

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

2023 in Review

ROPES & GRAY

Dedication to diversity, equity and inclusion is one of Ropes & Gray's core values.

We aspire to be the legal industry leader in attracting and retaining talented and diverse professionals, providing equitable opportunities for every person to perform to their fullest potential, and being inclusive of and welcoming to all people.

This report includes a synopsis of the progress we made during 2023 on our implementation of the firm's DE&I strategic plan.

Our Plan's Fundamental Pillars

The DE&I team works with the diversity committee, policy committee, administrative departments, and attorney forums and business support resource networks to advance the firm's DE&I strategic plan, which is built on four fundamental pillars:

1. Cultural competence
2. Equitable systems and processes for recruiting and talent advancement
3. Equitable leadership development
4. Allyship

PILLAR 1

Cultural Competence

Our goals are to change the culture of the firm for the better by learning from, teaching and engaging the entire firm regarding the importance of DE&I, and to ensure that the composition of our attorney talent and business support teams is representative of the broader aspirations we have for DE&I at the firm. This year's activities include:

■ Community Conversations

Throughout the year, Ropes & Gray held diversity office hours—sessions with the firmwide community to share updates, respond to questions and encourage idea-sharing about DE&I efforts—as well as listening sessions to provide the opportunity for diverse associates to come together to discuss issues, share ideas and provide feedback.

On May 15, we hosted a fireside chat with Anti-Defamation League New York/New Jersey director Scott Richman in the firm's New York office. In conversation with **Gregg Weiner** (he/him/his), global litigation & enforcement group co-chair (and an ADL NY/NJ board member), Richman explained how his office locally and ADL nationally have been fighting antisemitism and bias as hate incidents have risen across the United States.

On June 15, disability rights advocates Robert Dinerstein and AJ Link joined Ropes & Gray for an informative discussion on disability rights, awareness and inclusion. The event, hosted by the Washington, D.C., DE&I Committee, opened the program with a presentation on the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and other laws that protect people with disabilities—who, he said, number about 61 million, or about 25 percent of the population



Participants at the disability rights event

in the United States. After the presentation, health care associate **Christina Ravelo** (she/her/hers) moderated a fireside chat with both speakers on important topics such as identity and the choice to disclose having a disability, understanding intersectionality in the disabled community, the use of correct language and marriage rights.

On July 10, the firm hosted a discussion of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. (SFAI) v. President and Fellows of Harvard and SFAI v. University of North Carolina*. The panel provided an overview of affirmative action and discussed the potential implications of the ruling for universities and employers, including law firms, and how the ruling could extend to other affirmative action policies.

■ **Cultural Events and Celebrations**

We recognize numerous cultural events and heritage celebrations, often by hosting educational programs with renowned speakers.

In collaboration with the firm’s attorney forums and resource networks, in 2023 the firm:

- Welcomed former two-term Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick for a fireside chat with litigation & enforcement partner **Alex Rene** as part of our Black History Month celebration.



The Black Lawyers Group held a Black History Month dinner

- Celebrated Women’s History Month by hosting legal scholar and Ropes & Gray alum Lisa Fairfax for the Women’s Forum’s annual “She Speaks, The Tracy Brown Speaker Series” event (detailed on page 5), as well as honoring the accomplishments and contributions of women at Ropes & Gray.
- Celebrated Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month by hosting Wajahat Ali, an acclaimed storyteller who has been at the forefront of working to overcome Islamophobia and harmful stereotypes aimed at the Muslim community. The firm also shared content highlighting the achievements of AAPI individuals in such areas as politics, law, social justice, science, medicine, and arts and culture.
- Celebrated LGBTQ+ Pride with a fireside chat with asset management partner **Lindsey Goldstein** (she/her/hers) and performer and author Chloe O. Davis. Several pre-Pride Parade brunches were organized across offices, including in Chicago, where more than 40 lawyers, support team members and their guests decorated a traditional Chicago trolley and officially marched in the Chicago Pride Parade—marking the first time that Ropes & Gray had a float in a major Pride parade.



The firm’s Chicago Pride Parade float

- Marked Latine | Hispanic Heritage Month by celebrating the achievements and contributions of Latine and Hispanic individuals in such areas as politics, law, music, social justice, and arts and culture; and hosting a panel discussion moderated by private capital transactions partner **Gabrielle DiBernardi** exploring the evolution, politics and intersectionality of reggaeton music. The panel included historian and podcaster Katelina Eccleston (also known as “Gata”), music critic Isabella Herrera and anthropologist Sarah Bruno.
- Welcomed Dru Levasseur, Harvard Law Wasserstein Fellow and DE&I Director at the National LGBTQ+ Bar Association, to moderate a National Coming Out Day conversation with Ropes & Gray manager **Anna Agostinelli** (she/her/hers), tax partner **Eric Behl-Remijan** (he/him/his), litigation & enforcement associate **Thanithia Billings** (she/her/hers) and tax counsel **Morey Ward** (she/her/hers). The LGBTQ+ Forum also produced its inaugural Coming Out Stories, a compilation of stories from Ropes & Gray attorneys and business support professionals that was distributed firmwide.
- Celebrated National Disability Employment Awareness Month with programming including a keynote speaker event with disability rights activist Tiffany Yu, who spoke on disability inclusion and allyship in the workplace, as well as educational content about disabilities in the workplace and the history of the disability rights movement.
- Celebrated Native American Heritage Month with programming that included a fireside chat between finance partner **Nichole Lopez-Tackett** and Emmy Award-winning storyteller Sarah Eagle Heart, and content recognizing legal milestones in the struggle for equality and sovereignty as well as spotlights on Native American members of our Ropes & Gray community.
- Shared firmwide messages to recognize International Women’s Day, International Transgender Day of Visibility, National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Juneteenth, Indigenous Peoples Day, GLAAD Spirit Day, Transgender Awareness Week, and Transgender Day of Remembrance.

■ Attorney Forums, Resource Networks and Affinity Groups

Our **LGBTQ+ Forum**, **Multicultural Forum** and **Women's Forum** bring together attorneys of shared identities and allies across offices. Our office-based **resource networks** provide similar opportunities for business support professionals. In 2023, the firm also launched a **Jewish Affinity Group** to foster an inclusive and supportive community that celebrates Jewish cultural identity. These groups meet regularly and host a variety of events and programming, including social activities, community outreach, mentoring, networking, educational opportunities, and cultural events and celebrations.

In addition to spearheading the firm's impressive programming for Pride Month, detailed on page 2, the **LGBTQ+ Forum** focused on renewing its programming throughout the year. Members participated in focus groups to provide insight and feedback on topics such as programming and events, community building, allyship, leadership and more to guide the forum's co-chairs, manager and steering committee in creating an enhanced welcoming and inclusive environment for the firm's LGBTQ+ community. The forum held its buddy program for the third year in a row, pairing 22 LGBTQ+-identifying first year associates with 49 LGBTQ+-identifying attorneys across the firm, as well as bi-monthly gatherings to discuss current events and topics relevant to the LGBTQ+ community; in July, the group invited representatives from Out Leadership to speak on LGBTQ+ rights and advocacy. In addition, the forum hosted bi-monthly brown bag lunches across all offices and invited members of the firm's LGBTQ+ Resource Networks, creating opportunities for LGBTQ+ attorneys and business support professionals to connect.

The **Ropes Multicultural Forum (RMF)** held a number of robust programs, including its third annual "Greater Good" speaker program to recognize the commitment of Raj Marphatia, an esteemed Ropes & Gray partner who passed away in 2020. The event is detailed on page 5. The RMF continued to support its affinity groups and mentoring circles, including the launch of the Los Angeles mentoring circle and Native American Lawyers Group. The forum also continued its annual virtual office hours program for racially and ethnically diverse incoming associates and organized coffee chats for these incoming associates to connect with RMF partners; organized a summer associate buddy program; and hosted various local office programs to bring together racially and ethnically diverse attorneys. In addition, the forum's professional development series is detailed on page 4.

The **Women's Forum** hosted numerous community programs such as quarterly "Women's Forum Wednesdays," which are open forums to discuss recent experiences, challenges and successes; holiday events in partnership with GlamourGals Foundation to write holiday cards for senior citizens living in isolation; and mentoring circle events—including luncheons, breakfasts, coffee breaks, book discussions and floral arranging workshops—to foster relationship-building and provide opportunities for our women partners, counsel and associates to engage in networking and to discuss issues faced by women across various practice groups. In addition, the forum's professional development programming is detailed on page 4.

The **Resource Networks** hosted and participated in a variety of events across offices:

- **The West Coast Resource Network** hosted celebrations for the Lunar New Year and Día de los Muertos.



The West Coast Resource Network Lunar New Year celebration featured food from across Asia

- **The Chicago Diversity Committee** sponsored and attended World of Chocolate, the AIDS Foundation Chicago's annual fundraising event, and participated in the city's Pride parade, detailed on page 2.
- **The D.C. Diversity Committee** hosted a firmwide conversation with disability rights scholars Robert Dinerstein and AJ Link, moderated by associate **Christina Ravelo** (she/her/hers). Detailed on page 1.
- **The New York LGBTQ+ and Allies Resource Network** participated in AIDS Walk New York, and the firm became an official sponsor of the event. The group also hosted numerous educational sessions on topics such as trailblazing trans activist Marsha P. Johnson and openly gay civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, best known for organizing the March on Washington and advising Martin Luther King Jr. **The New York Multicultural Resource Network** hosted programming on topics such as the Filipino plight, Albanian wedding culture and racist usage of American Indian sports mascots.



Members of the firm's Aids Walk New York team

PILLAR 1 Continued

- The **Boston Multicultural Resource Network** provided programming on BIPOC mental health equity, and the **Boston LGBTQ+ Resource Network** invited attorneys and business support for a collaborative brainstorming and planning session. Both groups participated in Strides for Action, a fundraising event for LGBTQ+ healthcare.



The “She Speaks” event had several audience questions (page 5)

PILLAR 2

Equitable Systems and Processes for Recruiting and Talent Advancement

Our goals are to continue to strengthen our infrastructure and procedures for recruiting a diverse community of colleagues, among both attorneys and business support teams, and to embed DE&I into all matter assignment and professional development processes to ensure that all attorneys have equitable access to work and all employees receive the clear, candid and actionable feedback needed to thrive. This year’s activities include:

■ Partner and Advocate Mentor Programs

The **Partner Mentor Program (PMP)** is an important way in which the firm supports the career development of U.S. racially and ethnically diverse junior associates. Mentees are paired with partners who will connect their mentees to the experiences and opportunities necessary to generate the high-quality legal work that is the core of a successful career at the firm.

The PMP feeds into the **Advocate Mentor Program**, in which advocate mentors are paired with U.S. diverse mid- to senior-level associates and counsel. Mentees are paired with partners who will advocate on their behalf to enhance their career. The relationships forged through this program are intended to help mentees identify, establish and work toward career objectives. The year concluded with 165 pairings in the PMP, 126 pairings in the AMP and six promotions, with three mentees becoming counsel and three making partner.

■ Professional Development

The **RMF** continued its quarterly professional development series, centered on topics essential to an attorney’s career development. The four sessions were focused on building and maintaining a professional network; best billing practices; making the most of attending conferences; and imposter and trespasser syndromes.

Business support professionals participated in the Mini-MBA Program, a part-time 11-week program teaching foundational business concepts and skills using simulations, Harvard Business School case studies, small group work and 1:1 mentoring, in addition to offering networking opportunities. The firm has sponsored seven cohorts of employees to participate in the program over the last three years.

The **Women’s Forum** hosted several professional development events, such as “building your own brand” workshops, and held leading conversations on women in law, including a Women in Sports Law panel, a Q&A series with new women partners, a conversation with a legal scholar and professor hosted by the Black Women Lawyers Group, as well as its third edition of “She Speaks: The Annual Tracy Brown Speaker Series,” detailed on page 5.

■ Recruitment Pipeline

The firm welcomed 13 **1L Diversity Fellows** to its 2023 summer associate program. The 2023 diversity fellows were based in all seven of Ropes & Gray’s U.S. offices, with four scholars in Boston, four in New York, and one each in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Silicon Valley and Washington, D.C. The firm provided a DE&I overview to all summer associates as a part of orientation, where summer associates were introduced to the firm’s DE&I team, diversity committee and attorney forums. Attorney forums held events throughout the program.



Members of the firm’s Women’s Forum gathered for dinners in Chicago and New York

PILLAR 2 Continued

Forum and resource network members in Boston, Chicago and New York took part in a variety of career exploration programming for students from under-resourced communities. In addition to collaborations with C5 and Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA), the firm held its third annual Legal Bootcamp in partnership with BUILD, one of Chicago's leading youth development organizations. Five high school- and college-age students learned about working as attorneys and paralegals, in addition to exploring various career paths in the legal industry. The students participated in networking and enrichment sessions, negotiated terms of a commercial lease,

participated in a mock hearing, and observed two proceedings in federal court, followed by intimate discussions with Judge Sara L. Ellis and Judge Young B. Kim.



Attendees at the Boston LGBTQ+ Forum's summer social

PILLAR 3

Equitable Leadership Development

Our goals are to increase the representation of individuals from diverse backgrounds in positions of leadership and the representation of individuals from diverse backgrounds in positions of responsibility with firm clients. This year's activities include:

■ Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

Through the firm's Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) membership, litigation & enforcement associate **Genieva DePass** and asset management associate **Chidi Oteh** (he/him/his) participated in the 2023 Pathfinder Program, which provides early-career attorneys with the opportunity to learn from top leaders in the legal profession, along with experts in the fields of learning and development and executive coaching.

■ Women's Forum New Partner Network

The **Women's Forum** launched the New Partner Network, a new initiative designed to connect women in their first five years of partnership to discuss business strategies, recent experiences and career goals.

■ "She Speaks" with Lisa Fairfax

As part of the firm's celebration of Women's History Month, the Women's Forum hosted its annual "She Speaks, The Tracy Brown Speaker Series" event on March 30, featuring legal scholar and Ropes & Gray alum Lisa Fairfax in conversation with asset management partner **Elizabeth Reza** (she/her/hers). Fairfax, a Presidential Professor and co-director of the Institute for Law & Economics at the University of Pennsylvania, began her legal career as an associate at Ropes & Gray. During the event, she spoke about the importance of mentorship, sisterhood and investing in others. She also discussed her relationship with Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, whom she introduced at Jackson's confirmation hearings before the U.S. Senate in March 2022.

■ "The Greater Good" with Pamela Everhart

On December 12, the firm hosted its third annual "The Greater Good" speaker event in memory of longtime partner Raj Marphatia. Ropes & Gray alum Pamela Everhart joined employment, exec comp & benefits partner **Sharon Remmer** for a conversation about Everhart's impactful career at Fidelity Investments and her civic leadership in Massachusetts. Everhart talked about her decision to join Fidelity, and how the lessons she learned at Ropes, especially about the power of relationships, helped her succeed in her new role. In addition to overseeing Fidelity's state and local government relationships, Everhart leads initiatives to bring financial education to hundreds of thousands of students in underserved communities, including Fidelity's \$250 million scholarship program, Invest in My Education. Beyond Fidelity, Everhart co-founded the New Commonwealth Racial Equity and Social Justice Fund, which provides grants to nonprofits led by Black and Brown people. The Fund also promotes efforts for health equity, police and criminal justice reform, economic empowerment, and financial literacy for children—a particularly favorite cause of hers.



Adrienne Ortega, Pamela Everhart and Sharon Remmer at the Greater Good event

PILLAR 4

Allyship

Our goals are to ensure that responsibility for DE&I initiatives is shared by our colleagues from majority groups alongside those from underrepresented communities; to invite clients to be allies in addressing bias and advocating for diverse people by partnering on DE&I projects and providing opportunities for diverse talent; and to establish partnerships with, and actively promote, diverse and minority-owned vendors to contribute to their business and growth opportunities in the market. This year's activities include:

■ Vendor Partnerships

Our attorney forums and business support resource networks prioritized partnering with women- and minority-owned vendors for their many events throughout the year. In addition, the firm compiled an extensive list of preferred diverse businesses, encouraging its use for planning events and initiatives firmwide.

■ Podcast Series

The Women's Forum produced six **Women @ RopesTalk** podcast episodes, including conversations with:

- [Jennifer Chun Barry, Associate General Counsel in Special Investigations at Meta](#)
- [Kelly Gold, Chief Financial Officer of CAMP4 Therapeutics](#)
- [Marjorie Goux, Chief Legal Officer at Rodan & Fields](#)
- [Karna Nisewaner, General Counsel of Cadence Design Systems](#)
- [Siobhan Pomeroy, Vice President of Corporate Development at Gilead Sciences](#)
- [Jennifer Zachary, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of Merck](#)

■ Bystander Intervention Trainings

On July 25, the firm welcomed Right to Be to conduct the first of three in a series of allyship trainings focused on methods for reducing workplace harassment. The workshop provided the tools necessary to be an effective bystander using their proven 5Ds methodology—Distract, Delegate, Document, Delay and Direct. The second training, held on October 9, focused on methods for reducing workplace harassment against LGBTQ+ self-identifying members of the firm. The session provided employees with tools and strategies for being a supportive ally to members of the LGBTQ+ community. The third workshop will be held in 2024, focusing on race-based harassment.

■ Honor Roll & Champions

The **Diversity Honor Roll** recognizes attorneys and other timekeepers who have met the firm's goal of dedicating at least 20 hours annually to efforts specifically focused on promoting the recruitment, retention and/or advancement of diverse attorneys. In 2023, 1,748 attorneys, legal managers and consultants, trainee solicitors, and technical advisors dedicated nearly 34,200 hours to DE&I activities—and 560 timekeepers met the Honor Roll's goal of investing at least 20 hours.

In addition, 139 business support professionals were named as **Diversity Champions** in 2023. The Diversity Champions program recognizes the efforts of our business support professionals who demonstrate a commitment to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive community.

The firm has also been recognized for many of our DE&I efforts, detailed on page 7.



Members of the New York office gathered to celebrate a Pride brunch

Recognition

The firm has been recognized for many of our DE&I efforts. Recent awards include:

The American Lawyer's A-List Ranked number two on the 2023 "A-List" in the U.S. and number one on the 2023 "A-List" in the U.K. It's the seventh consecutive year the firm has been ranked in the U.S. top three, and the second year the U.K. list has been published. This award, encompassing diversity and gender equity, honors the "best of the best" law firms.

The Boston Business Journal's Corporate Ally Award 2023 Recognized for a longstanding commitment to LGBTQ+ advocacy, including through *pro bono* work.

The Boston Globe's Top Women-Led Businesses 2023 Ranked in the top ten among all businesses in Massachusetts, citing a high percentage of women partners, as well as innovative and creative programs geared toward accelerating the careers of women lawyers.

Chambers Diversity & Inclusion Awards: North America 2023 Shortlisted for two awards, including Diversity and Inclusion: Outstanding Firm.

Human Rights Campaign's Best Places to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality 2024 Recognized for 15 consecutive years, earning a 100 percent score.

LAW360'S Glass Ceiling Report 2023 A top firm for women for the seventh consecutive year. Named a "Ceiling Smasher" for having a high percentage of women equity partners for the seventh consecutive year.

Law.com's Diversity Survey 2023 Ranked first for the most gender diverse equity partnership in the UK, with women making up 40% of equity partners in London. It's the fourth consecutive year the firm has ranked in the top three for the highest proportion of female equity partners in the UK.

The National Law Journal's LGBTQ Scorecard 2023 Ranked number three for a second consecutive year for LGBTQ inclusion among law firms.

The National Law Journal's Women In Law Scorecard 2023 Recognized as an excellent firm for women lawyers. Honored three consecutive times.

The National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) Beacon Of Justice Award 2023 Honored for the firm's sustained *pro bono* efforts to address issues related to LGBTQ+ and/or gender-based equity issues that intersect with racial equality. The firm has consistently brought litigation to protect the rights of diverse groups.

Seramount's Best Law Firms For Women 2023 Recognized for excellence in hiring, retaining, training, and promoting women lawyers. Honored four consecutive times.

Yale Law Women Awards 2022 Named a top law firm in the culture category, citing Ropes & Gray's "good work-life balance, community engagement and work environments that prioritize health and wellness."