litigation

Steven Hunter is an experienced trial lawyer with first-chair experience representing companies in the U.S. and abroad and is the Chicago office chair of the Litigation & Dispute Resolution Practice Group. He has handled all aspects of dispute resolution – from discovery and motions practice to arbitration, mediation, jury trials, bench trials and appeals – representing clients in a wide variety of disputes.



Pamela Kain, Ernst & Young LLP
Deputy General Counsel

As the Deputy General Counsel for Ernst & Young LLP, Ms. Kain manages a large, diverse team of attorneys and professionals supporting the corporate, governance, and transactional needs of the firm. She also provides legal support for the firm’s strategic initiatives and M&A activities, working closely with the firm’s Executive Committee and leadership. Ms. Kain previously served as the Global Deputy General Counsel for Cushman & Wakefield, where she drove transformational change within the legal department. Before her work at Cushman & Wakefield, Pamela held various leadership roles in the legal department at General Electric Company, where her practice focused on strategic dispositions and reorganizations, global commercial matters, and commercial real estate financings and equity transactions. Prior to joining GE, Ms. Kain was the Vice President and Deputy General Counsel for General Growth Properties where she and her team handled the company’s financing, development, leasing and bankruptcy matters. Ms. Kain began practicing law in the Chicago office of Katten Muchin Rosenman, focusing on all aspects of commercial real estate transactions. She received her Juris Doctor, cum laude, in 2000 from Northwestern University School of Law and her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan. She is a Fellow of the American College of Real Estate Lawyers.

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Jose Lopez, Perkins Coie LLP
Chicago Office Managing Partner; Litigation

Jose Lopez is a partner with Perkins Coie's Litigation practice, with a special emphasis on securities litigation. He draws upon his experience as a former Senior Enforcement Attorney with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to represent clients involved in enforcement proceedings by the SEC, DOJ, FINRA, FTC, CFTC, Illinois Securities Department and other regulatory agencies. Jose has extensive experience in internal corporate investigations, particularly investigations relating to alleged violations of federal and state securities laws. Jose has investigated a multinational company's compliance with FCPA bribery and books and records laws in Mexico, India, South Korea, Central America, South America, Europe and South Africa.



Olivia Luk Bedi, Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP
Intellectual Property, Litigation

Olivia Luk Bedi's experience encompasses all areas of IP – patents, trade secrets, copyrights, and trademarks – and covers a variety of industries, including medical devices, computer programs and software, cellphone technology, and manufacturers of audio products, paintballs, and power tools. An experienced trial lawyer, Olivia has litigated and tried significant cases before the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and other federal courts across the country, and she has also briefed and argued patent appeals before the Federal Circuit. Olivia serves on three judicially appointed committees for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois: Local Rules Advisory, Local Patent Rules, and Racial Justice Diversity. Olivia's experience also encompasses many aspects of civil litigation, including general business disputes and product liability investigations and litigations.

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Michael Martinez, K&L Gates LLP
Managing Partner, Chicago; Member, K&L Gates Management Committee; Antitrust and Complex Commercial Litigation

Michael E. Martinez concentrates his practice on criminal investigations and multidistrict class actions and government agency actions and arbitrations involving a wide spectrum of antitrust and complex commercial litigation issues. He has represented numerous global and domestic corporations in a wide variety of federal and state court cases involving antitrust claims under Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act and the Robinson-Patman Act as well as unfair competition and deceptive trade practice claims under numerous state statutes. He regularly counsels clients on competition, distribution, and sales and marketing practices.



Gray Mateo-Harris, Board Secretary, Fox Rothschild LLP
Labor & Employment

Gray Mateo-Harris has more than a decade of experience representing employers in workplace litigation, handling labor relations disputes and providing strategic counsel on labor and employment law issues. She advises clients in a broad range of industries including education, software and technology services, real estate, financial services, retail and manufacturing. Gray tailors her solution oriented counsel to the particular needs of each client, considering the nuances of their business in order to deliver advice that is practical and in line with their goals, values and culture. Gray is the regional practice lead for the firm's Labor & Employment Department for the Chicago office, and co-chairs the firm's Trade Secrets & Restrictive Covenants practice group.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Amol Parikh, McDermott Will & Emery LLP
Intellectual Property Litigation

Amol Parikh concentrates his practice on intellectual property litigation, counseling and procurement. He draws on his trial and litigation experience in combination with his engineering training to quickly identify intellectual property issues and develop creative strategies to address them. Amol has represented high-tech companies in complex patent litigations in various United States district courts, the International Trade Commission (ITC) and before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board in a variety of technologies. In addition to his litigation experience, Amol is a registered patent attorney and manages preparation and prosecution of patent applications in the field of electronic and computer technologies.



Binal Patel, Board Treasurer, Banner Witcoff
Patent Litigation, Patent Prosecution, IP Counseling

Binal is a past president of Banner Witcoff. He has a range of experience in intellectual property matters including procurement, litigation, and counseling. He represents clients in various industries including financial services, insurance, automotive and heavy equipment technologies. Binal actively manages the patent procurement programs for a number of large and medium sized corporations in the U.S. and internationally. Having litigated patents in court, Binal approaches patent procurement with an eye towards litigation and with an effort to obtain maximum desirable claim coverage results. Binal counsels his clients to establish and maintain effective patent prosecution procedures. Binal has prepared and successfully prosecuted numerous patent applications in the fields of computer software, Internet-related technologies, computer hardware, telecommunications, and medical devices. Binal also has significant experience managing complex litigation matters involving the enforcement and defense of intellectual property rights. Binal handles litigation with a pragmatic and pro-active approach and tailors his litigation strategies to suit the business goals of his clients.

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LaRue Robinson, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Litigation

LaRue L. Robinson is a partner in the Litigation Department. LaRue focuses his practice on complex commercial litigation, class actions, employee benefits (ERISA) litigation, and investigations. As a former U.S. Army prosecutor, LaRue also has significant trial experience. LaRue litigates in federal and state courts across the country. His work involves all phases of litigation starting with pre-litigation counseling and continuing up to, and including, the trial and post-trial stages. He also maintains an active pro bono practice in civil and criminal cases.



Jeffrey Sharp, Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP
Managing Partner; Patent Prosecution

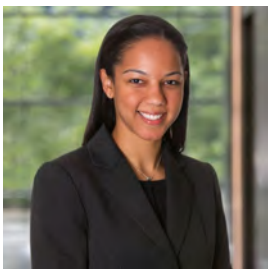
Jeffrey Sharp is the Managing Partner of Marshall Gerstein. He is a registered patent attorney with more than 40 years of experience in patent prosecution, litigation and transactional work who focuses his practice in the areas of biotechnology and chemistry. Jeff has handled matters in a wide variety of biotechnology disciplines, such as pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, and gene therapy; recombinant nucleic acid technologies, including plant biotechnology; and in-vivo and in-vitro diagnostic and gene-sequencing methods. He has also gained successful outcomes in diverse chemical and chemical engineering technologies, including organic, inorganic, and metallurgical chemistry; chemical and metallurgical processing; and food and beverage chemistry.

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Lei Shen, Cooley LLP
Data Privacy

Lei Shen advises clients on a wide range of global data privacy issues and works collaboratively to develop practical privacy and data protection strategies for their products and services. She helps companies navigate and comply with state, federal and international privacy regulations, including the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) and other state consumer data protection laws, and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). She also advises on issues concerning emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, telematics, and connected products and services (including connected and autonomous vehicles).



Angela Smedley, Winston & Strawn LLP
Litigation

Angela Smedley focuses her practice on complex commercial litigation and has successfully defended large financial services clients against individual and class actions at the trial and appellate level. She also employs her years of sports litigation experience in representing professional sports unions, and athletes, and agencies in labor arbitrations, and complex disputes in a variety of forums. She serves as Chair of the firm's Pro Bono Committee and Co-Chair of the Black Lawyers Network. She is also a member of the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Rachael Trummel, Jenner & Block LLP

Litigation

Rachael Trummel's practice incorporates complex business litigation, pre-litigation risk mitigation, and putative class action defense for clients across a range of industries and sectors. Rachael's work spans industries and sectors, and ranges from representing Chicago-based institutions to defending multinational corporations in large-scale commercial disputes and putative class actions suits. Whether she's providing strategic counsel to prevent litigation, identifying solutions to difficult legal challenges, or arguing before a judge or jury, clients trust Rachael to address their most sensitive matters.



Malaika Tyson, Board Vice Chair, McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Ltd.

Patent Prosecution, Intellectual Property Transactions and Counseling

Malaika Tyson's practice focuses on corporate IP and patent protection strategies. Malaika assists innovative companies in developing integrated approaches to the strategic management of intellectual property by providing competitive IP analysis and portfolio management, IP due diligence, patent and trademark prosecution. Malaika also has experience with post-grant proceedings, patent litigation, EPO patent practice and FDA-patent matters. Malaika represents clients in a variety of areas; particularly in the biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and consumer goods industries.

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Bilal Zaheer, Locke Lord LLP
Litigation, Labor & Employment, Securities Litigation,
Bankruptcy

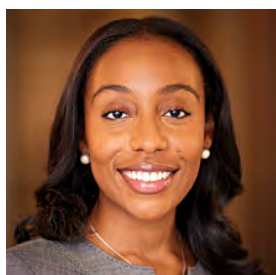
Bilal Zaheer is a Partner in the Chicago office of Locke Lord LLP and focuses his practice on business litigation in state and federal court, as well as arbitration and mediation. Bilal regularly advises and counsels companies facing disputes arising from complex corporate and commercial transactions. He also regularly defends companies, officers, directors and professional advisors against claims for breach of fiduciary duty, aiding and abetting and related claims involving alleged corporate misconduct often brought by bankruptcy trustees, creditor committees, court-appointed receivers and shareholders, and advises on issues of Delaware corporate governance arising in connection with such claims.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Elsa Andrianifahanana, Jones Day
Labor & Employment

Elsa Andrianifahanana is a partner at Jones Day and focuses on complex labor and employment issues, including employment discrimination, trade secrets, and restrictive covenants. She counsels clients on the labor and employment aspects of cross-border mergers and acquisitions and has represented clients through various phases of internal investigations, arbitrations, and litigation. She also provides guidance to clients on preventative measures, including reviewing wage and hour practices, drafting company policies, and negotiating agreements.



Valérie Cambronne, Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP
Trademarks, Copyrights, IP Litigation

Valérie Cambronne is an associate at Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP in the Trademark practice group. She specializes in both domestic and international trademark prosecution and enforcement across various sectors, including retail, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, and transportation. Valérie provides strategic trademark protection and enforcement programs to help clients safeguard and commercialize their brands. Her experience includes representing clients in trademark infringement disputes in Federal court, drafting dispositive motions, presenting legal arguments, and negotiating settlement agreements. Beyond her legal work, Valérie is dedicated to social impact initiatives and DEI efforts. She co-founded LegallyBlack®, a non-profit organization aimed at bridging the gap between intellectual property resources and minority communities.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Ashlee Germany, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
Corporate

Ashlee Germany helps companies close the deals that advance their strategic business objectives. She has experience representing and advising buyers and sellers in both the public and private sector, as well as startup companies. Ashlee practices corporate law with a focus on M&A, venture capital and private equity transactions. Her work includes managing and advising on due diligence, and drafting governing merger, purchase and equity agreements for private and public companies for a variety of transactions in industries including, transportation and logistics, health care and financial services. Ashlee also advises startup companies and venture capital arms on formation, corporate governance and investment documents.



Demetria Hamilton, Associate Board Chair, Seyfarth Shaw LLP
Real Estate, Real Estate Finance

Demetria Hamilton concentrates her practice in the areas of real estate and real estate finance. Demetria represents a wide variety of clients, including financial institutions, loan servicers, REITs, real estate funds, and developers in acquisition, disposition, leasing, joint venture, and financing transactions. Demetria also has experience representing public and private companies in a broad range of corporate transactional matters. Demetria has deep knowledge and experience in the distressed asset space, assisting with receivership sales and leasing of commercial real estate, as well as in the cannabis space, working on cannabis-related real estate and real estate finance transactions. Demetria is an experienced litigator, litigating all aspects of business-to-business commercial matters and multimillion-dollar distressed commercial real estate disputes.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Nasir Hussain, Associate Board Vice Chair, Winston & Strawn LLP Commercial Litigation

Nasir Hussain (Nas) is a senior litigation associate at Winston & Strawn LLP, and specializes in antitrust/competition and government enforcement, investigations, and compliance matters. He represents clients in antitrust disputes relating to both merger challenges and anticompetitive conduct allegations. He advises clients on antitrust compliance and risk and has experience assessing potential mergers and acquisitions for antitrust risk. Nas represents health care clients in a variety of regulatory compliance matters beyond antitrust, including matters involving controlled substance regulations and health care fraud and abuse laws. He has worked on numerous significant federal investigations into the conduct and billing practices of health and hospital systems.



Amanda Johnson, Jones Day Business Restructuring & Reorganization

Amanda Johnson is an associate in the Business Restructuring & Reorganization group in the Jones Day Chicago office. She specializes in complex bankruptcy litigation and chapter 11 proceedings, in addition to other bankruptcy-related matters. In particular, Amanda has experience working with clients who have legacy liabilities. She also counsels other types of distressed clients and has experience with out-of-court restructurings. In addition, Amanda is a lecturer at law at the University of Chicago Law School, where she teaches a seminar on resolving mass tort liability.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Sara Kim, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Litigation

Sara Kim is an associate in Willkie’s Litigation Department. Her practice focuses on all phases of complex commercial litigation in both federal and state courts. Sara has represented clients in high-stakes litigation matters, including consumer class actions, insurance coverage and contract disputes, and ERISA litigation. She has experience in drafting dispositive motions, managing wide-ranging discovery, taking depositions, and preparing witnesses for trial. She was part of a trial team that secured a favorable verdict for Willkie’s client on all counts immediately following closing arguments in an ERISA action. Sara maintains an active pro bono practice, where she has represented individuals in immigration and civil rights cases.



Elaine Liu, Mayer Brown LLP
Litigation & Dispute Resolution

Elaine Liu is a Litigation & Dispute Resolution associate in Mayer Brown’s Chicago office. Elaine’s practice has encompassed all stages of litigation in federal and state courts as well as arbitration proceedings. She also provides counseling to clients seeking to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws. She has significant experience in a broad range of substantive areas, including primarily the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), labor and employment, class actions, False Claims Act, internal investigations, financial services, and telecommunications. Elaine is also active in the firm’s pro bono program.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Cristina Alma McNeiley, Littler Mendelson P.C.
Labor and Employment

Cristina Alma McNeiley litigates employment-related disputes and provides day-to-day advice on employment-related issues to companies of all sizes across the country. Cristina has experience defending companies in single and multi-plaintiff actions in state and federal courts, in arbitration proceedings, and before various administrative agencies. Cristina also drafts and revises handbooks for companies. Prior to joining Littler, Cristina practiced in the labor and employment and commercial litigation practice groups of two other AmLaw 100 firms. During law school, Cristina served as a judicial extern to former Northern District of Illinois Federal Court Chief Judge Ruben Castillo.



Rachel Myung, DLA Piper LLP US
Corporate, Private Equity

Rachel Myung is a corporate attorney at DLA Piper and is a member of the firm's private equity and secondaries practice groups. She advises clients on complex business transactions, including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, leveraged buyouts, recapitalizations, secondary transactions and general corporate counselling and compliance. Rachel's clients also include private equity sponsors, portfolio companies and other private companies across an array of industries, including technology, manufacturing, healthcare, aviation, food and beverage, and professional services and marketing.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Sumaya Noush, McDermott Will & Emery LLP
Corporate, Healthcare

Sumaya M. Noush is a corporate and regulatory healthcare lawyer at the law firm of McDermott Will & Emery LLP and is based in the firm’s Chicago office. Sumaya maintains a transactional and regulatory practice focused on the representation of hospitals and health systems. She has significant experience in innovative and high-stakes hospital/health system strategic corporate transactions. Sumaya closely partners alongside clients as they explore strategies for the future health of their communities, their missions, and their business goals. She frequently advises her clients through the challenges of daily operations and recent regulatory developments which drives her understanding of the unique issues facing hospitals and health systems today. Sumaya is an active author and speaker on critical issues affecting the health care industry. Sumaya is dedicated to improving the diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the legal profession through leadership positions in several minority bar organizations. Sumaya previously served on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Association of Healthcare Attorneys from 2020-2023.



Aaron Ogunro, Polsinelli PC
Technology Transactions and Data Privacy

Aaron Ogunro is a member of Polsinelli’s Technology Transactions and Data Privacy practice group. Aaron primarily focuses on data privacy and cybersecurity matters and has vast experience working with early stage organizations and large corporations across various industries. Aaron counsels clients on domestic and international data privacy laws and advises clients through complex data and technology transactions. He also advises clients through sensitive data breaches.

ASSOCIATE BOARD



Bryant Roby, Jr., Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Litigation

Bryant Roby is a litigation associate in the Chicago office of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Bryant's practice focuses primarily on white collar, government compliance and investigations matters. He also has experience in jury trials, complex commercial litigation and bankruptcy litigation.



Miguel Suarez Medina, Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Antitrust

Miguel Suarez Medina is an antitrust and competition associate in the Chicago office of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Miguel's practice focuses on transactions before the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and Federal Trade Commission (FTC), with an emphasis on filings under the Hart-Scott-Rodino (HSR) Antitrust Improvement Act.



Brandon Villa, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
Litigation

Brandon Villa is a litigator and associate in the firm's Litigation Department. Brandon has significant experience in both federal and state courts and in all phases of complex commercial litigation, including pre-suit investigations through summary judgment and trial. He has represented clients in high-stakes matters, including contract disputes, antitrust, and ERISA litigation. Brandon also has significant experience in alternative dispute resolutions, including mediation and arbitration. Brandon maintains an active pro bono practice, which has included a range of civil matters.

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Melissa Whigham, Associate Board Secretary/Treasurer

Ice Miller LLP

Real Estate Investment Trusts

Melissa Whigham is an associate in Ice Miller’s Business Group, where she focuses her practice on real estate investment trusts, as well as private equity sponsors and their portfolio companies. She has experience structuring and negotiating domestic and cross-border finance transactions, secured and unsecured senior and mezzanine debt offerings, and first- and second-lien subordinated debt financings, and is knowledgeable in leveraged acquisitions, asset-based lending transactions, and debt restructurings.

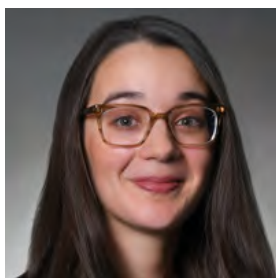


J. Sterling Williams, IV, Much Shelist, P.C.

Corporate

Sterling Williams is a corporate attorney who guides clients through both major transactions and day-to-day business matters. Private companies, family offices, private equity firms, strategic buyers, and independent sponsors rely on his smart, steady advice as they navigate complex decisions. Sterling handles lower middle-market and middle-market mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, and more. He leads due diligence review, drafts core documents, and negotiates agreements for both buy-side and sell-side deals. Sterling also acts in an outside general counsel role for some clients, serving as a trusted advisor with a pulse on the market and deep business experience. His knowledge of structuring matters, operations, corporate governance, and more positions him as a valuable resource for entrepreneurs and investors building their businesses and portfolios.

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Caroline Wong, Sidley Austin LLP
Litigation

Caroline Wong is a senior managing associate at Sidley Austin LLP. She represents companies and their directors and officers in securities and shareholder litigation, ERISA class actions, and other high-stakes litigation matters. She also maintains an active pro bono practice. She received her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School. Before joining Sidley, Caroline clerked for the Honorable Frank H. Easterbrook of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and the Honorable John Z. Lee of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

CHICAGO COMMITTEE

STAFF



Anna Lloyd
Executive Director

Anna Lloyd is the Executive Director of the Chicago Committee. She has experience in diversity and inclusion, recruiting, and career development in private and public sectors. She has spoken, presented, and organized numerous programs and presentations on inclusion and professional development for diverse attorneys and law students. Previously, Anna worked for Stinson Leonard Street LLP, the University of Missouri School of Law, and the Missouri Department of Transportation. She has also previously worked at ABS Legal Advocates, P.A. advocating for veterans' disability benefits. Anna earned her J.D. from the University of Kansas School of Law and her B.A from the University of Kansas. Anna is active in the community and as held positions on the boards of the Asian American Bar Association of Kansas City, the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association Diversity Section, the National Association of Asian American Professionals Kansas City, and the ACLU Kansas City Metro Chapter Board.



Xavier Reed
Program Coordinator

Xavier Reed is the Program Coordinator of the Chicago Committee. He has experience in event planning, human resources and fundraising throughout various internships while in college. Majoring in public policy, Xavier has organized and served various communities in both Chicago, IL and Albion, MI. Through these community service events, Xavier has demonstrated his ability to understand and connect with people of various backgrounds.

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