

# Diversity Committee

**Newsletter**

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2013

## A Word from Our Diversity Committee Chair...



**Weldon H. Latham**  
*Diversity Committee Chair*

2013 was a year of significant activity in diversity for the firm, as detailed in the reports below from our five highly active Attorney Resource Groups ("ARGs"). The firm was recognized by both *American Lawyer* and *Multicultural Law* magazines as a **"Top Law Firm for Diversity."**

Additionally, we recently received word from our client, that after reviewing our submission in response to its law firm diversity survey, they find that **Jackson Lewis demonstrates "a solid focus on diversity," and that we have "a good foundation in place."** It is always gratifying when our clients recognize our efforts and achievements, but even more important that our own lawyers understand the importance the firm places on diversity.

Finally, there have been several changes to the Diversity Committee leadership. First, **Stephanie Adler-Paindiris (ORL)** joins **Susan Corcoran (WP)**, **Samantha Hoffman (OC)**, and **Peggy Strange (HFD)** as a Co-Chair of the Women's Interest Network. Second, **Verónica Arechederra Hall (LV)** succeeds **Pedro Torres-Díaz (MIA)** as Co-Chair of the Hispanic Attorney Resource Group. We thank Pedro, who has taken on new responsibilities as Managing Shareholder of the San Juan office, for his service to the Diversity Committee, but know that Veronica will do a great job filling his shoes. Welcome to the Diversity Committee, Stephanie and Verónica!

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## A Word from Our Diversity Manager...



**Michael R. Hatcher**  
Diversity Manager

You may have seen a recent [Law360 article](#) indicating that women have occupied a shrinking portion of law firm associate ranks for the fourth straight year. While Jackson Lewis has seen a dip in the percentage of female associates over the same period, **our female associate representation (55%) remains significantly above the industry average (45%)** cited in the survey.

	% Female Associates	
	2009	2013
NALCP Survey	45.6%	44.8%
JL	58.1%	54.7%*

	% Minority Associates	
	2009	2013
NALCP Survey	19.6%	21.0%
JL	21.9%	23.0%

\* I also note that our percentage of **female shareholders (formerly partners)** has **dramatically increased from 24% to 31.5%** in this period. This may explain, in part, the dip in percentage of female associates.

Our representation of **minority associates** has progressed at a rate comparable to the legal industry and we **remain above average**, but firm management is seeking to improve in both categories and in every office. Help us recruit the best and brightest to your office!

Our diversity and inclusion efforts are clearly paying off but we need to keep up the good work in educating our lawyers as to the importance our major clients place on having a diverse group of male and female attorneys of various racial and ethnic backgrounds and experience representing *their* interests nationwide.

## Attorney Resource Groups Update

*The Attorney Resource Group Chairs provided the following updates on behalf of their members.*

### African American ARG

*Led by LeRoy Watkins (MOR) and Dave Sukhdeo (MIA)*

The fourth quarter of 2013 provided some excellent outreach and client-related activities for the members of the African American Attorney Resource Group.



As previously reported, in mid-September, Jackson Lewis lawyers **Marty Aron (MOR)**, **Frank Alvarez (WP)**, **Ariana Wright Arnold (BAL)**, **Tom Davis (BHM)**, **Peter Moskowitz (NYC)**, **Otieno Ombok (WP)**, **Michelle Phillips (WP)**, **LeRoy Watkins (MOR)**, and **Barnett Brooks (TPA)** attended the Minority Corporate Counsel Association's annual gala at Lincoln Center in New York City, at which a number of the firm's clients received diversity-related awards. Earlier that day, Marty and LeRoy represented Jackson Lewis at the MCCA's VIP luncheon at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in NYC.

On September 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, **Ariana Wright Arnold (BLT)**, **Minnie Fu (DC)**, **Monica Williams Harris (TPA)**, **Tracie Maurer (ATL)**, and **DeAndrea Washington (HOU)** attended the Corporate Counsel Women of Color's Ninth Annual Career Strategies Conference in Washington, D.C. This event proved to be an excellent venue for meeting prospective clients and business contacts. Jackson Lewis and the African American ARG have been long time supporters of the CCWOC, which will celebrate its tenth anniversary in 2014 in California.

Members of the African American ARG also continue to channel their time, efforts and resources back to minority communities through mentoring and outreach programs, which include offering career guidance to students and recent graduates at local colleges and schools.



## Asian American ARG

*Led by **Tanya Bovée (HFD)** and **Nicky Jatana (LA)***

As the year came to a close, Asian American ARG members remained active.

The firm sponsored the annual National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) convention in November. **Tanya Bovée (HFD)** and **Harry Joe (DAL)** represented the firm at the meeting, which was held in Kansas City.

Congratulations to **Misti Mukherjee (DC)**, who was appointed as Chairman of the Board of Northern Virginia Family Service, a non-profit community organization. This is yet another example of Misti's commitment to the legal profession and community. Misti has been a leader in other professional and community organizations, including the Executive Women's Roundtable, Inc., the HR Leadership Forum, and the CARE (Companies as Responsive Employers) Awards Advisory Board. She has twice served as a Judge for the HR Leaderships Awards of Greater Washington, and she is a Past President of The Madeira School Alumnae Association, a past Trustee of The Madeira School, and a current member of Marymount University's Reston Campus Advisory Board.



**Nicky Jatana (LA)** was appointed a Co-Practice Group Leader for the firm's Privacy, e-Communication and Data Security practice group.

Texas has been busy! **Sujata Ajmera (AUS)** was asked to sit on the board of the Asian American Resource Center (AARC), which is supported by and funded in part by the City of Austin. On October 9<sup>th</sup>, she presented at the University of Texas at Austin's International Student & Scholar Services' annual Employment Seminar on employment visa options for foreign national students. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, she also organized and attended the South Asian Bar Association of Austin's membership meeting, which was sponsored by Jackson Lewis. **Victor Corpuz (DAL)** and Sujata also attended the Texas Minority Counsel Program Annual Conference, which was held in Dallas. And finally, on November 15<sup>th</sup>, Sujata presented at the American Immigration Lawyers' Association Texas Chapter Fall Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on hot button visa issues.

The Asian American ARG wishes everyone all the best in 2014!

## Hispanic ARG

*Led by James Botana (CHI) and Verónica Arechederra Hall (LV)*

This coming year, the Hispanic Attorney Resource Group will continue its efforts to (1) partner with local Hispanic bar associations and similar Hispanic professional groups, and (2) expand the firm's Spanish Language Legal Services (SLLS), which provides clients with litigation-related services, training and investigations conducted in Spanish. Please look for a language survey that the group has developed which will be distributed to attorneys and paralegals in the near future to reassess the firm's expertise in Spanish. If you are fluent in Spanish and are interested in being added to the list of attorneys who can provide these services, please reach out to **James Botana (CHI)** or **Verónica Arechederra Hall (LV)**. These services help to distinguish us from our competitors and help us develop work from existing clients, and to originate new ones. If you have a client you think could benefit from these services, please reach out to James or Veronica. Likewise, if you know of any organizations that would be interested in a presentation to their members on labor and employment law topics that would be conducted in both English and Spanish, please reach out to us.





We also continue our active participation in Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) events. We are gearing up for the mid-year convention, which will take place in Orlando March 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, and will be reaching out to attorneys to help coordinate our firm's presence in the event. **Pedro Torres-Díaz (MIA)** is finishing his tenure as General Counsel for the HNBA, but will continue to be involved in the group. Verónica will step down in her role as a member of the HNBA's Latina Commission, but we are pleased to announce she was recently asked by HNBA's President, Miguel Pozo, to serve as a Deputy Regional President. Jackson Lewis has become a regular on HNBA panels throughout the years. As in the past, this mid-year convention will be another great opportunity to promote the firm's expertise in the area of labor and employment law, as well as our internal diversity.

## **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender ARG**

*Led by Michelle Phillips (WP) and Pedro Forment (MIA)*

In November, **Michelle Phillips (WP)** and **Nora Kaitfors (MIN)** conducted a CLE presentation on sexual stereotyping and gender identity in the workplace. Michelle and **Lisa DeFilippis (CLE)** conducted an update on post-Windsor/DOMA issues for members of the Association of Corporate Counsel. Jackson Lewis' "Windsor Supreme Court Ruling—DOMA" Resource Group continues to assist both JL attorneys and clients on a myriad of benefits, disability, tax and immigration issues relating to this ruling. Finally, **Ryan Nelson (LI)** and Michelle are preparing a sample Gender Transition Guide for both JL attorneys and clients.



## Women's Interest Network

*Led by Stephanie Adler Paindiris (ORL) Susan Corcoran (WP), Peggy Strange (HFD), and Samantha Hoffman (OC)*

What an incredible year 2013 was because of the efforts of so many people! It started off with **Stephanie Adler-Paindiris' (ORL)** coordination of the 2013 Master's Series focusing on client development. A number of offices had JL WIN events or supported regional women-based organizations. This fall, the West Coast put on the Women's Employment Law Conference (WELC), and we had national exposure—**Nicky Jatana (LA)** was a speaker at an in-house counsel conference in D.C. We were once again a Gold Standard award recipient based in part on the number female leaders we have at the firm and number of equity shareholders.



The Atlanta office hosted a WIN event on November 9<sup>th</sup> in support of Autism Speaks. Jackson Lewis was a corporate sponsor of the event, a "fun run and walk," and hosted a brunch for participants afterwards.

In 2013, we took "leadership" to new heights, with **Kristin Bauer (DAL)** having been appointed to the Board of the National Association of Women Lawyers.

*Leadership is practiced not so much in words as in attitude and actions. – Harold S. Green*

How do we make 2014 more fantastic than 2013? Stephanie will be rolling out the 2014 Master's Series focusing on leadership and management. More WIN events will follow, with an emphasis on collaboration among offices, sharing of ideas, and maximizing our return on investment (ROI). We want to explore other cost-effective sponsorships or opportunities to elevate the firm's profile and attract business, and want your participation.

Our goal is greater firm participation. We welcome hearing from you. Best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year!



On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Chicago Office hosted its second annual WIN event at Nordstrom Michigan Avenue. Guests sipped cocktails and enjoyed appetizers while Nordstrom presented fall fashion trends. Attendees brought gently used professional briefcases and purses that were donated to the charity Dress for Success.



## Additional Items of Interest

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The firm was honored at The American Lawyer's Diversity Awards, which took place on December 3<sup>rd</sup> in New York City. **Michelle Phillips** and **Tarek Maheeran (both WP)** represented the firm at the event and accepted the award on the firm's behalf.

**Michelle Phillips (WP)** co-authored an article, "Movements in LGBT Discrimination Laws," which appeared in the November issue of *The Suffolk Lawyer*.

**Weldon Latham (DC)** authored an article, "Major Metro Fire Departments Face Claims of Widespread Discrimination," for *American City & County*.

The firm was a sponsor of the National Action Network's Martin Luther King Day Celebration on January 20<sup>th</sup>. In Washington, D.C., PepsiCo's General Counsel was among the honorees at a breakfast. The keynote speaker was Vice President Joe Biden and the event was attended by a number of ranking federal officials, including the Secretary of Transportation, EPA Administrator, USDA Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, *et al.* **Weldon Latham (DC)**, **Mike Hatcher (DC)**, and **Alta Ray (DC)** attended on behalf of the firm. Later that day, **LeRoy Watkins (MOR)** attended a National Action Network Symposium in New York City that included newly inaugurated New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and First Lady Chirlane McCray, U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirstin Gillibrand; U.S. Congressmen Charles Rangel, Jose Serrano and Jerry Nadler; New York City Controller Scott Stringer; New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; NYS AG Eric Schneiderman; NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli; and several state senators and New York City Council members.

Firmwide, Jackson Lewis participated in Lee National Denim Day, in support of October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month. On October 4<sup>th</sup>, attorneys and staff across the firm paid \$5 in exchange for being allowed to wear jeans to work. The firm collected over \$5000 with proceeds going to the American Cancer Society, the largest voluntary health organization in the United States.





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