

## A diverse workplace makes a powerful workforce

of the firm's

**Attorneys** are

women or

minorities



**At Banner Witcoff we believe that diversity encompasses both acceptance and respect.** We recognize and celebrate our individual differences and understand that it is our uniqueness as individuals that brings us success as a team in the practice of intellectual property law. It sparks our creative thinking, gives our perspectives dimension, and results in innovative problem-solving techniques.

While we value these benefits, we also acknowledge the challenges of building and maintaining a diverse workforce. That is why we have adopted recruiting programming to attract diverse candidates as well as career mentoring and business development programming to support and retain them. We are also consistently adapting our policies and programming to our ever-changing world and are committed to continually evaluating and improving our approach to diversity and inclusion.

#### DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP

Our continued efforts are outlined in three categories set forth below: Internal Actions, Client & Industry Engagement and Social Action Efforts.

### INTERNAL ACTIONS

Our **Diversity & Inclusion Committee** is responsible for planning and implementing programs and initiatives that foster an inclusive and collaborative work environment for people of all identities and backgrounds to succeed.

The D&I Committee established the **Banner Witcoff Women's Alliance (BWWA)** to focus on business development and networking, professional and personal development, mentoring, outreach and volunteering opportunities for the firm's women attorneys and professionals. The group is open to all.

In 2021, the D&I Committee formed the **Veterans Affinity Group**. The Veterans' group focuses on business development and networking, professional and personal development, mentoring, pro bono, outreach and volunteering opportunities for the firm's veteran attorneys and professionals. The group will also promote an awareness of U.S. military/service culture within the firm. The group is open to all.

We also created the **Donald W. Banner Diversity Fellowship** in 2008 to strengthen diversity in the field of intellectual property law. To date, the fellowship has awarded more than \$250,000 to law students for law school tuition and other school-related expenses. The fellowship is available to people who possess attributes unique in the field of IP law or demonstrate a commitment to enabling opportunities for, and engagement with, individuals who possess identities or backgrounds unique in the field of IP law. Some recipients of our Diversity Fellowship have joined Banner Witcoff as full-time attorneys following law school.

### CLIENT & INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Banner Witcoff supports diversity and inclusion outside of our team by providing support to organizations dedicated to increasing diversity and inclusion in IP law and in the legal industry.

Representative examples of these organizations include:

- **American Bar Association (ABA)**
  - ABA Section of Litigation's Judicial Intern Opportunity Program (JIOP)
    - Banner Witcoff has sponsored JIOP for more than 10 years. JIOP's mission is to provide opportunities to students that are traditionally underrepresented in the legal profession.
- **American Bar Foundation (ABF)**
  - We host an annual half-day program where undergraduate students participating in the ABF Research Diversity Fellowship Program as ABF Summer Fellows are invited for educational and networking programming.
- **Asian American Bar Association (AABA)**
  - The AABA aims to increase awareness among elected officials on issues of importance to the Asian American community, to documenting the need for increased representation in all areas of the profession including the judiciary, to serving the legal needs of the community by supporting non-for-profit organizations.
- **Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms (CCMLF)**
  - The Chicago Committee seeks racial and ethnic diversity in the legal profession by collaborating with its law firm and corporate membership to: drive sustainable institutional change at law firms and corporate legal departments; provide professional development; and cultivate the community of minority lawyers through programming and leadership opportunities.
- **ChiP's Network**
  - ChiP's network is an organization that advances and connects women in technology, law, and policy.
- **Chicago Women in Intellectual Property (ChiWIP)**
  - ChiWIP is a networking and mentoring organization committed to the connection, promotion, and success of Chicagoland area women in the intellectual property law field.
- **Law Firm Anti-Racism Alliance (LFFA)**
  - Recognizing the strength of a group and in hopes of making a more substantial impact, we joined with dozens of other law firms across the country to become a member of the LFFA. The purpose of the LFFA is "[t]o leverage the resources of the private bar in partnership with legal services organizations to amplify the voices of communities and individuals oppressed by racism, to better use the law as a vehicle for change that benefits communities of color and to promote racial equity in the law."
- **Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)**
  - We continue our involvement in LCLD, a national organization made up of corporate counsel and law firm managing partners dedicated to creating a more diverse and inclusive legal profession. Annually we select attorneys to participate in the LCLD Fellows and Pathfinders programs. Launched in 2011, the

program promotes the development of talented attorneys from diverse backgrounds and prepares them for leadership positions.

- **National LGBTQ+ Bar Association**
  - The LGBTQ+ Bar promotes justice in and through the legal profession for the LGBTQ+ community in all its diversity.
- **South Asian Bar Association (SABA)**
  - SABA seeks to strengthen the rapidly growing South Asian legal community with a recognized and trusted forum for professional growth and advancement, and promotes the civil rights and access to justice for the South Asian community.

We are proud to support these programs dedicated to improving diversity and inclusion in the law.

## **SOCIAL ACTION EFFORTS**

The D&I Committee leads the firm's social action efforts. Our plans will evolve over time as we listen, learn and seek out opportunities for meaningful ways to contribute as a law firm.