

DIVERSITY MATTERS

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To our readers:

In the midst of a series of major crises occurring around the world, I cannot help but reflect upon the need to pull our resources together in order to create a better future for everyone. In our own world, I am grateful for the decision of our Executive Committee to make a significant donation to the American Red Cross to support relief efforts in Japan. I am also proud of the firm being named the 2011 Visionary Award winner by the Nebraska State Bar Association in recognition of its support of the Volunteer Lawyer Project (VLP). Under the leadership of **Patrick Kennison**, the firm established a program to staff the VLP's community outreach clinics at the Urban League and the Latino Center in 2008. More than 20 attorneys from the Omaha office have contributed their time and effort in representing low-income Nebraskans since then.

As further indication of our community outreach efforts, Kutak Rock LLP received the Midlands Mentoring Partnership 2011 Business Advocate of the Year Award at the annual award ceremony attended by more than 500 people that featured a keynote speech by Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle. The firm was selected for its longtime support of mentoring programs to underserved youths in the Greater Omaha area, such as the All Our Kids (AOK) mentoring program supported by many of the firm's attorneys since 2008, including **Danielle Amorena-Kenny, Daphne Aronson, Beth Ascher, Kasey Cappellano, Jill Goldstein, Ed Gonzales, Kate McCoy Jones, Josh Meyer and Homero Vela**. In addition, **David Jacobson** has been on the Steering Committee of AOK for more than 15 years.

For the second year in a row, Kutak Rock received a special recognition at the annual Corporate Celebration of Equality event honoring corporations in Kansas City and surrounding communities for their diversity policies and practices involving gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees. Kutak Rock was honored for achieving a score of 85 out of 100 on the Corporate Equality Index (CEI) survey (up from 70 last year). Many thanks to **Robert Keim** and **Courtney Koger** for accepting the award on behalf of the firm.

I am also pleased to announce that the firm has just been selected for the 2010 Spirit of Diversity Partner Award by the CenturyLink Law Department. This program honors one outside counsel firm each year for its dedication to continually improving the inclusiveness of its culture. A special award reception will be held in late May in Denver.

I hope all the external recognition does not make us feel complacent in our diversity journey but inspires us to try even harder. After all, it is not only the right thing to do but it is in the best interest of the organization. As Mr. Keim put it in receiving the special recognition for our diversity efforts from the Human Rights Campaign, diversity makes us all better lawyers by increasing the talent and information pool and enhances our ability to provide quality services to clients.

Daphne Hyun-Jin Aronson
Director of Diversity

Diversity Dialogue: Washington, D.C. Office

One of the goals articulated in the firm's diversity mission statement reads "[t]o reflect at all levels of our workforce the diversity of our clients, the United States of America and communities in which we serve." While the firm has been making steady progress toward that goal, our D.C. office stands out with its high percentage of minority attorneys and staff. Today in the D.C. office there are six minority attorneys out of 22, representing 27% of all the attorneys, including two partners (18%), two of counsel attorneys (33%) and two associates (40%). In fact, out of 50 people working in the office, almost half of them are minorities, including over 60% of the paralegal professionals.

One of the more meaningful statistics is the number of years many of our attorneys have been with the firm. It is our special pleasure to speak with **Jennifer Blunt**, **Gilbert Boyce**, **Seth Kirshenberg** and **Alicia Terry** and discuss their thoughts on diversity.

Diversity Matters: With much focus on the challenges of minority attorney retention at law firms, could you first speak as to the success factors that have contributed to your respective tenures at the firm?

Terry: The dedication of the firm to me and my practice. I have been with the firm for 24 years now, and I am constantly amazed not only at the wealth of expertise resident throughout the firm, but everyone's ready willingness to provide assistance in order to provide the best client service.

Boyce: I have been with the firm for more than 20 years and for me, working with good people has made it a pleasure to come to work every day. I also appreciate the high level of responsibility and autonomy I have been given from very early on in my career at Kutak. Those opportunities have allowed me to develop a niche by leveraging my experience and expertise gained through working at IRS before joining the firm.

Blunt: I also agree that the most significant factor is the people of Kutak. When I joined the firm from the public sector more than 10 years ago, everyone was so helpful in making the transition to private practice easy and seamless. I have also enjoyed the level of client contact that was made available to me from early on at the firm.

Kirshenberg: It is reassuring to hear everyone's thoughts on this question as we make it our priority to create a good place to work in the D.C. office. To that end, we encourage and value an open door policy that fosters opportunities to learn from each other's diverse viewpoints and experiences.

Diversity Matters: With the increased focus on diversity in the legal profession in the last decade or so, have you personally noticed any changes either at the firm or in the legal profession generally?

Boyce: I have seen a great deal of change. Many companies and their law departments now place a great deal of focus on diversity, requiring their law firms to deliver tangible results to improve diversity in their own firms. This has no doubt created new opportunities for client development.

Terry: I would also add that the increased emphasis is certainly reflected in the myriad of diverse legal professionals throughout all the offices of the firm.

Diversity Matters: Do you have any advice for young attorneys just starting their legal careers?

Kirshenberg: My first advice would be to find a mentor and learn as much as you can



Ms. Blunt



Mr. Boyce



Mr. Kirshenberg



Ms. Terry

Diversity Dialogue, cont'd

about the substantive legal knowledge and the business of private practice. I would also encourage everyone to also take time to find their passion both within and outside the law practice.

Blunt: I would encourage today's young attorneys to find out their passion and pursue their dreams—take a chance with the opportunities as they present themselves and take advantage of people offering their time and advice. For minority attorneys especially, I would tell them to be proactive in seeking mentoring relationships with senior attorneys.

Terry: I would tell our young lawyers to work hard and continually and give it their all, but be patient. Take pride in what you have achieved so far and use it as fuel to go the distance in your career and in life generally.

Boyce: I agree with all the advice from others and would like to add that young lawyers need to think strategically about developing one or more specialties in an area that appeals to them. It will help them stand out among the competition and give them a concrete tool for marketing their services.

Diversity Matters: Our last question concerns the diversity initiative at Kutak Rock which was launched five years ago. What is the most pressing issue or need that you would like to see the firm focus on this year?

Blunt: As Gil Boyce mentioned earlier, diversity can be leveraged to tap into new opportunities for business development. I would like the firm to consider implementing new media tools to maximize these marketing opportunities.

Kirshenberg: We need to communicate more effectively to our attorneys and staff about our diversity initiative—what it is about, what has been done so far and what the future plans are.

Boyce: I would also like to see increased communications to our clients and external constituents about our diversity efforts.

Terry: I think we need to continually ask ourselves about our diversity mission and seek out our weaknesses and strengths. We then need to come together to discuss ways to tackle those areas and make a sincere effort to achieve the needed improvement.

People in the News

Boyce Presents at the Annual Minority Corporate Counsel Association CLE Expo

Gil Boyce was once again invited to speak at the 10th Annual CLE Expo sponsored by the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) held in Chicago on March 15-17. His presentation topic this year was white-collar SEC enforcement and current issues related to settlement options. The MCCA CLE Expo consistently draws a large number of in-house counsel from large corporations around the country, and Mr. Boyce has been a frequent speaker at this event.

Cung Appointed by Governor to the Arkansas EMS Advisory Council

Niki Cung was recently appointed by Governor Beebe to serve as the attorney member of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Advisory Council. EMS is a function of the Arkansas Department of Health and covers the transportation and medical care services provided by a certified emergency medical technician prior to arrival at a medical facility. The Advisory Council members assist and advise the Department of Health on all matters concerning EMS, including developing and recommending policies, procedures, training requirements or equipment lists.

Delgado Invited To Join Diversity Board at GE Capital

Randy Delgado is serving as a member of a diversity board, Project Hola! (Having Outside Lawyer Advisors!), established by the GE Capital Americas (GECA) Legal Diversity Council in August 2010. The board is comprised of in-house counsel members of GECA and a committee of outside law firms. The mission of the board is to shape and implement the GECA policy to retain and advance diverse outside counsel by fostering and strengthening diverse external counsel relationships. As a member of Project Hola!, Mr. Delgado attended a special conference in New York on November 3, 2010 which featured a distinguished panel of in-house lawyers from other major U.S. companies that have implemented similar diversity initiatives designed to enhance the diversity of their respective outside legal advisors. Mr. Delgado will serve on the board through the end of 2011.



Mr. Delgado

Galdean Appointed to the Advisory Board for the Kansas Diversity Leadership Institute

In November 2010 Trinidad Galdean was appointed to the Advisory Board for the Kansas Diversity Leadership Institute to oversee the efforts and diversity programs of Advance Kansas designed for executives. Mr. Galdean was also selected in February 2011 as one of 10 Hispanics in Kansas to participate in a leadership program funded through the Kansas Leadership Center. Created specifically for diverse professionals, this program is the first of its kind created between the Kansas African-American Coalition and Kansas Hispanic Education & Development Foundation. Over the next nine months, the individuals selected for the program will participate in training sessions to enhance leadership skills to use in community organizations and in their careers.

Pfeiffer Presents at the Annual Meeting of the Virginia Bar Association

In January, **Loc Pfeiffer** was a speaker at the 121st Annual Meeting of the Virginia Bar Association, held in Williamsburg, Virginia. His presentation focused on bankruptcy issues in construction law. Mr. Pfeiffer also attended the annual meeting of the Vietnamese American Bar Association of the Greater Washington, D.C. area held on April 1-2 and will attend the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Southeast Regional meeting to be held in Baltimore, Maryland on May 13-14.

Van Horne Participates on The Women & The Law Section Panel of the Nebraska Bar



Ms. Van Horne

Amy Van Horne participated on a panel discussion sponsored by The Women & The Law Section of the Nebraska State Bar Association (NSBA) and Nebraska Law Women's Caucus on April 7th at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law. The panel was entitled "Why Are There So Few Women? Underrepresented Areas of the Legal Profession." The panelists shared the nature of their work in the areas of commercial litigation, patent law and criminal defense, as well as the possible explanations for why women are significantly underrepresented in their respective areas.

Kutak Rock LLP's law practice embraces a wide array of legal disciplines, including general corporate practice, litigation, tax, government relations, corporate finance, banking, real estate, telecommunications, health care, bankruptcy, insurance, public finance and environmental law. Founded in Omaha in 1965, the firm has expanded to 16 offices nationwide. The firm's approximately 425 attorneys direct their individual professional skills toward the common goal of providing the firm's clients with excellent, comprehensive legal services.



For more diversity news and information, check our Web site: www.KutakRock.com.

Diversity Events Highlights

This year's ABA Midyear Conference was held in Atlanta in February and included a special CLE program on "Women and Power, Getting Ambitious About Ambition" on February 11. Attorneys from our Atlanta office attending this program included **Michelle Adams, Kate Bailey, Erin Elliott, Ruth Isaac, Joyce Mocek, Susan Stebbins** and **Ryan Swanson**.

Our Denver office once again sponsored the Annual Colorado Legal Inclusiveness and Diversity Summit held March 14-15 in Denver. Attending this year's summit were **Jim Arundel, Jennifer Barrett, Angie Birky Bohnert, Pardis Farrokhyar, Liz Firmender** and **Meredith Riley**.

Around the Firm

On January 26 our **Omaha** office received the Midlands Mentoring Partnership 2011 Business Advocate of the Year Award from The Partnership For Our Kids during their annual conference, which was attended by more than 500 people and featured a keynote speech by Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle. Accepting the award on behalf of the firm were **Kasey Cappellano, Kate McCoy Jones** and **Homero Vela**, who are currently mentoring ninth-grade students at Omaha Central High School through the All Our Kids (AOK) Group Mentoring program.

This group mentoring program has been supported by a number of the firm's attorneys since 2008, and past mentors include **Danielle Amorena-Kenny, Daphne Aronson, Beth Ascher, Jill Goldstein, Ed Gonzales** and **Josh Meyer**. This summer, the firm also will host a career exploration day for 25 high school students from the AOK mentoring program. Along with the AOK mentors, **Edward Fox, Winifred Hawkins** and **Michael Mollner** have volunteered to participate in this program to introduce students to the possibility of a legal career.



Kasey Cappellano, Kate McCoy Jones and Homero Vela accept the Midlands Mentoring Partnership 2011 Business Advocate of the Year Award.



David Jacobson accepts the 2011 Visionary Award for the firm's support of the Volunteer Lawyers Project.



On April 9 the firm received the 2011 Visionary Award from the Nebraska State Bar Association (NSBA) for its support of the Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) clinics during the last three years. Attorneys participating in the VLP clinics include **Daphne Aronson, Richard Bonness, Kasey Cappellano, Robert Coon, Matthew Enenbach, Alison Gutierrez, Paul Gwilt, Kathryn Jones, Patrick Kennison, Bart McLeay, Dennis Moynihan, Patricia Peterson, Judith Schweikart, Suzanne Shehan, Robert Slovek, Amy Van Horne** and **David Weill**. The VLP clinics are held weekly at the Latino Center in South Omaha and monthly at the Urban League location in North Omaha. At each session, the volunteer attorneys meet with two to four individual clients for initial consultation, gather information to determine if there is a legal problem and provide information on the next steps, including referring the case to the Volunteer Lawyer Project. So far, Kutak volunteers have served more than 200 clients at the VLP clinics.

Around the Firm, cont'd

For the third year in a row, our Omaha office participated in the NSBA's Job Shadowing program for Omaha Public High School students who are completing the Street Law curriculum offered by the Creighton University School of Law. As part of this program, **Kate McCoy Jones** and **Michael Mollner** once again volunteered their time in presenting to 25 students at Northwest High School on April 27 and facilitated a lively discussion on various career options in the legal profession and the steps necessary to become a lawyer.



Kate McCoy Jones and Michael Mollner speak to students at Northwest High School as volunteers for the NSBA's Job Shadowing program.

Our **Denver** office has been a longtime supporter of the Colorado Pledge to Diversity Program since the program's inception in the early 1990s and has been steadfast in its support throughout the economic turmoil in recent years. Recently, **Barry Burns**, **Ryan Jardine**, **Heather Kendrick** and **Meredith Riley** participated in the mock interviews, and Mr. Burns and Ms. Riley also attended the program's kickoff reception. This summer the Denver office will host two first-year summer clerks through the Pledge to Diversity program.



Courtney Koger (first row, second from right) accepts an award at the fifth annual Corporate Celebration of Equality event.

On March 31 the Human Rights Campaign Kansas City honored our **Kansas City** office at the fifth annual Corporate Celebration of Equality event for 15 area organizations in recognition of their records in philanthropy, diverse hiring practices, same-sex partner benefits and the activities of the respective organizations' diversity councils. Many thanks to **Courtney Koger** for not only representing us at the event but for all the work she has done to increase GLBT awareness and acceptance around the firm.

The diversity and outreach efforts highlighted in this newsletter reflect the ongoing legacy of the commitment and vision held by one of the firm's founders, the

late **Robert J. Kutak**. Mr. Kutak was a member of the first Legal Services Corporation and dedicated much of his life to public service and legal education. One such example of his legacy is the Kutak Dodds Prize named after Mr. Kutak and the late **Kenneth R. Dodds**, a former partner in the Omaha office of the firm, who also held a lifelong interest in providing legal services to the disadvantaged. Established in 1989, the prize honors an equal justice advocate "who, through the practice of law, has contributed in a significant way to the enhancement of the human dignity and quality of life of those persons unable to afford legal representation." The award is jointly sponsored by the National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) and the Robert J. Kutak Foundation. Beginning in 2001, two \$10,000 prizes have been given each year, one in the area of civil legal aid and the other in public defense. The most recent award ceremony was held last October 6 at the JW Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C., and **Joseph Ingrisano** presented the 2010 Kutak Dodds awards to Alan Alop of Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago and J. McGregor Smyth of the Bronx Defenders.