

Resource Document

ACC Chicago

Staying the Course: How Companies Can Remain Committed to DEI Efforts in the Wake of the June 2023 Supreme Court Decision

February 29, 2024

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[ACC's General Counsel Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Survey, 2023](#)

[2023 Report on Diversity in U.S. Law Firms](#)

National Association for Law Placement, Inc. (NALP), January 2024

[Some Gaps Narrow, But Disparities in Employment Outcomes Persist for the Class of 2022](#)

NALP Bulletin+, January 2024

[NALP Press Release: Despite a Record Job Market for Class of 2022 Law Graduates, Outcomes Remain Unequal for Graduates of Color, First-Gen College Students](#)

National Association for Law Placement, Inc. (NALP) October 2024

[DEI's 'Rooney Rule' placed under legal microscope, on and off the field - Stephen Miller's America First Legal files an EEOC complaint against the NFL, adding to the wave of challenges against a hiring practice widely used in corporate America.](#)

The Washington Post, February 6, 2024

[EEOC's Lucas Calls Mark Cuban 'Dead Wrong' in DEI Push](#)

Law360

January 29, 2024

[DEI is Under Attack. Here's How Companies Can Mitigate the Legal Risks](#)

Harvard Business Review, January 5, 2024

[U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2023 - 2026](#)

[U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Minority and Women Inclusion – 2020 Diversity Assessment Report](#)

[Nasdaq, SEC Knock Bids to Review Court's Board Diversity Support](#)

Bloomberg Law

December 19, 2023

[Conservative Group Sues Wisconsin Bar to Block Diversity Clerkship Program](#)

Reuters

December 20, 2023

[US Court Upholds Nasdaq Board Diversity Rule](#)

Reuters

October 18, 2023

[Blum-Led Group Drops Lawsuit Against MoFo After Firm Opened Diversity Fellowship to All Applicants](#)

The American Lawyer

October 6, 2023

[Mirroring MoFo, Perkins Coie Opens Diversity Fellowship to All Applicants](#)

The American Lawyer

October 6, 2023

[The Supreme Court Further Restricts the Use of Race in College Admissions; Its Decision May Also Impact Employers and Government Contractors](#)

Quarles & Brady

June 29, 2023

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Checklist for In-House Leaders

Prepared By: **N. Cornell Boggs, III**
Of Counsel / Senior Strategic Advisor

Former ACC St. Louis Chapter President
Former Chair, ACC Law Department Management Committee
Former ACC Board Member

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is a topic of great relevance in our world, our nation, our profession and within our respective companies. The checklist items below are merely designed to be **thought starters** for your corporate legal department as you engage in conversations that are aimed at making improvements both internally in your companies, and externally with the service providers who support your company.

Internal

- ✓ What are the characteristics of an ideal leader in your company? Do those characteristics favor or disfavor individuals of different gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ What are the characteristics of the ideal worker in your company? Do those characteristics favor or disfavor individuals of certain gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ Does your company culture focus on teaching diverse individuals to "lean in" and adapt, or does it focus on teaching inclusive behaviors for everyone in the workplace?
- ✓ What steps have been taken to recruit underrepresented attorneys and staff into the company, and has someone been given this assignment with a focused set of accountabilities and a corresponding recruitment budget?
- ✓ Is someone assigned to support the onboarding and integration of new hires?
- ✓ Do all attorneys and legal staff, including those from underrepresented groups, have annual goals and a corresponding development plan?
- ✓ Do all attorneys and legal staff have an opportunity to have regular 1:1 meetings with their manager so that there are opportunities to share feedback on a regular basis?
- ✓ Do individual managers spend an equal amount of time with all employees who report to them or do some employees receive more attention to the exclusion of others? How is this monitored?
- ✓ Is there a process in the company, or in your department, for a focused discussion on "potential" and opportunities for development and growth? Does this discussion occur at a different time than when annual results are discussed?
- ✓ Are attorneys and staff from underrepresented groups able to see stories of promotion and success in others from their group? If not, why?
- ✓ Do you have a process for periodically capturing 360-degree feedback?
- ✓ Does the legal department participate in employee engagement survey processes, or other processes to check on whether company policies might negatively impact diverse or underrepresented groups?
- ✓ Do underrepresented attorneys have opportunities for exposure to business clients, senior management or even committees of your board of directors? Do those methods favor or disfavor individuals of different gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ Do you take time to celebrate "inclusion" in your department, by showcasing different cultures, different geographies and different histories that might be represented in your department?

- ✓ If you lead a global legal organization, do you adjust/accommodate those in other geographies so that some of your meetings take place at times convenient to those in other parts of the world?

External

- ✓ Does your company offer opportunities to have conversations on the topic of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion broadly?
- ✓ Have you had a discussion in your company on the topic of DEI as it relates to your outside service providers, particularly the law firms that you retain for work?
- ✓ Have you had any conversations regarding DEI as it pertains to your actual law firms, and whether you can play a role in impacting meaningful change as attorneys are assigned projects?
- ✓ Have you sought to meet diverse attorneys through professional association activities?
- ✓ Do you understand the law firm revenue model(s) that are applicable to your outside counsel firms?
- ✓ Do you understand how the law firms you work with treat "origination credit?" In many law firms, the attorney who is the "originator" of work from your company can receive valuable credit internally at their firm, even when other attorneys actually do the assigned projects.
- ✓ Do you understand what criteria attorneys at the law firms you use are evaluated on? In many law firms, in order for an attorney to be successful, that attorney must generate sustainable work for both herself/himself and others.
- ✓ Who is doing the "strategic" legal work for your company—work that you view as critically important to your own company's success? Are these attorneys from similar backgrounds or varied backgrounds? How did those attorneys gain your trust in order to do such strategic work, and do those processes favor or disfavor individuals of differing gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ Are you having conversations with the law firms you work with on how more inclusive teams of lawyers can do work for your company, both now and in the future? What is the follow up from those discussions both from the law firm and from your company?
- ✓ Have you ever invited a diverse attorney to your company for a visit, simply to learn more about it "on-site," and to also introduce the attorney to a broader community of your department and company members?
- ✓ Have you considered inviting a diverse attorney to present a CLE program to the attorneys in your company, on a topic that is important for your company? Are there other opportunities you can give a diverse attorney to gain exposure to individuals at your company?

We are hopeful that these thought starters can be of assistance to you and your legal department as you address the important topic of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We at Quarles are available to assist you as you engage in these conversations—and we can point you in the right direction to other resources that might be helpful as well, including resources within the ACC itself. We believe that through honest engagement on topics such as those above, the journey to improvement becomes smoother for all.



For more information, contact:

N. Cornell Boggs, III
Of Counsel/Senior Strategic Advisor
Quarles & Brady LLP
Tel: (317) 399-2861
Email: cornell.boggs@quarles.com

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February 29, 2024

Meet our Speakers



Giselle Perez de Donado
Global Chief Counsel, Employment Law & Investigations
Aon plc

Giselle is an experienced labor & employment litigator and trusted advisor with extensive experience, both in-house and at preeminent labor and employment firms. She currently serves as Global Chief Counsel for Employment Law & Investigations at Aon, plc., an insurance brokerage and professional services company with 52,000+ employees in over 120 countries. As Global Chief Counsel, she routinely collaborates with senior leadership to provide strategic advice on the full spectrum of employment law issues, offering creative solutions with commercial sensibility to minimize risk while advancing business objectives.

Giselle is responsible for overseeing and managing the firm's global employment matters, including employment litigation, executive agreements, restrictive covenant enforcement and defense, benefits and executive compensation, reductions in force, wage and hour compliance, and mergers and acquisitions diligence.

She leads a high-performance team of attorneys and legal professionals who advise on compliance with global employment laws and work cross-functionally with Aon's business units, People Organization, and Compliance group. The team handles employment-related litigation (including restrictive covenant matters) and investigations, executive compensation and benefits, and immigration.

Giselle also partners closely with Aon's People Organization to lead global initiatives, advance Aon's United culture, and champion inclusion and diversity. She is a member of the firm's Global Inclusive Leadership Committee and the Law & Compliance liaison to the Board of Directors Inclusion and Diversity sub-committee.



Nikia Gray
Executive Director
National Association of Law Placement (NALP)

Nikia is the Executive Director of NALP (National Association of Law Placement), an association of over 3,000 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. NALP is dedicated to advancing legal careers by ensuring that all law students, lawyers, and legal professionals have equal access to all career opportunities, by providing professional development opportunities for those who affect the legal profession, and by using facts to move the legal profession towards a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive future.

Prior to joining NALP, Nikia was the Managing Partner of the Washington, D.C. office of Quarles and Director of Legal Recruiting for the firm. She devoted most of her practice to

district court litigation, particularly high-stakes competitor litigation, in the areas of patent, trademark, copyright, and unfair competition.

In her legal recruiting role, Nikia had responsibility for development and implementation of the firm's nation-wide legal talent acquisition strategies. She has a particular talent and passion for culture building, which was reflected in her creative approach to diversity sourcing strategies, development of novel talent inclusion and retention initiatives, and her leadership of her home office, Washington, D.C.

Nikia's legal expertise is complemented by practical experience gained as a physicist. Before becoming a lawyer, Nikia worked for several years in the private sector developing optical software solutions for the illumination industries. Nikia is also honored to have been a 2018 LCLD (Leadership Counsel on Legal Diversity) Fellow.



Dr. Erin Reeves
Founder and Managing Director
Nextions

As a researcher, author, and top advisor to many global leaders & managers, Dr. Arin N. Reeves offers expertise and insights on a wide range of leadership and workplace culture topics. Arin is intellectually voracious and committed to exploring diverse, and often contrarian, perspectives in her research and writing. She is the best-selling author of *The Next IQ*, *One Size Never Fits All*, and *Smarter Than a Lie*. Her latest book, *In Charge: The Energy Management Guide for Badass Women Who Are Tired of Being Tired*, was released in March 2022.

Arin has designed and led comprehensive research projects on topics including gender equity, LGBTQIA diversity, racial/ethnic diversity, cultural integration, implicit bias, transformational leadership, energy management, and working through generational differences. She is the founder and managing director of the research and advisory firm Nextions, which specializes in workplace culture change. Additionally, Arin created The JEDI Collective, a public interest initiative dedicated to advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion globally.

Arin began her career as a practicing attorney. She then earned her doctorate in sociology at Northwestern University, where she has served as an Adjunct Professor teaching classes on law and society.



Cornell Boggs III
Of Counsel and Sr. Strategic Advisor
Quarles & Brady LLP

Cornell has extensive experience in corporate management and oversight, including ethics and global compliance, enterprise risk management, executive coaching and succession plan development. At Quarles, he plays an integral role in helping executive leadership create diverse and inclusive teams to meet emerging client demands in this area. Cornell is Board Chair and Chair of the Executive Committee at Thrivent Financial; and former general counsel for Toys "R" Us Inc., Dow Corning Corporation and the Coors Brewing Company. He was recognized as a "Legend in Law" by receiving the prestigious Burton Award from the Library of Congress and the American Bar Association, and Savoy Magazine named him

among the “Most Influential Black Corporate Directors,” one of the “Most Influential Black Lawyers” and one of the “Top 100 Influential Blacks in Corporate America.”



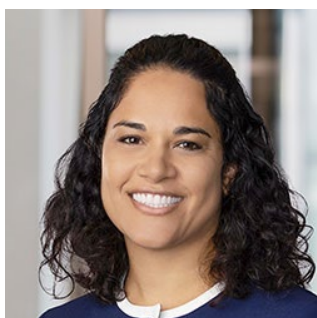
Vanessa Meeks
Of Counsel
Quarles & Brady LLP

Vanessa counsels investment advisers on both registration and ongoing compliance matters. She advises registered investment companies, their investment advisers and their boards of directors/trustees on a wide variety of regulatory, compliance and business matters, including fund governance matters and adviser registration and compliance. Vanessa formerly served as a senior counsel with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, where she worked in the Division of Investment Management and the Office of Investor Education and Advocacy. She has extensive experience with the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and Investment Company Act of 1940, including related SEC rulemakings, no-action letters and exemptive relief. She has had responsibility for advising on enforcement cases and examinations, including an on-site investment adviser examination. This experience enables her to provide her clients with practical and customized strategies to their business needs.



Camille Roe
Partner
Quarles & Brady LLP

Camille focuses on employment litigation, including defending against state and federal claims. Her experience includes defending suits brought by private parties and by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). She has extensive trial experience, having litigated numerous labor and employment matters at trial and in arbitration. In addition, she has handled cases involving discrimination claims related to race, age, disability and sex, sexual harassment and retaliatory discharge. Camille works with a wide range of employers to provide timely and practical counseling to address both day-to-day and unique challenges in the workplace. She offers creative “out of the box” solutions to her clients to address the ever-changing employment landscape. She counsels clients on the application of existing laws and regulations and anticipates the possible impact of new laws and regulations on clients’ employment practices.



Jaya White
Partner
Quarles & Brady LLP

Jaya represents a wide range of health care clients—primarily in the long-term care industry—in regulatory and transactional matters. She also advises clients in pharmacy, wholesale distribution and infusion providers and physicians in a broad array of issues. Her clients include long-term care facilities, home health and hospice providers, clinical laboratories, pharmacies, and other participants in the health care industry. Jaya understands the rapidly evolving world of the health care industry and stays current on the regulatory landscape so she can immediately guide her clients with their changing needs. She is the Chicago office chair of the Health Law Group. Additionally, Jaya is the national co-chair of the Long-term Care Practice, the Clinical Laboratories practice and the Behavioral Health Providers practice.