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July 2020

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

WELCOME

WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT



Tamara Jack

President, ACC National Capital Region, and Chief Legal Officer and Chief Financial Officer, LMI

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Association of Corporate Counsel National Capital Region (ACC NCR), it is my pleasure to introduce you to the impressive group of finalists and recipients of ACC NCR's 16th Annual Corporate Counsel Awards who are profiled in the pages that follow and to recognize a big milestone – the chapter's 40th anniversary. Of course, we wondered if we should celebrate at all. It has been a difficult year – from the unprecedented health and economic crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to the ongoing racism and inequality that have resulted

in demands for justice. After much consideration, we decided to move forward with honoring outstanding in-house leaders, who, through their dedication, leadership and talent, have had a profoundly positive impact on their departments, organizations and communities, so that they may inspire us to continue improving ourselves and our communities. In addition, we want to recognize the chapter's past presidents, board members and volunteer leaders. Enclosed is a timeline of key events that are the product of their efforts. Thank you to all those known and unknown who have made our chapter and the in-house community as successful as it is! Looking to the future, we pledge to build on your work and redouble our efforts to become a more just and truly diverse and inclusive organization.

Sincere thanks go to the Awards Co-Chairs, Charlotte Bernard and Thomas Cluderay, and all of the judges, who reviewed the accomplishments of the candidates and made thoughtful – and difficult – decisions in selecting the finalists and winners. On behalf of all of ACC NCR's members, we also want to thank our sponsors, whose support has empowered our many successful programs and initiatives over the years, including these awards. And lastly, I want to thank all members of our chapter for helping to advance the in-house bar in the National Capital Region.

WELCOME FROM THE CO-CHAIRS



Charlotte Bernard

Co-Chair of the ACC National Capital Region Global Issues Forum and Young Lawyers Initiative, Co-Chair of the Corporate Counsel Awards, and Counsel, Commercial Services, Hilton



Thomas Cluderay

Member of the Board of Directors of ACC National Capital Region, Co-Chair of the Corporate Counsel Awards, and Associate General Counsel, The Aspen Institute

We are excited to join in celebrating the excellent work done by the in-house attorneys, paralegals and legal departments selected as finalists and winners of the 16th Annual Corporate Counsel Awards. Through their talents, accomplishments and dedication, they represent the best of the in-house bar and elevate our legal community.

As Tamara noted, in-house counsel and paraprofessionals do far more than serve their employers well. They are also a force for good in their communities, including ACC NCR. We are pleased to highlight the in-house bar's commitment to pro bono by presenting Kathi Westcott of The Pew Charitable Trusts with the Outstanding In-House Pro Bono Award and Verizon Media Inc. with the Outstanding Commitment to Community Award. In addition, we are honored to present the Career Achievement Award to Leslie Thornton for her remarkable in-house career, including most recently as Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of WGL Holdings Inc. and Washington Gas, and the Chapter Service Award to the co-founders of the ACC NCR Leadership Academy, one of our chapter's most impressive programs.

Congratulations to the finalists and the winners of the 2020 Corporate Counsel Awards!

Judges Committee

Charlotte Bernard

Co-Chair of the ACC National Capital Region Global Issues Forum and Young Lawyers Initiative, Co-Chair of the Corporate Counsel Awards, and Counsel, Commercial Services, Hilton

Kevin Buck

Chief Operating Officer, Association of Corporate Counsel

Thomas Cluderay

Member of the Board of Directors of ACC National Capital Region, Co-Chair of the Corporate Counsel Awards, and Associate General Counsel, The Aspen Institute

Tamara Jack

President of the Board of Directors of ACC National Capital Region, and Chief Legal Officer and Chief Financial Officer, LMI

Mary Kennard

Past President of the Board of Directors of ACC National Capital Region, ACC NCR Career Achievement Award Recipient, and Vice President & General Counsel (retired), American University

Patrick McGlone

ACC National Capital Region Career Achievement and Community Service Awards Recipient, Former President, D.C. Bar, and Sr. V.P., General Counsel, Ullico Inc.

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PERKINS COIE is proud to support the Association of Corporate Counsel’s National Capital Region and its mission to serve the professional needs of in-house counsel in Washington, D.C., Virginia, and Maryland. Congratulations to the recipients of the 2020 Corporate Counsel Awards. We admire your outstanding work and dedication to the legal profession.

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding Chief Legal Officer

For Angela Ciccolo, chief legal officer and secretary at Special Olympics International headquartered in Washington, D.C., each day is a combination of focusing on the present and looking far ahead.

Last year, for example, she was integral to the nonprofit organization's successful execution of the 2019 World Games Abu Dhabi. During the games, Ciccolo and her legal team supported a free shoe give-away in partnership with Pierce Footwear, Olympian Bob Beamon, and Special Olympics athlete Kester Edwards. By bringing more than 7,000 athletic shoes to the event, they ensured that all Special Olympics athletes in attendance were able to participate.

At the same time, Ciccolo was playing a vital role in completing the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2023 Berlin agreement. These achievements were, of course, on top of the normal workload shouldered by Ciccolo and her legal team.

The Special Olympics International legal department comprises two attorneys, two paralegals, two part-time law clerks, a legal executive assistant and an administrative assistant. Ciccolo is responsible for a wide range of legal functions handled by the department and by outside counsel, including contracts, employment law, trademarks, entertainment law, corporate law issues, compliance with U.S. and international legal requirements, exempt organization tax



WINNER
Angela Ciccolo
Chief Legal Officer and Secretary
Special Olympics International

law, sponsorship and fundraising matters, litigation, biannual accreditation of every Special Olympics program, risk management, and registration of Special Olympics offices around the world.

On a daily basis Ciccolo and her team field numerous requests for legal review and assistance from throughout the global organization, while also handling all matters relating to and including the organization's international board of directors. Ciccolo's advice is sought throughout the organization for outstanding legal advice,

but also for business advice.

Ciccolo also chairs the nonprofit's Risk Management and Insurance Task Force and the organization's Fiduciary Retirement Committee. She sits on the boards of the Special Olympics subsidiaries in the U.S. Europe and the Middle East. Last year, she introduced innovative policies and procedures to better protect athletes. For instance, she spearheaded the development of Operation Safeguard, which is designed to protect vulnerable people with intellectual disabilities from abuse. Ciccolo's department and the Special Olympics Europe Eurasia Team worked together and raised nearly \$500,000 to fund the multi-year initiative, which will include the review and updating of policies and processes, improvement of reporting and tracking, new training for staff and volunteers and more engagement with the law enforcement community.

In July 2019, Special Olympics International and Special Olympics Illinois held the first Diversity and Inclusion Summit. Its guest speakers included athletes as well as Special Olympics staff, board members, supporters and partners. Conducted by the Special Olympics Illinois Diversity Taskforce and Ciccolo — who co-chairs the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce for Special Olympics International — the all-day event included sessions on transgender athletes, race and equity, athletes in the workplace

and outreach and inclusion.

The summit's four primary goals were to develop a diverse staff, volunteer, and athlete base that reflects the diversity of the Special Olympics community; to determine how the nonprofit can build capacity for interactions in its multicultural community; to ensure that all staff, volunteers and athletes feel welcomed and valued; and to better understand the importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity to the Special Olympics community.

Also in the past year, Ciccolo and her legal team worked diligently to ensure that more than 200 accredited programs across the globe met Special Olympics guidelines and athlete safety obligations.

Ciccolo routinely encourages law students and undergraduate students to become mentors. In 2019, she gave a presentation called "The Work of a Mission-Driven Attorney" to the Georgetown University Law Center. In addition, she joined a Harvard Law School panel about attorneys and sports, and she serves as vice chair of the Virginia Committee of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.

Prior to joining Special Olympics, Ciccolo was general counsel of NAACP. She earned a bachelor's degree in Foreign Service specializing in international economics, finance, and commerce, as well as her law degree, from Georgetown University.

Outstanding Chief Legal Officer | FINALIST

One of Caroline Davidson-Hood's greatest legal successes of 2019 took place in the area of energy regulation.

Davidson-Hood is general counsel for the nonprofit Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) in Arlington, Va., where her legal office also includes a deputy counsel and four professionals in the regulatory and research departments.

The energy efficiency of AHRI products is regulated primarily by the U.S. Department of Energy and, to a lesser extent, by the California Energy Commission. Over the years, laws and regulations have required major redesigns and production changes to many air conditioning, heating and water heating products — compliance efforts that have cost the industry more than \$1 billion.

Despite the laudable goal of energy conservation, "the law has sometimes been applied in federal rulemakings in a nontransparent, seemingly arbitrary and disjointed manner," said Charles Samuels,



Caroline Davidson-Hood
General Counsel
Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute

an antitrust and regulatory lawyer with Mintz in D.C. "Caroline combined an effort of working on individual product rulemakings and managing judicial review of final Department of Energy rules with a broader

reform effort to develop a procedural rule for the Department of Energy, which will ensure fair, open and rational conduct in decision-making and rulemakings."

Samuels is familiar with Davidson-Hood's achievements through his own work as counsel to an AHRI sister organization, the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers.

"We work together on myriad regulatory and legal issues," he explained. "I've had the pleasure of interacting with her and closely observing her work for three years."

The Energy Conservation Program for Appliance Standards Process rule, largely developed and promulgated in 2019, was finally published in the *Federal Register* in February of this year. Its development required many hundreds of hours of building consensus among AHRI member companies, creating a coalition of like-minded trade associations and successfully advocating for the Department of Energy's adoption of this approach.

AHRI's members range from large to small manufacturers, both domestic and

international. They are subject to a plethora of international, federal, state and local requirements ranging from safety rules and energy efficiency standards to environmental regulation of the refrigerants they use. Davidson-Hood is responsible for integrating the work of AHRI's government relations, regulatory, and technical standards staff to develop persuasive and effective advocacy in a number of forums.

In this and other duties, Samuels said, Davidson-Hood "has had considerable impact, both in representing a large and significant sector of American industry — heating, ventilation, and cooling products, such as residential and commercial air conditioners, commercial refrigeration equipment and water heaters — and in handling internal legal matters for a growing and important trade association."

Prior to joining AHRI, Davidson-Hood was an attorney at Caterpillar, Inc. and an associate at Patton Boggs LLP. She earned a bachelor's in history, as well as her law degree, from the University of California, Berkeley.



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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding Chief Legal Officer | FINALIST

Within an industry facing greater regulatory and legal scrutiny, Jeff Francer has proven himself to be an indispensable guide and advocate for the Association for Accessible Medicines (AAM) in Washington, D.C.

Francer is interim chief executive officer and general counsel at the association, which works to improve access to generic and biosimilar medicines. His legal department also includes Assistant General Counsel Karin Hessler.

“Jeff’s leadership, legal acumen and strategic judgment have been integral to the association’s success,” said Jonathan Janow, a shareholder in District-based Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC. “With the proliferation of proposed laws, regulations and lawsuits targeting the industry on a wide array of issues – from drug pricing and transparency, antitrust scrutiny of intellectual property settlements, and interactions with the FDA to drug purity and the impacts of opioid addiction – Jeff has engaged with a wide-



Jeff Francer
Interim CEO and
General Counsel
**Association for
Accessible Medicines**

cross-section of industry stakeholders to guide AAM’s members and advocate for them in a rapidly evolving landscape.”

In one recent example, Francer helped ensure that efforts at the state level to regulate interstate commerce, including

contracts that impact pricing, wouldn’t exceed the bounds of the U.S. Constitution’s Commerce Clause. Under Francer’s leadership, AAM overturned a Maryland drug-pricing law on constitutional grounds by securing a judgment from the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and a denial of certiorari.

AAM successfully challenged a similar New York law relating to the taxation of pharmaceutical products, and the association is currently involved in a constitutional challenge to a California law regulating pharmaceutical patent settlements that raises identical Commerce Clause issues.

Immediately prior to joining AAM, Francer served as vice president and senior counsel of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). In that role, he was the principal counsel to the association on issues related to the research, development and regulation of medicines in America and globally.

From 2003 to 2005, he was associate

chief counsel with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), for which he advised agency leaders on issues involving the regulation of drugs and biologics including clinical investigation, manufacturing, promotion, enforcement and legislative matters. After leaving the FDA, Francer was associate general counsel, U.S. compliance officer and chief privacy officer at Biogen Idec, Inc. He served as Biogen’s primary in-house counsel on FDA issues, fraud and abuse prevention and patient privacy, while also overseeing its U.S. corporate compliance program.

Francer received a bachelor’s degree in Public Policy and Economics from Brown University, a Master of Public Policy degree from Harvard University and a law degree from the University of Virginia. He currently serves on the board of the Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI). He and his wife are active in D.C. politics, advocating for the expansion of paid family leave and more effective city services for workers.





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Congratulations to this year’s ACC National Capital Region Corporate Counsel Awards honorees. We applaud all of the finalists for their outstanding accomplishments and strategic innovations.

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding In-House Counsel

Last July, Margaret Chase stepped seamlessly into a new, interim role at Fannie Mae, ensuring that a legal executive's departure would not disrupt important company initiatives.

At the time, Chase had spent seven years as vice president and deputy general counsel, Single-Family Legal, for the D.C.-based company, which is federally chartered to operate in the U.S. secondary mortgage market. With 15 legal professionals reporting to her, she was already responsible for providing and coordinating all legal services on consumer regulatory and servicing portfolio management matters, as well as the Making Home Affordable program run in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Treasury.

"Margaret has always excelled at her role, demonstrating a level-headed demeanor in the face of complex legal issues relating to servicing-related legal issues and consumer regulatory issues," said Terry Theologides, Fannie Mae's executive vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary. "Her strategic thinking, legal analysis and leadership style have supported the efficient and effective operation of the single-family business as it has implemented enhancements to its risk management capabilities."

Fannie Mae called upon those impressive traits and many others in July 2019,



WINNER
Margaret Chase
Vice President and
Deputy General
Counsel
Fannie Mae

when the senior vice president of Single-Family Legal retired. Chase was asked to serve as interim lead while the company conducted a national search for a new SVP. Chase's additional duties included overseeing another 45 legal professionals supporting and providing legal advice to the entirety of Fannie Mae's Single-Family mortgage business made up of buying new mortgages as well as managing approximately 17 million mortgages with an unpaid principal

balance of \$2,951.9 trillion.

By stepping up, Chase enabled the continuation of key initiatives, such as:

- Working with lenders, trade associations, Freddie Mac and the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) to implement the consent provisions of the Taxpayer First Act.
- Protecting Fannie Mae in connection with the sale and transfer of a large servicing platform and portfolio, which handled approximately 325,000 Fannie Mae loans with an unpaid principal balance of approximately \$50 billion.
- Managing the bankruptcy of a major mortgage servicer that handled approximately 428,000 Fannie Mae loans with an unpaid principal balance of approximately \$52 billion.
- Supporting the rollout of numerous digital innovations with market-wide impact, including speeding up and simplifying the mortgage origination and acquisition requirements and process.

"As if that weren't enough, Margaret also assumed responsibility in 2019 for work on the legal department's overall strategy in 2019, organizing and overseeing three working groups dedicated to advancing the 'pillars' of the department's strategy," Theologides explained.

The working group focused on innovation to learn more about artificial

intelligence (AI), identifying related legal issues and potential areas of growth for AI at Fannie Mae. As part of the Value Pillar, another working group homed in on ways to attract, develop and retain diverse, high-performing talent within the company's legal department.

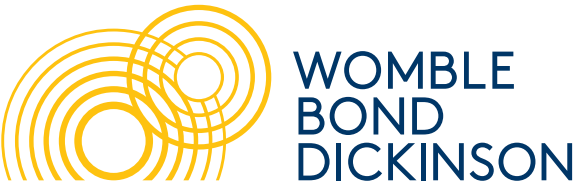
"With Margaret's encouragement," Theologides said, "the team partnered with Diversity Lab, an incubator for innovative ideas and solutions that boost diversity and inclusion in law, to host its first-ever D.C. event – a two-day client forum at Fannie Mae."

The third working group, tasked with the company's Optimize Pillar, focused on ensuring efficient, cost-effective operations within the legal department. The team reviewed existing policies and procedures and made recommendations for streamlining vendor and outside counsel management, as well as knowledge management practices.

"These accomplishments are not the sum total of Margaret's work in 2019, but they highlight the outstanding nature of her work," Theologides said. "Through it all, Margaret never ceased to model Fannie Mae's values in her behavior or to carve out time to mentor and develop other lawyers and support staff throughout the legal department. Margaret didn't just go the extra mile in 2019; she went the extra marathon."

Congratulations to the 2020 Corporate Counsel Award Winners.

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding In-House Counsel | FINALIST

Under Christa Cole's leadership, Nestlé USA Inc. in Arlington, Va. recently acquired a license to one of the world's most famous brands, Starbucks, and has begun integrating certain Starbucks consumer-packaged goods into the Nestlé portfolio.

Cole is head of brand development, enforcement and licensing at Nestlé USA. The Nestlé USA IP function is a collaborative team of eight people, including three in Arlington who are focused on trademarks; one senior IP and R&D counsel in Solon, Ohio; and four division general counsels partnering in trademark and licensing matters.

Cole's in-house team manages all trademark matters, including licensing, for the \$10 billion business. They are in charge of more than 40 brands, including such iconic, billion-dollar brands as Coffee Mate, Nescafé and Nesquik.

Cole has also been busy with innovative projects aimed at creating trademark-licensing opportunities for Nestlé's well-known brands outside of the food/



Christa Cole
Head of Brand Development, Enforcement and Licensing
Nestlé USA, Inc.

beverage space. The initiatives would expand the value and reach of Nestlé's vast trademark portfolio. As testament to Cole's business acumen, she has successfully negotiated more than 20 agreements

in the past four years with premier entertainment brands that include Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, and Frozen 2 as well as indulgent brands such as Snickers, M&M's, The Cheesecake Factory and Hostess.

In addition to building partnerships and expanding Nestlé's reach, Cole is charged with enforcing the company's trademarks.

"When it comes to robust trademark enforcement, Christa's experience is unmatched," according to Anna Naydonov and Virginia Carron, who are both partners at Finnegan, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner LLP. "Nestlé has nearly one hundred thousand trademark protections globally and has handled more than 2,700 disputes. Christa is adept at managing trademark enforcement, having launched and integrated dozens of complex enforcement strategies, including protecting the intellectual property of Nestlé's Nespresso product in the United States."

Cole's expertise extends further into audits of trademarks and taglines, which ensure consistency in trademark registra-

tions. She achieved a recent success in this realm with the Crunch brand.

"As shown by the vast number of matters she handles, Christa's work ethic is truly admirable," Naydonov and Carron said. "She combines her impressive knowledge of trademark law with a business-savvy, practical and innovative manner when managing enforcement, gray market, counterfeiting and other matters in the ever-changing landscape, including the fast-developing ecommerce marketplace. All the while, she partners well with outside counsel and develops strong relationships with her internal Nestlé clients, who greatly trust her judgment and good counsel."

She was a co-founder and co-leader of Nestlé Arlington's gender balance network in 2017-2019. As part of that effort, she organized employee engagement events and provided women with content and opportunities focused on advancing careers, including coffee chats and talks with the global general counsel and other female leaders.

Outstanding In-House Counsel | FINALIST

After joining Arlington, Va.-based Fluor Government Services in January 2019, Patrick McCarthy had a significant and measurable impact on its efficiency and success.

Fluor Government Services is a significant business unit of Fluor, one of the world's largest publicly traded engineering, procurement, construction and maintenance companies. As vice president and managing general counsel with the business unit, McCarthy's legal department consists of seven attorneys, a paralegal and an administrative assistant. In addition to the home office, McCarthy oversees four site legal departments, which comprise a total of 10 attorneys and two administrative assistants. He is also responsible for the unit's compliance and risk departments.

Soon after joining Fluor Government Services, McCarthy endeavored to improve delivery of service, enhance communication within his legal department, create new focus areas and bring his considerable experience to bear on litigation and a variety of other legal issues.

For example, he engaged his client base to determine the value provided by the legal, compliance and risk enterprises to the larger company. Upon learning that



Patrick McCarthy
Vice President Law, Managing General Counsel
Fluor Government Group

enhanced leadership and empowerment of his attorneys would improve outcomes, McCarthy instituted regular calls and meetings to foster better communication among team members. He also reorganized the legal department into two pipelines, which are aligned with Fluor Government Services' key business clients and headed by executive-level leaders. In addition, he created a dispute-focus area to coordinate dispute and pre-dispute

matters across the unit's functional and business teams.

"Ultimately, the reorganization allowed the legal department to focus on discrete phases of the business cycle, including business development, project execution and performance, project closure, and dispute-claims resolution in a much more disciplined, thoughtful manner," according to a supporting letter from Craig Margolis and Tirzah Lollar, both partners at Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP in D.C. "This sharpened focus of the legal department allowed the legal enterprise to more deliberately and successfully assist the business functions of Fluor Government Services."

Margolis and Lollar describe McCarthy as a hands-on leader who can tap into not only his legal acumen but also his 30 years of experience in the U.S. Navy. McCarthy's broad knowledge base came in handy when Fluor's former Afghanistan country manager sued Fluor and when a privilege battle ensued as a result of a disclosure made by Fluor to the U.S. Army Inspector General. At the heart of the dispute was the fact that Fluor and other federal contractors are required by law to report to the government "credible evidence" of certain types of misconduct. Moreover, a series of rulings by the

trial court last year put at risk whether a contractor may claim privilege over an investigation that leads to a disclosure.

McCarthy pursued a pre-trial appeal through a mandamus proceeding, which was resolved in Fluor's favor and which gave clarity to all government contractors about how to preserve privilege in making mandatory disclosures.

"Apart from the merits of the particular dispute, Mr. McCarthy recognized the importance of the overall issue not only to Fluor, but also to all government contractors," Margolis and Lollar explained, adding that he "gave clear, valuable guidance and was unafraid to take bold steps to vindicate our mutual client's interests."

Also in the past year, McCarthy was instrumental in settling a long-running fee dispute with a U.S. government client; resolving politically sensitive contract close-out negotiations with a close NATO ally government; and settling with the Department of Justice a potential false-claims case as a contract matter, among other significant achievements.

Based on these and other actions in the past year, it is estimated that McCarthy has added between \$50 million and \$100 million to Fluor Government Service's current and future revenue.

CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding In-House Counsel | FINALIST

As managing counsel for employment law at Nestlé USA, Inc. in Arlington, Va., Karen Vossler was instrumental in a variety of company initiatives in 2019, deploying strategic legal advice to drive business objectives and providing advocacy in employment-related disputes.

For instance, Vossler drafted important revisions to Nestlé’s Parent Support Policy to expand benefits for working parents who need to take time off to care for a newborn or newly placed adopted child. The new policy will take effect later this year. She also provided key legal support to the U.S. teams in transforming the human resources function, as part of a global company initiative.

Vossler takes an expansive view of her responsibilities as an in-house legal partner, seeing herself as a strategic accelerant to her human resources and business partners. With this vision as her guide, she continued to evolve the employment law support model at Nestlé in 2019, building a high-functioning and successful team



Karen Vossler
Managing Counsel,
Employment Law,
Nestlé USA, Inc.

recognized throughout the organization for its responsiveness, agility and collaborative, can-do style of lawyering. She oversaw the employment law team’s efforts to drive down external legal spend by bringing certain key legal services back in-house. Based on her record of helping clients make quick

and pragmatic decisions while managing risks, Vossler was chosen by the company’s executive leadership team to serve as part of a hand-picked, cross functional team dedicated to driving a “decide and go” mindset of business decision-making throughout the organization.

“As is typical for Karen, her professional advice was not the end of her contribution,” said Tyrone Thomas, member at Mintz in D.C. “Karen also is dedicated to the progression of diversity in the legal profession.”

As part of that dedication, Vossler serves as co-lead of the Nestlé Legal Department’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee. In this capacity, she helps advance D&I initiatives both internally, within the department, as well as through the company’s work with external legal partners. Vossler was a keynote panelist for Mintz’s annual minority attorney (MIATTY) retreat to provide advice on professional and business development. She also “walked the walk,” Thomas explained, in generating a new business relationship for the firm with an attorney of color.

Vossler also is a leader in the human resources and employment community in Greater Washington with respect to compliance on federal, state and local regulations. She recently led a comprehensive Continuing Legal Education (CLE) on developments in employment law for the D.C. region, which was held at the Washington Nationals Stadium. She was also the key speaker in a web-based seminar on the topic of workplace violence. In addition, Vossler has served as co-chair and board member of the Takoma Park Child Development Center.

“Karen is an outstanding lawyer who has advised Fortune 200 companies, executives and human resource leaders for over 20 years,” Thomas said. “She has been a trusted advisor to her clients while practicing with four different AmLaw 200 law firms earlier in her career and subsequently upon taking her practice in-house – servicing a variety of industries, such as electronic security products and services, commercial landscaping and the food and beverage industry. She exemplifies those attributes which bring credit to the corporate counsel bar.”

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding Paraprofessional

Last year, Chanel Bradden truly showed her superpower for juggling a wide array of responsibilities. Bradden, who has worked for Lockheed Martin Corporation in Bethesda for five years, was promoted in 2019 to the newly established non-attorney management position overseeing the company's Subsidiary Management department. While working as a team lead for the busy division, she managed to earn her bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland University College, and remained an active member of the National Capital Area Paralegal Association (NCAPA). In addition, for the past four years, Bradden has and continues to serve as the editor-in-chief of NCAPA's *Onpoint* Magazine, and co-chaired the association's mentorship committee for two years.

"Chanel is truly a super star in the paralegal profession who deserves the utmost respect and recognition," said Deirdre Davis-Washington, assistant corporate secretary for Lockheed Martin.

Bradden's department, which has a total of five employees, handles compliance and governance of domestic and international subsidiaries and affiliated legal entities. Bradden facilitates the collaboration of cross-functional teams to ensure total



WINNER
Chanel M. Bradden
 Manager, Assistant
 Corporate Secretary
 Lockheed Martin
 Corporation

compliance of the various Lockheed entities. Her duties include working with tax, treasury, accounting, and a number of other internal corporate functional groups and connecting with local outside counsel for advice. Among her recent achievements, Bradden carefully selected two people with vast experience to join Lockheed Martin's subsidiary management team and has worked diligently to onboard and train the

new employees.

"Chanel was essential in putting together the right team to tackle the complex work of one of the organization's busiest and very important divisions," Davis-Washington said. In addition to her leadership of the subsidiary management team, Bradden co-lead the committee to form a paralegal mentoring program within the legal department of Lockheed Martin. The program was created to provide paralegals and other non-attorney members of the legal department with attorney mentors to support career growth and development. She led the effort to prepare presentations to the paralegal community, introducing the program and explaining the logistics of implementation of the program and remained a primary point of contact for both mentors and mentees throughout the first cohort of the program.

The growth and progression of the paralegal profession is important to Bradden, as evidenced by her commitment to supporting NCAPA as well as the ACC NCR In-House Paralegal Institute. For several years Bradden has helped to plan the Institute and in May 2019, Bradden joined a panel of esteemed professionals discussing career planning, presenting on the importance of a five-year career plan for paralegals, and highlighting the impor-

tance of being intentional when navigating career paths while consistently improving upon marketable skills.

"Chanel is extremely knowledgeable and is faithfully committed to the growth and development of her team," Davis-Washington continues. "The international world of entity management is much more complex than the world of domestic entity management, as penalties imposed can include criminal penalties against officers and/or directors. Ensuring legal entities remain in compliance in the U.S. and internationally is another way Chanel demonstrates excellent judgment and outstanding performance. Chanel leads by example!"

Bradden joined Lockheed Martin with more than 15 years of experience in corporate governance and entity management. Bradden had already been successful as a senior paralegal at Marriott International, Inc., where she managed the company's portfolio of hundreds of legal entities and played a key role in the spin-off of Marriott's timeshare business to a new independent company through a tax-free dividend to Marriott's shareholders in 2011. She had also served as a corporate paralegal for securities and regulatory and international subsidiary management at Northrop Grumman Corporation.

Outstanding Paraprofessional | FINALISTS

At Fannie Mae in D.C., Karl Johnson and Farah Elherazy both stepped up last year to help boost civility in the workplace and prevent sexual harassment.

Johnson, a project manager, and Elherazy, a paralegal, are part of the company's Employment Law Team.

On top of their regular duties, they took significant responsibility for the coordination, promulgation and delivery of Fannie Mae's Civility Training program in 2019. The program's genesis harks back to 2016, when a task force created by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued a report asserting that traditional training methods had not proven wholly effective in eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace. The task force recommended adding training on general respect and civility in the workplace as a way to eliminate unacceptable behaviors before they rose to the level of legal harassment.

Fannie Mae took this recommendation to heart, creating a Civility Training course focused on helping employees recognize, avoid and address uncivil behavior in the workplace. Small groups of employees engaged in robust, moderated discussions and hypotheticals as part of training sessions led by an attorney with assistance from either Johnson or Elherazy.

"It quickly became clear that Johnson



Karl Johnson
 Project Manager - Employment
 Fannie Mae

and Elherazy were not only more than capable of providing the training on their own, but in fact, tended to better invoke the intended spirit of the conversations," said Terry Theologides, executive vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary for Fannie Mae. "The presence of lawyers inherently created a more formal environment, which at times seemed to limit the robust and open discussion that is encouraged. Johnson and Elherazy proved to be more relatable to our general employee population at all levels, allowing attendees to be more comfortable engaging in discussions with them about workplace behavior."

Their status with the training program was made official in 2019, when Johnson and Elherazy became the Legal Depart-



Farah Elherazy
 Paralegal II
 Fannie Mae

ment's primary resources for Civility Training, in partnership with Fannie Mae's Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI). In this capacity, Johnson and Elherazy:

- Trained members of OMWI on delivering the training materials.
- Helped coordinate and schedule sessions.
- Engaged with leaders to respond to ad-hoc requests for training and to understand any unique issues related to the makeup and/or functions of the team as a way to enhance the value of the training.
- Revised the training materials as appropriate to address those unique issues.
- Led training sessions in partnership with OMWI.

Because each session is driven by

attendee input, any number of topics or experiences can come up. So it's vital that Johnson and Elherazy use discretion and careful judgement in guiding all conversations to a positive resolution, Theologides explained.

"They have done this confidently and effectively, promoting civil behavior in the workplace," he said. "And their effectiveness has actually increased the amount of training requested."

The skills and dedication that Johnson and Elherazy displayed didn't go unnoticed. Both were invited by OMWI last year to become certified to teach a day-long course on Unconscious Bias in the Workplace.

In addition to their notable accomplishments at work, Johnson and Elherazy are both active in Fannie Mae's community service endeavors, including participating in its Disaster Relief and Recovery Program in 2019. The program enables employees to help rebuild areas affected by hurricanes, wildfires and other disasters. For instance, Elherazy spent four days in Houston, Texas, working with other Fannie Mae employees to clean up after Hurricane Harvey. Johnson spent four days in San Juan, Puerto Rico, joining the clean-up efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. He also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity in D.C. in 2019.



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A large, curved architectural detail, likely the interior of a dome, featuring a grid of square panels with recessed centers, creating a sense of depth and perspective.

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding Law Department

Among its many achievements in the past year, the Office of General Counsel (OGC) at Fairfax-based ICF continued a major, multiyear legal entity rationalization effort. Through the initiative, begun in 2014, the OGC was able to eliminate, or rationalize, 34 legal entities, branch registrations and joint ventures. Those included eight U.S. and other international entities, branches and joint ventures in 2019 alone, with another three pending final approval.

ICF is a consulting and technology services company with U.S. and international public sector and commercial clients. Founded in 1969 to support investment in minority-owned businesses in the nation's capital, the organization now has more than 7,000 full- and part-time employees.

The OGC is headed by James E. Daniel, executive vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary. His office includes both the Legal and Internal Audit departments. The former comprises 13 staff members, including six attorneys, including Luciana Cetateanu, Laura Hang, Roda Hassan, Crystal Jones, Rose Jones, Theresa Livan, Adah Moulton, Ena Murphy, Tara Oladimeji, Matt Selander,



WINNER

Marzia Spanta, and Judy Watters.

As part of the legal entity rationalization effort, the OGC's efforts enabled ICF to cut hundreds of thousands of dollars in expenses each year. The initiative is managed by Rose Jones, director of legal affairs, and completed with the assistance of attorneys and paralegals in the ICF OGC, including senior paralegals Adah Moulton, Ena Murphy and Judy Watters.

Also in 2019, the OGC participated in vetting and due diligence on about 10 projects and worked for months on the \$225 million acquisition of ITG. The purchase, finalized in January 2020, marked ICF's eighth acquisition in the past five years.

On top of assisting with legal entity rationalization and the ITG acquisition, the ICF OGC managed more than 300 discrete legal matters last year, including litigation, potential or threatened claims, employment and other business issues, as well as third-party discovery, production and related requests. With the company managing lawsuits and claims seeking more than \$200 million – not uncommon for a firm of ICF's size – the office helped the company prevail in four lawsuits and obtain dismissal or favorable resolution in 16 administrative proceedings. In the end, there were no material, and very limited monetary, impacts to ICF in 2019.

Yet another example of exemplary work in 2019 is the OGC's efforts over many months to finalize an amendment to ICF's credit facility. This resulted in an additional \$300 million of available credit capacity and improved financial covenants.

Last year also saw the continuation of an ICF site-visit program, managed by the OGC as part of the company's initiatives dedicated to enterprise risk management and compliance and ethics. The program is co-led by Tia Augustin (head of Internal Audit) and Matt Selander, and involves visiting ICF operations and locations in 12 countries on five continents to

assess the overall health of the business, complete audit-and compliance-related reviews and identify efficiencies.

"This is a critical program that enables the ICF OGC to gain an in-depth understanding of all major operations of the company and to gain an appreciation for the challenges of program operations away from the corporate center," Daniel explained. "In short, this program demonstrates how the OGC is helping ICF manage risk across the enterprise and how, in doing so, the OGC has become a stronger partner in the company's growth."

Also last year, the OGC reiterated its commitment to diversity and inclusion. The office hired Tara Oladimeji, who had interned as an ICF law clerk in the summer of 2017 through the ACC NCR Corporate Scholars Program, which seeks to increase diversity in the legal profession by placing law students in internships at legal departments. She "did such an outstanding job," Daniels said, that ICF hired her back as a law clerk in subsequent years as Oladimeji completed her law degree. "She is now an important member of our team, and the experience she gained — and ICF gained from her work as a law clerk — encouraged us to create a new position to recruit and hire Tara," Daniels said.

Outstanding Law Department | FINALIST

The past year has been both busy and successful for the legal department at Special Olympics International in Washington, D.C.

In addition to completing the Special Olympics World Games 2023 agreement, the department created Operation Safe-guard to protect athletes with intellectual disabilities from predatory sexual abuse and bullying. To fund the project, the legal team also raised almost \$500,000.

The legal department is overseen by Angela Ciccolo, the nonprofit organization's chief legal officer and secretary. The department comprises two attorneys, two paralegals, two part-time law clerks, a legal executive assistant and an administrative assistant. The legal team fields a high volume of daily requests for legal review and assistance from throughout the global organization, while also handling all matters relating to and including the organization's international board of directors.

Special Olympics



Ciccolo's department had several notable accomplishments last year in terms of advocacy, diversity and inclusion. For one, her team launched bold initiatives across Special Olympics programs around the world in support of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force.

The legal department also worked diligently to ensure that more than 200 accredited programs across the globe meet Special Olympics guidelines and athlete safety obligations, which ensuring that they're compliant with their local jurisdictions. In addition, the team joined Hill Day 2019, during which participants in the nonprofit's programs visit Capitol Hill, taking notes and pictures while meeting with their states' legislative

representatives.

In addition, Ciccolo's department was integral to the nonprofit organization's successful execution of the 2019 World Games Abu Dhabi. During the games, the legal team supported a free shoe give away in partnership with Pierce Footwear, Olympian Bob Beamon, and Special Olympics athlete Kester Edwards. By bringing more than 7,000 athletic shoes to the event, they ensured that all Special Olympics athletes in attendance were able to participate.

In July 2019, Special Olympics International and Special Olympics Illinois held the first Diversity and Inclusion Summit. Its guest speakers included athletes as well as Special Olympics staff, board

members, supporters and partners. Conducted by the Special Olympics Illinois Diversity Taskforce and Ciccolo — who co-chairs along with William Alford, chair of the Harvard Law School Project on Disability, the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce (DIT) for Special Olympics International — the all-day event included sessions on transgender athletes, race and equity, athletes in the workplace and outreach and inclusion. The summit's four primary goals were to develop a diverse staff, volunteer, and athlete base that reflects the diversity of the Special Olympics community; to determine how the nonprofit can build capacity for interactions in its multicultural community; to ensure that all staff, volunteers and athletes feel welcomed and valued; and to better understand the importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity to the Special Olympics community.

In addition, the department hosted an ACC NCR Corporate Scholar during the summer of 2019, as it has for many years.

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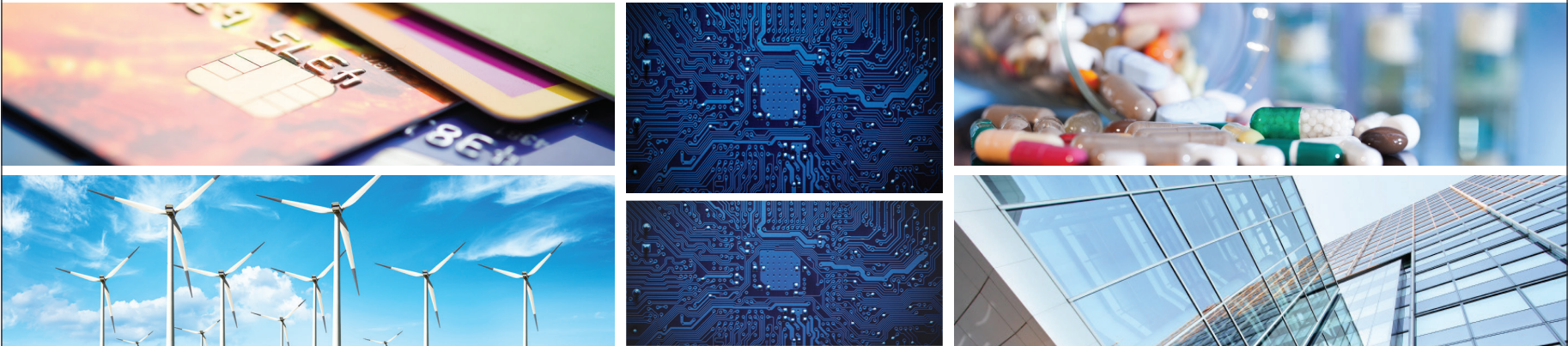
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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding Pro Bono Service

Kathi Westcott has been a pro bono volunteer for many years and her passion and personal commitment to pro bono has extended far beyond her direct services to include organizing clinics for ACC NCR and co-leading the chapter's Pro Bono Forum.

Westcott, who is now senior director for legal affairs and deputy general counsel at The Pew Charitable Trusts, also has dedicated her time and talents in a pro bono capacity to Whitman-Walker Health (WWH) in the District since 2012.

WWH is a community-based, non-profit healthcare center serving lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members of the community and all Washington-area residents living with HIV. WWH's Legal Services Program is the oldest medical-legal partnership, dating back to 1986. Today it offers legal representation to LGBT individuals and families and to healthcare patients at WWH regardless of HIV status, sexual orientation and gender identity on a wide range of issues intended to connect low and no-income persons to healthcare and improved health outcomes. The work includes federal, state and local public benefits programs; discrimination in employment and health care; disability insurance claims and appeals; immigration



Kathi Westcott
Senior Director for Legal Affairs
and Deputy General Counsel
The Pew Charitable Trusts

relief; medical confidentiality; and name and gender marker changes in legal records for transgender individuals.

"Kathi is the ideal candidate for ACC NCR's pro bono award because of her ongoing commitment to the protection and promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights for families and individuals across the Washington area," explained Amy Nelson, director of Legal Services at WWH. "Her contributions to the law have improved the lives of residents and com-

munities facing significant barriers."

Westcott's pro bono work with the WWH Legal Services Program began with the nonprofit's monthly Name and Gender Change Clinic in D.C. Due to her efforts, WWH and ACC NCR have co-hosted five Name and Gender Change clinics in Virginia and Maryland serving clients located outside D.C. and expanding the reach of WWH Legal Services Program's pro bono efforts. Over the years, these clinics have enabled more than 50 volunteers to assist 34 clients.

Most recently in June 2019, the organizations co-hosted a half-day pro bono Name and Gender Change clinic at Davis Construction in Rockville, Maryland. There, they trained 20 volunteers and served 12 clients. For some volunteers, it was their first time providing pro bono legal services. For clients who cannot afford to pay for critical legal services, having an attorney listen to their story and provide them the guidance they need is life changing.

Westcott also volunteers each winter with WWH's Medicare Part D clinics, where pro bono volunteers evaluate the specialized drug needs and public benefits enrollment status of nearly 400 clients. In addition to her work at WWH, Westcott is the co-lead

of the ACC NCR Pro Bono Forum and a co-chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Forum, which has hosted a variety of meaningful programs in the past few years.

Westcott brings to her pro bono work a wealth of knowledge and experience. Her expertise includes legal representation, policy analysis, compliance, management, training and public speaking. Prior to joining The Pew Charitable Trusts eight years ago, Westcott served as senior counsel at the American Association of University Professors. Before that, during the nine years she worked on behalf of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network in D.C., she provided direct support to U.S. service members facing mistreatment and discrimination due to their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

"Kathi's enthusiastic support and personal participation in pro bono efforts in the Washington area continue to expand the reach of ACC NCR's membership and to benefit our most marginalized neighbors," Nelson said.

Westcott earned her law degree from the University of Buffalo School of Law and holds both a master of arts in liberal studies (MALS) from Georgetown University and a bachelor's in criminal justice from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Outstanding Commitment to the Community

The legal team at Verizon Media along with members of Verizon’s Pro Bono Team from D.C., Virginia and Maryland – spent more than 1,640 hours in 2019 on pro bono and community service activities. Verizon Media is a digital media and technology company offering its nearly 900 million users access to a trusted ecosystem with premium brands including Yahoo, HuffPost and TechCrunch, as well as mail and search applications, while also providing digital advertising and video streaming platforms for partners.

One of Verizon Media’s pro bono efforts, a monthly advice clinic hosted in partnership with Cornerstones Inc. at the South Lakes Community Center in Reston, VA, is a mainstay. Cornerstones is a human services provider and advocate for those experiencing homelessness, poverty and inequity in Northern Virginia. Verizon Media (then AOL) launched its Pro Bono Program in 2008 with that signature project, a standout in the in-house pro bono community for bringing legal services to a community services organization. Through the clinics, volunteer attorneys provide pro bono representation on critical matters, such as public benefits,



immigration, consumer debt and family law. Twelve years later, dozens of Verizon Media volunteers have assisted over four thousand clients and the clinic is still going strong. In April 2020 the clinic went virtual in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Verizon Media Legal, led by General Counsel Julie Jacobs, consists of close to 200 employees, half of which are practicing attorneys and the other half paraprofessionals, legal operations professionals and other non-attorney professionals. About 25 percent of the department’s employees are based in the D.C. area. The department, which is divided into 12 substantive areas, oversees all the domestic and international legal issues associated with the premium digital brands and products that comprise Yahoo, AOL, HuffPost, TechCrunch, Engadget, MAK-

ERS, and many others. “I’ve been with the company for almost 20 years and one area our team has always prioritized is helping others. Our commitment to pro bono work, which is especially critical in this moment, reflects the culture and mindset of our team. Nothing could make me prouder,” says Verizon Media’s General Counsel Julie Jacobs.

In addition to the monthly clinic and serving their client’s needs, significant pro bono projects undertaken in 2019 by Verizon Media Legal staffers and the Pro Bono Team included:

- Hosting advice and referral Consumer Law clinics in partnership with Legal Services of Northern Virginia (LSNV).
- Partnering on pro bono work with volunteers from the in-house legal departments of Hewlett Packard Enterprises, Freddie Mac, Salesforce and VMware, as well as from the law firms of McGuire Woods and Venable.
- Partnering with the Pro Bono Institute and DLA Piper to host a clinic providing social media policies and advice to 10 local nonprofits in Greater Washington.
- Representing victims of domestic violence in protective order hearings through LSNV’s Attorney of the Day program.

Other pro bono projects recently taken on by Verizon Media Legal and the local Verizon Pro Bono Team include holding an Immigration Consultation Clinic for D.C.-based Ayuda and helping individuals obtain T Visas and U Visas. In addition, attorneys provided Guardian Ad Litem training through the Volunteer Lawyers Project and helped the National Veterans Legal Service Program, both by representing veterans with discharge upgrade and medical retirement intakes and conducting a Know Your Rights Information Session and Discharge Upgrade Clinic. Attorneys at Verizon also provided pro bono Veterans Consortium training and assisted children with asylum proceedings through Kids in Need of Defense (KIND).

In addition to pro bono work, employees of Verizon Media Legal have volunteered with the Capital Food Bank, Lawyers Have Heart, Miriam’s Kitchen, Becky’s Fund, Wreaths Across America, the Manna Food Distribution Center and the Food & Friends meal delivery program. They also have pitched in with a Toys for Tots drive, helped impoverished adults search for jobs through A Wider Circle, and served as reading partners to children.



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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Chapter Service Award



Constantine Athanas
Co-Chair

Mona Mahoney
Co-Chair

ACC NCR Leadership Academy Co-Founders



Cynthia Boyle

Margaret Hackbarth

Kenneth Pollack

Zachary Stewart

Maria Votsch

Luise Welby

Nichole Williams-Miller

The ACC National Capital Region Leadership Academy is a one-of-a-kind leadership training program that provides the tools and skills in-house counsel need to optimize their leadership potential and succeed at the highest levels of their organizations. To build, launch and manage such an impressive program takes tremendous teamwork and a significant investment of time and energy.

In fact, it took two-and-a-half years to develop the Academy curriculum, hire faculty and recruit top local general counsel to serve on the Board of Advisors that provides guidance to tailor the program to in-house counsel. The Academy launched in 2017 with great success, but the work continues as its third class of 30 Fellows is about to graduate and an incoming Class of 2021 (33 strong) is gearing up for the start of its journey in January 2021.

ACC NCR is grateful to everyone who has contributed to the creation of the Academy and is excited to honor the following volunteers whose sustained service has enabled the Academy to thrive: Academy Steering Committee

Co-Chairs Constantine Athanas and Mona Mahoney, who led the effort from summer 2016 through June 2020; and Cynthia Boyle, Margaret Hackbarth, Ken Pollack, Zack Stewart, Maria Votsch, Luise Welby and Nichole Williams-Miller, who served on the Academy Steering Committee from the start to the present.

The spark for the Academy came from members’ interest in forming a group aimed at mid-level or managing attorneys. Many offered suggestions that the chapter provide some kind of programming or services that would help mid-level attorneys who wanted to be leaders, and the chapter board began to brainstorm. Knowing that there are limited opportunities to become a general counsel, then president Rob Falk asked an effort to equip members to develop their leadership potential, apply those skills to their roles in their departments and bring depth to their organizations’ leadership bench.

The task force that convened included many members who had been through leadership training programs and felt they got the most value from those that

took place over a span of months and that promoted their development of relationships with others in the program as well as with a smaller cohort group they met with between sessions. Over the following six months, the task force surveyed and held focus-group sessions with GC members and the general membership for their feedback on all these issues. It was a full-time effort, guided by an experienced leadership development consultant.

In the summer of 2016, Athanas and Mahoney assumed the leadership of the effort. Task force members turned to recruiting faculty and members of the Board of Advisors, developing the application and selection process, creating a website, recruiting candidates for the first class and so much more. It was a labor of love that allowed ACC NCR, in September 2017, to welcome the inaugural Class of Leadership Academy Fellows.

With the launch, the task force became the program’s Steering Committee, responsible for its ongoing operations. As each class has moved through the Academy, the Committee has continued to play this important role in the evolu-

tion of the program. Committee members attend modules, conduct outreach to raise awareness about the Academy and review feedback provided by the Fellows after each module, which has led to some adjustments to the curriculum. Committee members also handle the application and selection process for the incoming Class of Fellows, make decisions on recruiting and retaining faculty, and fill openings in the Board of Advisors.

The Academy has built a strong reputation in our ACC NCR community for its success in developing leaders “who can lead from any seat” and has had a significant impact on the Fellows. In the words of Andy Wright, a member of the inaugural class and vice president, senior counsel and corporate secretary, at Marriott International: “The Leadership Academy not only taught me valuable skills that I now use in my personal and professional life every day, it fundamentally changed how I approach my job and gave me the confidence to unleash my leadership potential. ... Before the Academy I wanted to be a leader; because of the Academy, I am one.”

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CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS 2020

Career Achievement Award

You can learn a lot from the way people say hello and goodbye to someone. When Leslie Thornton joined WGL Holdings in 2011, she received this welcome from Terry McCallister, the company’s chairman and CEO at the time: “Leslie is highly regarded in the legal community for her sound judgement, strategic thinking, leadership capability and collaborative style.”

Seven years later, upon her retirement from WGL, the company’s then president and CEO, Adrian Chapman, was no less glowing in his bittersweet send-off: “Leslie Thornton has done a tremendous job leading our legal strategy and building our legal team into one of the best in-house teams in the country. She also was instrumental in guiding WGL through the rigorous regulatory process surrounding our recent merger with AltaGas. We are grateful for Leslie’s many contributions to WGL, her profession and the broader community.”

Indeed, Thornton’s career has been a heady mix of leadership roles, public service, business savvy, legal acumen and community outreach. She is an experienced public-company director who currently serves on the boards of directors for the Perdoceo Education Corporation and Southwest Gas Holdings, as well as



Leslie T. Thornton
Former Senior Vice President,
General Counsel & Secretary
**WGL Holdings Inc. and
Washington Gas**

the board of trustees for the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. At WGL, in addition to leading the company through a \$6.4 billion merger with an international energy infrastructure company in 2018, Thornton provided advice and counsel on all legal matters, including litigation, data privacy and cyber-security, state and federal regulatory issues, employment and labor law, compliance, mergers and acquisitions, and board support. She also served on the

CEO’s Strategy Council and Risk Management Committee, among others.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania and Georgetown Law, Thornton ultimately returned to Georgetown Law to obtain her L.L.M. in National Security Law. She began her legal career with the D.C. Public Defender Service before holding partnerships in two Washington, D.C., law firms.

Thornton served eight years in the Clinton Administration, both as a White House advisor and chief of staff to the secretary of education. During the 1992 presidential transition, she co-chaired the DOJ appointments search, and she was part of the 1996 Presidential Debate Team. Holding a top-secret clearance, Thornton was also her agency’s representative for the Continuity of Operations of Government program.

A 2017 Burton Legend in Law recipient, Thornton has received numerous other recognitions, such as the 2016 MCCA’s Innovator Award, Savoy magazine’s top 300 Directors recognition, and InsideCounsel’s Transformative Leadership “Catalyst for Change Award”. Under her leadership, WGL Holdings and Washington Gas received the ACC NCR Community Service Award in 2016. In late 2017, Thornton was named one of the 300 Most Influential African Americans in Corporate America

by BLACK ENTERPRISE. Thornton is a prominent member of the Washington community. She serves on the board of a number of nonprofit organizations, including the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington. She has founded two organizations in support of the education of disadvantaged youth in the D.C. area. Thornton has authored numerous articles and is a frequent panelist on a variety of issues, including compliance and diversity. Since 2005, she has also served on the board of the Perdoceo Education Corporation as chair of the Compliance Committee and recently was elected Lead Independent Director by her board colleagues.

In 2018, Thornton joined the ACC NCR Leadership Academy Board of Advisors. With regard to Thornton and her ongoing service to ACC NCR, past-president Jim Villa remarked: “Not only is Leslie incredibly talented, smart, and professional, she is one of the warmest people I know. With all of her accomplishments, we’re so very lucky that she has given her time and talent to the ACC NCR Leadership Academy; I know that our fellows are better for her work with the program. This recognition is well-deserved and I’m so grateful that we’re able to honor such a superb person.”

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We congratulate all of the 2020 ACC NCR Corporate Counsel Awards Finalists and applaud their outstanding achievements.

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A Message from ACC NCR President Tamara Jack

ACC National Capital Region (ACC NCR) stands with many others in the legal community in unequivocally stating that Black Lives Matter and our continued anger over the killing, harming and silencing of African-American men and women, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and way too many others.

Of course, our words and feelings mean little without deliberate, consistent, and persistent action to (i) fight explicit racism; (ii) unlearn the habits and dismantle the structures that support and perpetuate systemic racism and all forms of discrimination, including that based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, immigration status and disability within our chapter, the organizations where we work, and in our community; and (iii) build a culture of equity and inclusion. We have not done enough, and we pledge to do more. To be most effective, we think it is important to take stock of what we are currently doing and explicitly state what we plan to do.



HISTORY OF ACTION IN THE LEGAL COMMUNITY AND WITHIN THE CHAPTER

In 2002, ACC NCR volunteer leaders began working very intentionally to create a more diverse profession. Due to the great work of those volunteer leaders and many members:

- In 2003, the chapter launched the ACC NCR Corporate Scholars program to increase diversity in the legal profession by placing law students at paid internships at local legal departments. Over 17 years, we have recruited, interviewed and placed 179 Scholars and contributed more than \$1.85 million to the program. This year, we expanded the program to include educational and networking programs.
- Since 2002, the chapter has hosted a number of programs for members and sponsors. Most recently, our Diversity & Inclusion Forum has hosted four programs in each of 2018 and 2019.
- In 2017, we launched the Leadership Academy with the mandate that faculty and fellows represent the diverse communities where we live and work.
- In 2018, we started tracking the diversity of our speakers and our leadership. Based on what we found, we have implemented requirements for diverse voices to be

represented on all panels. We also started the process of making our recruitment and promotion of volunteers more transparent and intentional and less dependent on personal connections.

- In 2019, we added taking actions in support of diversity and inclusion to the criteria for all Corporate Counsel Awards, both individuals and departments.

2020 AND GOING FORWARD

As announced in January, improving diversity and inclusion has been among our top three priorities for 2020, particularly within the chapter. We have taken a number of actions and have more planned:

1. **Advocate and Convener** – ACC NCR sits at the intersection of law, business, policy and community. Our members and sponsors include fierce advocates for diversity and inclusion, and we will bring those voices together for shared learning and action.
2. **Board Level** – We now have a board member dedicated to diversity and inclusion, who not only is tasked with reporting out on our progress at each board meeting but developing more robust measurements and metrics for evaluating that progress.

3. **Training for Leaders & Staff** – While we will continue to host programs for our members and leverage our position to advocate for broader change, we believe it is critical for the chapter as an organization to examine the ways in which we perpetuate systemic racism. Earlier this month, we hosted implicit bias training for our board, staff and select leaders - the first of what we plan to be an ongoing series of trainings for those who lead our organization.

4. **Diversity & Inclusion Forum** – We are expanding our forum to include a broader range of voices and to expand on our previous commitment to host four programs a year.

5. **Community** – We aim to collaborate more with and amplify the work of the many affinity bars and to host programs to inform and empower our members to effect policy change.

These steps are a start, but we know they are not enough as racism is deeply embedded in our history and the ways in which we operate. We look forward to working together to truly end racism and social injustice and achieve not only freedom from fear and exclusion, but to bring about true inclusion.

ACC National Capital Region: 2020 Leadership

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CELEBRATI



800
ORGANIZATIONS

2,500
MEMBERS

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SUBURBAN

17
YEARS OF
CORPORATE SCHOLARS

179
SCHOLARS

3
YEARS OF
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

90
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
ALUMNI FELLOWS

3
U.S. SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE SPEAKERS:
Scalia, Ginsburg, Alito

100+
EVENTS A YEAR

10
CLE
FORUMS

- Corporate Law
- Employment & Labor
- Ethics & Compliance
- Global Issues
- Government Contractors
- Litigation
- Nonprofits & Associations
- Privacy & Data Security
- Small Law / Generalist
- Tech & IP

9
ENGAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP,
AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Career Development Forum
- CLO Club
- Community Service Forum
- Corporate Scholars Program
- Diversity and Inclusion Forum
- Greater Virginia Forum
- Leadership Academy
- Pro Bono Forum
- Young Lawyers Initiative

NG 40 YEARS!

THE HISTORY

October 1980

39 lawyers from 29 corporations responded to a suggestion from Robert E. ("Robin") Freer Jr., then staff vice president and Washington counsel for Kimberly-Clark Corporation, and formed the Washington Metropolitan Corporate Counsel Association ("WMACCA").

November 1986

WMACCA, with **539 members**, is the second largest chapter in ACCA, constituting about 10 percent of its membership.

April 1998

Ilene G. Reid becomes the first Executive Director.

October 2000

WMACCA wins its first (of four!) **Large Chapter of the Year Awards** from ACC.

December 2003

WMACCA membership exceeds **1,000**.

November 2005

WMACCA celebrates its **25th anniversary** and presents the first **Corporate Counsel Awards**.

January 2012

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia delivers keynote address at Annual Meeting Luncheon.

September 2016

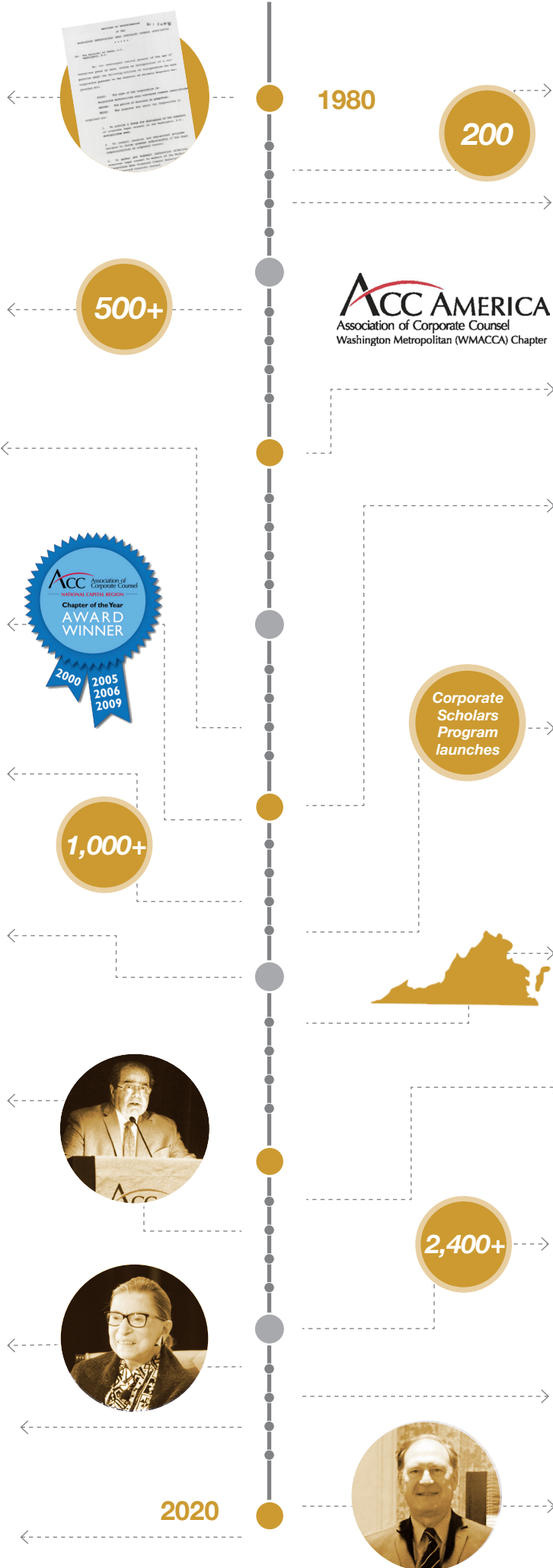
ACC NCR hosts a fireside chat with **U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg** and Former Solicitor General Theodore B. Olson. Video from this important event was used in the Oscar-nominated documentary "RBG".

April 2018

Shannon Graving starts as ACC NCR's second Executive Director.

March 2020

Global **COVID-19** pandemic forces events to move online for safety.



January 1982

WMACCA holds its first annual meeting, with guest speaker Edwin Meese III, then Counselor to President Reagan. Membership had grown to nearly **200 members representing about 78 corporations**.

December 1983

WMACCA membership agrees to affiliate with the **American Corporate Counsel Association (now ACC)** as the Washington metropolitan area chapter.

January 1990

The chapter elects its **first female president—Kathleen O. Argiropoulos**.

January 2000

WMACCA launches its first practice-area committees - **Employment and Labor** and **IT/IP**.

May 2004

Corporate Scholars Program begins with a class of 7 Scholars. Over the years, a total of 179 law students intern in local legal departments over the summer.

June 2006

WMACCA increases its service area to include **all of the Commonwealth of Virginia**. Previously, there was no ACC chapter for Virginia members who were outside the Northern Virginia suburbs.

May 2011

The **In-House Paralegal Institute** begins.

July 2015

WMACCA changes its name to **ACC National Capital Region** to better reflect the geographical footprint of the chapter. There are **2,400** members.

September 2017

Inaugural class of the **ACC NCR Leadership Academy** begins.

January 2020

ACC NCR 2020 Annual Meeting and Signature Lunch Featuring a Conversation with **U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel Anthony Alito**.

July 2020

ACC NCR Celebrates its 40th Anniversary at the first **Online Corporate Counsel Awards Reception**.



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