



Nixon Peabody Diversity Update

November 2009

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DAC creates recruiting, retention, business development subcommittees

The firm's Diversity Action Committee (DAC) spent the past several months restructuring the DAC to support three specific subcommittees, including recruiting, retention, and business development.

The recruiting subcommittee's goal is to improve the affinity group's proactive participation in identifying candidates for open positions in order to expand the number of diverse candidates in the applicant pool. **Tatiana Gutierrez Abendschein**, an associate in the Washington, DC, office is the chair of this subcommittee. "The subcommittee has divided its duties into lateral and entry-level initiatives and is putting systems in place," Tatiana said. For example, the subcommittee is seeking more involvement from the firm's affinity groups regarding lateral applicants, particularly. "We've had some really great responses. The last two lateral recruiting positions were filled with diverse applicants," she said. Additionally, five preferred diversity recruiters have been identified to help locate applicants.

From an entry-level recruiting perspective, the subcommittee is refocusing on a variety of things, including on-campus interviewing and wider outreach for campus recruiting. Recently, the firm started a database to track diverse candidates who did not accept an offer from the firm. "We want to keep in touch with these candidates because we may have a future opportunity for them as lateral candidates," Tatiana said.

The retention subcommittee will focus on all aspects of retention. The committee's current initiatives include developing a new mentoring/coaching program for the firm's diverse professionals, developing and implementing a new system to ensure that diverse professionals have equal access to work assignments, training and marketing opportunities, and exploring work/life balance opportunities. **Patrice Harris Talbott**, a partner in the Washington, DC,

office, is chair of the retention subcommittee. The committee was divided into specialized areas, including a diversity mentoring program, professional/educational opportunities, diversity within practice groups, program/training to promote diversity, work/life balance, and intra-firm coordination, according to Patrice. Some of the initiatives include wellness rooms (more details are included in a later article), and diversity mentoring circles. The first diversity mentoring circle, an introductory event, will be held the end of November or the first of December and will feature Patrice and Kendal Tyre.

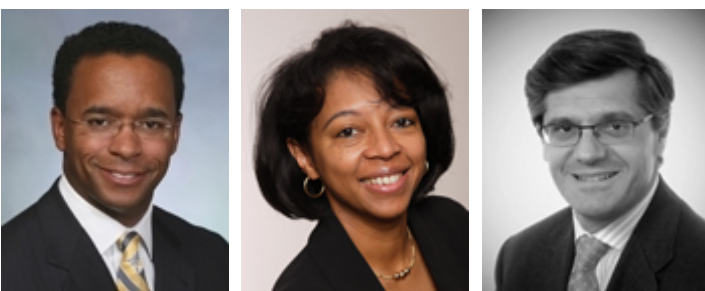
The business development subcommittee will be working to better leverage the firm's affinity group networking to grow business, and will be exploring ways to develop closer ties with affinity groups within client companies. **Grace Wu de Plaza**, an associate in the Washington, DC, office is chair of this subcommittee.

"We are also looking to leverage our diversity initiative internationally. For example, we're reaching out to operations in France and working to take advantage of new diversity initiatives recently announced by the French government," Kendal said.

Overall, the idea is to increase the firm's diversity efforts. "The goal is to have a diversity initiative that is institutionalized and inclusive," Kendal said.

Nixon Peabody to promote French Diversity Initiative

A cross-Atlantic discussion about diversity in France—and the resulting actions taken by Nixon Peabody attorneys—has resulted in several positive developments for the firm and its diversity efforts.



Kendal Tyre, Noro-Lanto Ravisy and Olivier de Chazeaux

Earlier this year, Global Business and Transactions partner **Kendal Tyre**, who chairs the firm's Diversity Action Committee (DAC), shared an article about French diversity with Private Equity partner **Noro-Lanto Ravisy** in the Paris office. Through some research conducted after the conversations that followed, Kendal discovered France's Diversity Charter (la Charte de la Diversité)—a document launched in October 2004 and including the signatures of various French business leaders who have pledged to work toward eliminating discrimination in the workplace. More

than 2,300 French companies have signed the charter and, as part of their commitment to it, have begun to implement policies aimed at encouraging diversity.

Kendal proposed to Noro-Lanto that Nixon Peabody approach some of the French companies represented in the charter to discuss their diversity efforts and the firm's own success with diversity. Kendal also proposed a meeting with Yazid Sabeg, the gentleman appointed by the French government as France's new commissioner for diversity and equal opportunities. Mr. Sabeg

is expected to launch a series of diversity initiatives and was partly responsible for the success of la Charte de la Diversité.

As a result of the successful meeting that followed between Paris Antitrust and Government Relations partner **Olivier de Chazeaux**, Noro-Lanto, and Mr. Sabeg, Nixon Peabody is hoping to become one of the few law firm signatories to the French Diversity Charter and will be working with Mr. Sabeg to encourage the Paris Bar Association to promote the charter. Also, the firm will be identifying and working with subsidiaries of U.S. companies operating in France to adopt France's standards in respect to diversity.

The firm will also be developing new operating standards (or "norms") to address diversity issues applicable to small- and medium-sized businesses to reduce the cost of compliance. The new standard could then be adopted and recommended by the French government to be used in public bids as a selection criteria.

Nixon Peabody's new 'Wellness Rooms' support work/life balance

In keeping with the firm's commitment to providing work/life balance resources, the Diversity Action Committee is pleased to announce the creation of "Wellness Rooms" in all Nixon Peabody offices with more than 10 employees. The purpose of these dedicated rooms is to create a supportive workplace environment for both parents and those with medical needs that must be addressed during the workday. Each room includes a reclining chair, side table, phone, network access, and office supplies. All Wellness Rooms will be secure, key-access rooms only.

The Wellness Rooms may be used for a variety of specific purposes. For example, the rooms are available for mothers to express milk or nurse their infants or as a diaper changing area for young children. The rooms are also available to those who need to give themselves insulin shots or other medications, or to those who require minor physical therapy upon their return to work. The rooms should only be used for predesignated purposes, unless otherwise authorized by the firm. These rooms will benefit all firm employees with medical needs or with child-related needs, as well as visitors to our offices, who may occasionally need these services.

Laurie Miller serves on committee for 'Women in the Profession' reception

Laurie Miller, partner and Practice Group Leader of Nixon Peabody's Government Investigations and White Collar Defense Group, served on the host committee for a reception in Washington, DC, for the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession. The reception served as a fundraiser for the Women of Color Research Initiative, a public service



project of the ABA. Joining Laurie at the reception from Nixon Peabody were fellow GIWC partner **Anjali Chaturvedi**, Affordable Housing Associate **Tatiana G. Abendschein**, and **Christine White**, Chief of Learning, Diversity, and Recruitment.

The reception included opening remarks from Roberta Liebenberg, Chair of the Commission on Women in the Profession. There was also a ceremony recognizing four honorees:

- ABA President Carolyn B. Lamm, a partner at White & Case
- Sherry F. Bellamy, Vice president and Deputy General Counsel, Litigation and Regulatory, Verizon Business
- Beverly L. Perry, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Pepco Holdings
- U.S. Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-Washington, DC)

Washington, DC, office hosts Asian Pacific Bar panel on real estate



Grace Wu introduces Michael Zuo

Grace Wu de Plaza, an associate in our Washington, DC, office, hosted a panel discussion on the current real estate market for the Asian Pacific Bar Association of the Greater Washington Area (APABA-DC). Michael Zuo, an associate of Long & Foster Real Estate, provided an overview of the real estate market in the Washington, DC, metro area, focusing on market trends. Masoud Hosseini, a senior loan officer at Bank of America, discussed the financing process. Approximately 20 people attended the program. Grace, who works with the firm's Government Investigations and White Collar Defense group, serves on APABA-DC's 2008-2009 Board of Directors as Vice President of Programs.

Firm Continues Support for McKnight Scholarship and Honors 2009 Winner

Julius Peterson, a Rush-Henrietta High School Senior, was awarded the 2009 McKnight Scholarship at the Urban League's Salute to Black Scholars Recognition Dinner earlier this summer in Rochester. The McKnight Scholarship is an endowed fund of \$140,766 (as of September 30), which was established in memory of **William E. McKnight**, the first African-American partner at Nixon Peabody legacy firm Nixon Hargrave, who died in 1985 at the age of 36. Nearly \$88,000 in scholarships has been awarded to Rochester-area students in Bill's memory.

Senior Counsel **John Witmeyer**, Public Finance associate **Janelle Whitaker**, and Global Business and Transactions associate **Paul Dimoh** were joined at the Nixon Peabody table by Janae Davis (the 2008 recipient), Tracy Thomas (the 2004 recipient who recently graduated from RIT with a 3.4 GPA—the first African-American woman to receive a degree from RIT in software engineering) and her mother, Yvette Thomas, Tom Bartlett (principal at Cobblestone Capital and a member of the Urban League’s Board of Directors) and Stephanie Griffith from the Rochester Area Foundation, which administers the scholarship fund.

Julius is the 22nd recipient of the McKnight Scholarship and will receive \$2,000, renewable for each of his years of college. He will attend the University of Buffalo where he plans to major in pre-med. Julius is a member of the National Honor Society and received his school’s Outstanding Citizenship award. He received school district honors in English and Spanish, played first stand violin in his concert orchestra, and lettered in Varsity football and wrestling. He was a member of his school’s Student Advisor Group and was active in the Law Explorer Program.

Nixon Peabody Women’s Initiative: promoting learning, networking and development



Women comprise the largest “diverse” group in the firm, and Nixon Peabody’s Women’s Initiative, under the umbrella of Diversity Action, is a firm priority. Through the Women’s Initiative, the firm is making efforts to develop the practices and leadership potential of women in the firm. **Ann Miller**, partner resident in the San Francisco office, leads the initiative.

The Women’s Initiative has been an important piece of the firm’s diversity efforts since day one when it helped start Nixon Peabody’s Flex Work program, which is now an integrated firm effort run by **John Snellings**, head of the firm’s PPC, and the Flex Work Committee. The current activities of the NP Women’s Initiative, broadly speaking, fall into two categories: activities in the various firm offices, and Mentoring Circles.

Leadership

Each of Nixon Peabody’s offices has its own, or participates with another office, in activities of the Women’s Initiative under the leadership of the following women: Rochester, Albany, and Buffalo: **Anita Pelletier** and **Leah Ziemba**; Boston and Manchester: **Sarah Connolly**, **Amanda Darwin**, and **Ruth Silman**; Providence: **Jodi Bourque**; New York and Long Island: **Connie Boland**, **Ronelle Porter**, and **Kerry Dinneen**; Washington, DC: **Molly Bryson** and **Corinne Gorski**; Paris: **Anne-Laure Fonade**; Chicago: **Jodi Rosen Wine**; San Francisco and Silicon Valley: **Jessica Sloan White** and **Ann Miller**; Los Angeles: **Alex Epand**. The office leaders get together quarterly by phone to discuss their events, share successes and concerns, and help each other to continue the development of initiatives for women lawyers.

Office Activities

Activities in the offices include regular lunch/breakfast meetings, often with guest speakers who cover topics including marketing/practice development, getting and keeping business from the perspective of women general counsels, non-profit women's initiatives, nutrition, work/life balance, opportunities for service on for-profit and non-profit boards, and many others. Some events serve as an opportunity for women attorneys to get to know each other, and others even include women clients.

Mentoring Circles

Approximately 70 women lawyers at Nixon Peabody have been participating in the Women's Mentoring Circles program, a voluntary initiative that arose out of the Women's Leadership Conference a few years ago. This is an opportunity for support and relationship building across offices, across practices, and across experience and seniority levels. Each mentoring circle typically includes 10 to 12 partners and associates from various practice groups.

Circle meetings, which take place by telephone conference on a regular basis, focus on topics including marketing and business development, work/life balance, networking for women, the economic downturn and its effect on lawyers, Nixon Peabody's evaluation process, and mentoring, generally. Members of the Circles enjoy getting to know each other better, collaborating with each other, and talking about matters of personal and professional interest. Circle "guests" have included partner John Snellings and partner **Ruth Silman**, in her role as a member of the firm's Flex Work Schedule Committee.

Leadership Training

Leadership training is an important part of attorney development across the firm, and the Women's Initiative is doing its part to develop and provide leadership and marketing/practice development training. Through this training we hope to develop women lawyers so that they can take advantage of opportunities that present themselves both with respect to internal firm leadership and external client development, service, and relationship management. Increasingly, individuals are seeking the mentoring/assistance of others, which can only contribute to the development of all lawyers in the firm and to the advancement of the firm consistent with its priorities and strategies.

Nixon Peabody helps sponsor Empire State Pride Agenda's Spring Dinner, participates in a variety of other activities

Nixon Peabody was a Bronze level sponsor for the Empire State Pride Agenda's Spring Dinner, which is held in Rochester annually. The Bronze level sponsorship is the second highest level and includes added visibility for the firm, including continued display of the firm's logo on the organization's website. Nixon Peabody has sponsored this event for several years.

The dinner was attended by several members of the firm, along with invited guests, which included potential clients and Empire State Pride Agenda board members. The evening's featured speaker was Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senator for New York.

"This year was no exception, this is always a great event," said **Eric Paley**, a partner in the Labor and Employment practice group in Rochester and one of the event attendees. The dinner was held on May 16, 2009, at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

In addition to the dinner, the Nixon Peabody's GLBT affinity group has been active on several other fronts. Here are some of the activities the group has been involved with during the past few months.

Nixon Peabody was a sponsor again this year for the Lavender Law, National LGBT Bar Association's Annual Career Fair and Conference, held during three days in September. Nixon Peabody is a long-time supporter of this conference and recruiting event.

The firm also sponsored the Human Rights Campaign 13th Annual National Dinner in Washington, DC, on October 10, 2009. The dinner featured the first-ever Edward M. Kennedy National Leadership Award, which was presented to Judy and Dennis Shepard. The award is named in honor of the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), a champion in the fight for LGBT equality.

Additionally, the firm sponsored a table at GLAD's (Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders) 10th Annual Spirit of Justice Award Dinner in Boston on October 23. Beth Robinson received the group's prestigious Spirit of Justice Award. She is deeply involved in marriage equality issues, winning a victory in the landmark *Baker v. Vermont* case, which led to the first civil union law in the nation, and she secured marriage equality for Vermont by way of a heart-stopping override of a gubernatorial veto in May 2009, according to the group's website.

Nixon Peabody will also be a sponsor at the 14th Annual SAGE Awards on November 2, 2009, at the Metropolitan Pavilion in New York City. The firm has helped sponsor this event for several years. This year's dinner will be hosted by Tony Award-winning actor Dennis O'Hare.

The firm also signed a letter of support to bring the Gay Games to Boston in 2014. However, Cleveland was selected to host the 2014 games. Previous Gay Games have been held in San Francisco, USA (1982, 1986), Vancouver, Canada (1990), New York, USA (1994), Amsterdam, The Netherlands (1998), Sydney, Australia (2002), and Chicago, USA (2006). Gay Games VIII

will be held July 31 through August 7, 2010, in Cologne, Germany, according to a press release from the Federation of Gay Games.

Finally, for the fourth year in a row, Nixon Peabody received a perfect rating of 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) Corporate Equality Index. The index focuses on evaluating gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) equality in corporate America.

Appointments and Honors



Jennifer Collins Elected to MLGBA Board

Congratulations to Boston Private Clients associate **Jennifer Collins**, who was elected to the board of the Massachusetts Lesbian and Gay Bar Association.

Her election was noted in the *Boston Bar Association BBA Week*, August 6, 2009, edition. From the Article: Jennifer Collins, an associate in Nixon Peabody's Boston office, has been elected to the Board of the Massachusetts Lesbian and Gay Bar Association (MLGBA). The two-year position is effective immediately. MLGBA is a state-wide professional association of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender lawyers and allies providing a visible LGBT presence within the Massachusetts legal community.



Colette Dafoe named to trade association's 'Future Leaders Council'

Real Estate associate **Colette Dafoe** has been selected to serve as a founding member of the NIC Future Leaders Council (FLC). NIC, which stands for the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing and Care Industry, is a trade association that serves as an educator and advocate for the seniors housing and care industry. Colette was personally recognized, along with the rest of the future leaders' class, at a special reception and dinner attended by several key industry leaders. She also participated in a half-day leadership workshop and was recognized at the plenary luncheon during the 19th Annual NIC Conference in Chicago, which was attended by approximately 1,400 people.

The FLC was created to prepare tomorrow's industry leaders to face what lies ahead, grow the industry, and positively impact America's senior population. FLC members will gather formally as a group at major NIC events to discuss current issues and group projects, share ideas and successes, and ask questions of fellow members and industry leaders.

The FLC includes 21 individuals—more than double that amount sought designation. The committee that selected Colette indicated they were impressed by her background and essays, and they recognized the presence of the qualities needed to be a future industry leader.



Kendal Tyre inducted as Fellow in College of Law Practice Management

Global Business and Transactions partner **Kendal Tyre** has been named a Fellow in the College of Law Practice Management—an international professional, educational, and honorary association that honors and recognizes distinguished law practice management professionals. Kendal, who works in the Washington, DC, office, was inducted into the prestigious institution as a Fellow in September during the 2009 Futures Conference at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law, which was held in conjunction with the college’s annual meeting.

Firm Chairman **Harry Trueheart** and Chief Marketing Officer **Mark Greene**—both current Fellows in the College of Law Practice Management—nominated Kendal for his efforts in promoting diversity in the legal community. Kendal currently leads the firm’s Diversity Action Committee, and he has routinely served as a mentor to diverse lawyers. Outside Nixon Peabody, Kendal also co-founded the Rochester Black Bar Association in Rochester, and LexNoir, an international, web-based network of black lawyers.

With his induction into the college, Kendal joins nearly 200 Fellows and Honorary Fellows who are “dedicated to improving the practice management process and to enhancing the professional quality of and public respect for the practice of law.” Fellows and Honorary Fellows include lawyers, judges, law professors, administrators, consultants, government officers, and others who are located in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Europe, South America, Australia, and New Zealand.



DC Associate Appointed to Serve on DC Bar Lawyer Assistance Committee

Tatiana Gutierrez Abendschein, an Affordable Housing associate in our Washington, DC, office, has been appointed by the Board of Governors of the Washington, DC, Bar to serve a two-year term on its Lawyer Assistance Committee.

The Lawyer Assistance Committee includes 15 lawyers and two non-lawyers who oversee the Lawyer Assistance Program. The program provides counseling and educational services to lawyers, law students and judges who are experiencing addiction, stress, or mental health problems that interfere with their professional or personal lives. It is one of the oldest lawyer assistance programs in the country.



Juan Concepción appointed to Boston College Board of Trustees

Congratulations to Boston Business Litigation associate **Juan Concepción** who was appointed to the Boston College Board of Trustees. Juan’s four-year board term began with the 2009–2010 academic year. “As a four-time graduate of Boston College, it is easy to understand why the University has been and will continue to be an important part of my life,” said Juan. “I am simply humbled by the opportunity to serve my beloved university within its governing body.”