



LEGACY | CHANGE

## INCLUSIVENESS AND DIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT

2018



“

On the 25th anniversary of Kutak Rock: “We are charged with serving society in the pursuit of justice for all. To put it simply, we are expected to put something back for that which we take out.”

# Legacy

Kutak Rock LLP dedicates its 2018 Inclusion and Diversity Annual Report to Harold Rock and David Jacobson and the legacy they created of mutual respect, inclusion, and diversity in the firm, with clients, and in our communities.

On the 50th anniversary of Kutak Rock: “We have preserved our culture and values. The conviction, captured in the firm’s original charter, that respect and diversity create a more instructive, collaborative and welcoming work environment, has remained a core part of our firm.”

”



**Harold Rock**  
Founder of Kutak Rock LLP  
(1932-2018)



**David Jacobson**  
Chair of Kutak Rock LLP, 1996-2017  
(1948-2018)

# Reflections

2018 marked the passing of firm founder, Harold Rock, and long-time firm chair, David Jacobson. In reflecting on their legacies, inclusiveness and respect are constant themes, beginning with a mandate in the founding charter that all relationships in the firm and with clients be based on mutual respect. Those who worked closely with Harold Rock describe him as a “trailblazer” who prioritized inclusiveness, diversity, and respect and hired diverse professionals from the firm’s inception. As David Jacobson noted on the 50th anniversary of the firm, “Our founders set the bar high when our doors opened over 50 years ago. They purposefully sought out diverse attorneys and staff members, creating what we feel is a wonderful platform free of barriers for doing important work.”

David Jacobson continued the legacy in his tenure as firm chair, commenting with pride on the firm’s “unwavering focus on inclusiveness and diversity” and noting that “we best serve clients with diverse teams and diverse perspectives.” The firm benefits daily from this legacy, which can be seen in inclusive and respectful working environments across 18 offices and in the diversity of the firm’s staff and attorneys, clients, and leadership.



“We best serve clients with diverse teams and diverse perspectives.”

- David Jacobson, Chair of Kutak Rock LLP, 1996-2017 (1948-2018)

“It’s very important to be diverse and to have a voice at the table.”

- Joaquin Avila,  
Lawyer and Civil Rights Activist  
(1948-2018)

## Continuing the Legacy: Building Inclusive and Effective Teams

The 2018 firm-wide inclusiveness and diversity training and education program supported the firm’s longstanding focus on fostering mutually respectful and inclusive working teams. Participants explored how urgency and time, rules and authority structures, and bias can affect team discussion and decision-making and how to encourage individual contributions, voice, and sharing of expertise within teams.



Miriam Blair helped facilitate the firm’s 2018 training titled “Building Inclusive and Effective Teams.”

# Training and Education

“I learned a lot. It challenged my assumptions and bias.”

- Program Participant



## Training: “What was I Thinking?! Getting to Assertive Thoughts”

Kutak Rock’s Women’s Initiative hosted speaker Dr. Karen Lisko to address assertive communication and assertive thinking. In her presentation, “What Was I Thinking?! Getting to Assertive Thoughts,” Dr. Lisko posited that we may unintentionally put nonassertive thoughts into our own, our children’s, and our grandchildren’s heads. An author, frequent legal education presenter, and leader in the American Society of Trial Consultants, she shared her latest “thinking research” and offered ways to think and communicate more assertively in the business setting.

“I was fearless. And I was strong.”

- Penny Marshall, Director, Producer, Actress (1943-2018)

## U.S. Supreme Court Masterpiece Cakeshop Decision Training

On the heels of the Masterpiece Cakeshop ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 2018, attorney members of Kutak Rock’s LGBTQIA + Allies Affinity Group broke down the justices’ opinions and presented the implications to the firm at large.

Courtney Koger, Drew Marlar, Alex Justiss and Brian Bartels addressed the facts of the case and the precedent and general rules affecting the decision, including the findings of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission and the Colorado Court of Appeals.

Below, Brian Bartels, Steve Likes, and LGBTQIA + Allies Affinity group Co-Chair Susie Carlson took questions after the presentation. Above, the Minneapolis office marked the occasion with a rainbow cake.



# Affinity Groups



## Black History Month

Each February brings a new opportunity for the firm to celebrate Black History Month. In 2018, the firm hosted an art exhibit featuring the works of local African-American artists. Organizer Kateeka Andrews said the exhibit has been her favorite Black History Month event yet. “It was more satisfying for me than anything because you get to bring young, black artists who might not ever get a spotlight, or don’t know how to get themselves into the spotlight, and give them an opportunity to be known and be seen. That was the most satisfying for me, to see people working toward their dreams.”

Artists from the Omaha area showcased their original pieces during Kutak Rock’s annual Black History Month program.

## Veterans Group At Ease USA Luncheon

Members of the firm’s Veterans and Servicemembers and their Families Affinity Group organize activities and outings across the country to raise awareness about and celebrate those who have served and are currently serving our country. One such outing was the 2018 At Ease USA luncheon benefit, featuring keynote speaker Montel Williams. At Ease USA offers therapeutic services and confidential trauma treatment for active military, veterans and their families, regardless of their ability to pay.



Attendees, from left: Erika Lynch, Micki Justice, Lorraine Swanson, Toger Swanson, Angel Younger and Mark Ellis. Not pictured are Anthony Scioli and Stephanie Thompson.

“I’ve got some more life to live now. It’s a different world, and I love it.”

- Richard Overton, at time of death, oldest living U.S. combat veteran (WWII) (1906-2018)



“The work that remains in the 21st century is enough to engage all of us...”

- Arvonne Skelton Fraser, Women’s Rights Advocate and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (1925-2018)

## AFFINITY GROUPS



### Women’s Initiative

Kutak Rock sent 11 attorneys to the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) Annual Meeting & Awards Luncheon in 2018. Panel discussions included cybersecurity and women’s advancement and diversity. The firm sponsors NAWL at the bronze level. In 2018, the firm’s NAWL Challenge Club participant was Patricia Luna, a public finance attorney in the Atlanta office.

Other attendees included: Maggie Ebert, Deb Froling, Winnie Hawkins, Ashley Welch Hudson, Karilyn Kober, Kim McKelvey, Nicole Moriarty, Leslie Powell, Lisa Sarver, and Margot Wickman

“We want to stay in the sunlight from now on.”

- Dick Leitsch, Gay Rights Activist (1935-2018)

### Out & Equal

In October, Mark Sappington traveled to Seattle to join 6,000 other professionals at the Out & Equal Workplace Summit, where he spent several productive days sharing strategies and best practices with the goal of creating inclusive workplaces for LGBTQ individuals. Adam Rippon, Olympic medalist, Nyle DiMarco, deaf activist, and several other entertainment and corporate luminaries were speakers. Mark attended workshops discussing the Masterpiece Cakeshop case and predictions about future litigation, as well as several sessions on themes of authentic storytelling and using personal narratives to create inclusive workplace cultures. He admits he shed some tears, and left with the admonition, “Ask, listen, show up, speak up.”



# Awards and Recognition

## Law360

Kutak Rock continues to be a “Ceiling Smasher” among law firms for its outstanding record of promoting women attorneys to equity partnership, according to a report from Law360. Kutak Rock placed second among law firms with 300-599 attorneys nationally with 30.23% of its equity partners being women—more than three percentage points higher than the next firm. In fact, the firm again has the highest percentage of women equity partners in all but two of the nation’s law firms with 300 attorneys or more.

“I guess I showed that one person can make a difference.”

- Aiko Herzig Yoshinaga, Activist and Researcher (1925-2018)

## WILEF

Kutak Rock was recertified in 2018 as a Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF) Gold Standard firm. The WILEF certification is given to law firms with significant percentages of women who are equity partners, in the highest leadership positions, on governance and compensation committees, and among the most highly compensated partners. Law firms with 300 or more practicing lawyers in the United States are eligible for consideration for the WILEF Gold Standard Certification.

Technically, a firm must meet four of WILEF’s six criteria to be certified Gold. **This year, Kutak Rock met all six criteria, plus two alternative criteria.**







“If no one ever took risks, Michelangelo would have painted the Sistine floor.”

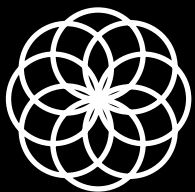
- Neil Simon, Playwright, Screenwriter, Author and Pulitzer Prize Winner (1927-2018)

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Pictured in New York City with his award is Brian Bartels, right, and Zac Baer.

### Brian Bartels 40 Under 40 National LGBT Bar

The National LGBT Bar Association recognized Brian Bartels as a 2018 top LGBTQ+ Lawyers under 40 for distinguishing himself in his field and demonstrating a commitment to LGBTQ equality. He accepted his award at the Annual Lavender Law Conference and Career Fair in August in New York City. Brian also attended discussions on the future of LGBT equality and the federal judiciary, technology disruptors for businesses and legal professionals, and an update on transgender people in the military, among others.



Inclusiveness and Diversity



Innovation



Client Service



Integrity and Fairness



## KutakCares

The firm's humanitarian outreach program, KutakCares, responds to various needs in communities around the United States. In 2018, in addition to local activities sponsored by the firm's offices, the firm conducted an event to "Pack the Backpack" with school and hygiene supplies for over 160 school children in need. In the past, the group has raised funds for victims of hurricanes in Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

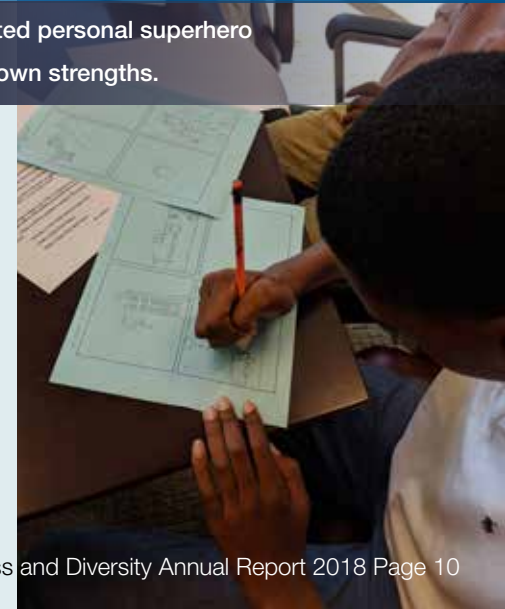
# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

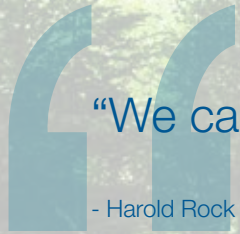
## Pipeline to the Legal Profession

Kutak Rock's pipeline program provides information to young people who might not otherwise consider a career in the legal profession. Programming ranges from one-hour school presentations to office and court tours, to full-day events. Whether the event is held in a semi-rural or metropolitan school or at the firm's offices, students are connected to possible career options. Staff and attorneys participate in the programs in order to provide information about various careers within the legal field (secretaries, paralegals and attorneys, as well as accounting, couriers, office services, IT and other staff positions) and educational requirements for each.

In one 2018 program, children from an area YMCA program were treated to a courtroom tour by the presiding judge before attending a naturalization ceremony. They learned about the skills required to be a leader, and were encouraged to create their own superheroes based on what they each believed were their own strengths.

In Richmond, students created personal superhero storyboards based on their own strengths.



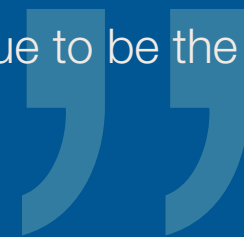


“We can be proud of our past and confident of our future.”

- Harold Rock

“I believe action for the common good must continue to be the principal mission of all of us.”

- David Jacobson





# KUTAKROCK

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