



# Nixon Peabody Diversity Update

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## The Diversity Challenge: New requirement offers opportunities for all

It's long been accepted business practice for law firms to set hour requirements for pro bono work. For example, 60 hours per year has become fairly standardized for pro bono. Now Nixon Peabody is leading the industry with its new proposal—an hour requirement devoted to the firm's diversity initiatives.

The new requirement was announced July 1, 2010, by the firm's managing partner, **Dick Langan**. "The Diversity Challenge represents a commitment from a broad cross-section of the firm's personnel to take specific action in the interest of promoting diversity at Nixon Peabody. Those actions will enhance the recruitment, development, and retention of diverse attorneys and staff, and will help us meet our articulated goals for improvement in this area," Dick said.

The Diversity Action Committee, worked for more than a year to develop and fine-tune the new Diversity Challenge, which establishes a 40-hour annual commitment for each individual attorney within the firm. While the commitment is 20 hours less than the pro bono requirement, the Diversity Challenge is structured in the same manner, with the goal of advancing the firm's diversity initiative by involving everyone.

"Although we've already come quite far, we've taken a look at our diversity initiatives in an effort to make further progress and we have found lots of opportunities for improvement. This new initiative is one way to take advantage of some of those opportunities," said Kendal Tyre, a partner in the Washington, D.C. office. Kendal believes that Nixon Peabody is the first law firm to create such a requirement, which is designed to propel the firm to a leadership position in diversity. "If we are all rowing together, we can reach our goal as a national leader in diversity. To my knowledge, the Diversity Challenge is a unique initiative; no other U.S. law firm has such a requirement," Kendal said.

## 830 hours devoted to 'Diversity Challenge' since July

Nixon Peabody attorneys are embracing the new diversity challenge. As of October 20, 2010, more than 70 attorneys across the firm have logged a total of 830 hours!

Here is a breakdown of how the Diversity Challenge has been advancing:

- **Recruiting:** 231.45 hours (on campus interviews, reviewing applications, and mentoring summer associates)
- **Retention:** 158.10 hours (planning and attending women's mentoring circles, and mentoring diverse associates)
- **Business Development:** 90.5 hours (attending various diversity related events, such as the New York State Bar Association, NASABA annual convention, and APABA-DC installation dinner)
- **Administration:** 350.75 hours (sponsorship of various events, management of supplier diversity program, affinity group meetings)

Attorney time is being tracked through timesheets just as it is with pro bono, and the time will count toward each attorney's non-billable commitment to the firm. To help attorneys identify appropriate activities, the firm will provide examples of the types of activities that qualify and, in some instances, will announce that participation in a particular activity qualifies for Diversity Challenge credit.

"Developing our diverse talent is the responsibility and privilege of each attorney at the firm. The Diversity Challenge makes it easy," said Jenny Kuenster, a partner in our San Francisco office and Co-Chair of the DAC. Some examples of qualifying activities include organizing or attending a diversity-oriented event, reception, or seminar; mentoring a minority, GLBT, or woman attorney; working with the recruiting manager to find diverse candidates; and reaching out to current clients with affinity groups or diversity committees to create joint projects. Additionally, each office or region has an appointed diversity champion who serves as ombudsman and who can help attorneys identify opportunities that meet the Diversity Challenge requirements. At the end of September more than 70 Nixon Peabody attorneys had already devoted nearly 700 combined hours to diversity

"I encourage each of you to meet the Diversity Challenge and become involved as we take the next steps in becoming a more diverse and inclusive law firm," Dick added.

## Firm's Diversity Action Committee reorganizes

Along with the new Diversity Challenge, 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.

"It's not enough to recruit diverse people to the firm," Jenny said, "we need to provide development opportunities and make sure we are giving our diverse attorneys the broadest range of opportunities to build their practices, connect with clients, and become leaders at the firm."

“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 announced by the French government”

— Kendal Tyre

“We’ve had some recruiting successes and we are looking for more,” Kendal said. 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 diverse candidates in the applicant pool.

The retention subcommittee will focus on all aspects of retention, with a particular emphasis on enhancing the firm’s current mentoring program and exploring work-life integration opportunities and issues.

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.

Overall, the idea is to re-energize the firm’s diversity efforts. “The goal is to have a diversity initiative that is institutionalized and inclusive,” Kendal said.

The Diversity Action Committee will continue to operate as a steering committee and will focus on ensuring that the firm meets its diversity goals.

Many thanks go to **Harry Trueheart, Rob Carrol, and Karen Greenbaum** for their commitments and tireless efforts in advancing the firm’s diversity initiative over the past few years.

The current committee is co-chaired by **Kendal Tyre** and **Jennifer Kuenster**. The new committee members, including regional and departmental representation, are: **Kathy Balderston, Travis Gibbs, Sam Goldblatt, Lori Green, Françoise Hanonik, Randy Kelly, Joe Ortego, John Snellings, Noro-Lanto Ravisy** and **Jodi Rosen Wine**.

Thanks to these individuals for their commitment to the firm’s future diversity efforts.

## Congratulations to Gordon MacDonald



**Gordon MacDonald**, a partner in the Manchester office, was recently recognized by the New Hampshire Cultural Diversity Awareness Council (NHCDAC) for his longtime support of diversity and for helping maintain the dream and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Marilyn McNamara, president-elect of the New Hampshire Bar Association, also received an award for her commitment to diversity. The award presentations were made at the council’s 9th annual “Keeping the Dream Alive” MLK dinner on March 25. Nixon Peabody is also a past recipient of the New Hampshire Cultural Diversity Awareness Council “Best Practice in Promoting Diversity in the Workplace” award.

The NHCDAC’s mission is to increase awareness of the need for communication, understanding, and respect among people of ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds. Through community events, educational programs, and alliances with corporations, educational institutions, government agencies, and non-profit organizations, NHCDAC addresses the important issues of multiculturalism facing our nation today.

The event was attended by 150 people. The award, as well as Nixon Peabody's past recognition, was also acknowledged on *SeacoastOnline.com*, a local news outlet.

## Susan Roney receives President's award

Buffalo Office Managing Partner **Susan Roney** was recognized as the recipient of this year's President's Award from the Minority Bar Association of Western New York (MBAWNY). The award was presented on September 16, during MBAWNY's 28th Annual Scholarship and Awards Dinner at the Buffalo-Niagara Convention Center.



Susan was chosen from among nominees who “demonstrate a strong commitment to diversity and exemplify leadership through work in our legal community or with local not-for-profit organizations,” according to the organization’s award description. The MBAWNY’s Executive Committee specifically highlighted Susan’s work with Buffalo Prep, the Attorney Grievance Committee, Roswell Park, and the International Association of Defense Counsel’s Diversity Committee, among others.

Congratulations Susan!

## Nixon Peabody hosts sixth annual LAWBound<sup>®</sup> program

On August, 12, 2010, Nixon Peabody’s Latino Affinity Network hosted 25 minority undergraduate students considering careers in the legal profession.

The “LAWBound Scholars” is a program offered by LatinoJustice/PRLDEF to help identify, encourage, and assist Latino students who are thinking about law careers. The weeklong LAWBound program combines classroom training with field trips to introduce the LAWBound Scholars to the legal world.



The LawBound Scholars’ visit to Nixon Peabody provided an opportunity to visit a New York City law firm and to meet with and ask questions of practicing attorneys. The topics included how the attorneys arrived at their decision to work in the legal profession, what the process was like and how they feel about their decision.

The students’ visit to the firm began with a panel discussion where the panelists provided personal experiences and advice on entering law school and working for a firm. The panel discussion was well received and many thanks go to our panelists, which included

**Michael Garcia** (Private Equity), **Joseph Ramos** (paralegal), **Cassie Hamar**, (NYC 2010 summer associate) and **Diana Hamar** (first-year law student American University). **Jim Montes** (Public Finance) served as the panel’s moderator.

After the panel discussion and the Q&A session, a reception was held to permit the students to network with the panelists and with other Nixon Peabody attorneys in an informal setting. Many thanks to the other Nixon Peabody attendees, including **Joseph Ortego**, **Michael Vaccari**, **Virginia Wong**, **Desiree Verdejo**, **Jennifer Wheeler**, **Natalie Dennery**, and **Wanda Woods**.

The weeklong pre-law program is aimed at college freshman and sophomores. The program was established in 2005 and, according to the group’s website, the initiative “...builds upon our current pre-law programming and identifies Latino students early in their college career. The program provides targeted services that address some of the most common barriers to admission to law school, and helps students effectively navigate the law school admissions process, and, in turn, underwrite their own success.”

## NASABA convention

This summer, the North American South Asian Bar Association (NASABA) held its seventh annual convention in Boston, Massachusetts. The convention had a turnout of over 400 attorneys and featured 100 high profile panelists, including several South Asian American elected officials, members of the Obama administration, federal judges and United States Attorney Preet Bharara.



Boston associates **Lesley Varghese** and **Gauri Patil** attended the convention and were organizers of the convention’s Friday night benefit for the NASABA foundation. The NASABA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that acts as the charitable arm of NASABA. Lesley served on the 2010 Convention Steering Committee and is currently a Trustee and the President of the NASABA Foundation. She was a featured speaker at the Foundation Event, along with Pratt & Whitney Vice President and General Counsel Peter Gutermann, and Professor Smita Narula, Faculty Director of the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at NYU Law School. Nixon Peabody, through its Diversity Action Committee, was a sponsor of the Foundation’s raffle benefit, which took place at the John Joseph Moakley Federal Courthouse.

## Nixon Peabody’s Paris office sponsors diversity event

Nixon Peabody’s Paris office recently took the initiative to talk diversity, with a discussion of how to expand the concept. Attendees learned that the challenge for law firms and other organizations

no longer lies so much with promoting the concept of diversity but in how to incorporate it into one's daily life. The speakers at the event focused on the following topics:

- Developments in terms of legal measures concerning diversity: female board of directors' members, male-female parity, and employment plans for senior employees;
- The tools and processes recently developed through diversity management research, such as Business IATs (Implicit Association Tests), to help bring about attitude changes; and
- What the future holds in light of current practices in the United States.



The French Paris office partners **Noro-Lanto Ravisy** and **Anne Perrin** hosted **Kendal Tyre**, the firm's Diversity Action Committee co-chair, to participate in the discussion on these issues and the difficult task of turning words into action. In addition to the Nixon Peabody team, other prominent speakers included:

- Jean-Claude Le Grand, L'Oreal's human resources director and the director of corporate diversity
- Nathalie Malige, chief executive officer of Diverseo, a consulting firm specializing in IAT tools
- Laurence Méhaignerie, founder of Citizen Capital and a former member of the COMEDD (French Committee for Measurement and Evaluation of Diversity)

## Firm summer associates complete internship under new fellowship program

Since the firm launched the Elizabeth D. Moore Fellowship program, which was established to honor the former Nixon Peabody partner, former co-chair of the firm's DAC, and current general counsel for Consolidated Edison Co. of New York Inc., two summer associates completed a stint at one of the firm's clients and reported that the experience was excellent.

The Elizabeth D. Moore Fellowship provides secondments, or temporary reassignments, for summer associates with clients of the firm. The goal of the program is to ensure that there is a pipeline of diverse talent at Nixon Peabody.

During the summer, the firm partnered with client TV One and had two summer associates work at the company's headquarters offices for one week after they completed their eight-week summer program at the firm. Here's what the two had to say of their experience:

“I had a great experience at TV One. Not only did I get the opportunity to meet incredibly friendly and talented people, but I also gained insight into corporate life that will be invaluable as I seek to serve clients in the future.”—Courtney Lindsay

“Working at TV One was a wonderful experience and it allowed me to see how the same work can be done from an entirely different perspective. I finally understand what it means to know your client’s business and be able to not only meet their legal needs but anticipate their business ones as well.”—Senayt Rahwa

## Laurie Miller honored as a ‘Most Influential Woman Lawyer’ at awards dinner

Washington, DC, partner **Laurie Miller**, the leader of our Corporate Integrity practice and a member of the Government Investigations & White Collar Defense practice, was honored at the *2010 Legal Times* awards dinner on September 30, 2010, where she received an award for being one of “Washington’s Most Influential Women Lawyers,” as selected by the *National Law Journal*. The award honors women who set the legal agenda in the nation’s capital and includes lawyers from private firms, government, and advocacy and trade groups.

Laurie was chosen alongside an impressive group of female lawyers, including three sitting U.S. Supreme Court justices. The *National Law Journal* called Laurie “one of Washington’s go-to attorneys for those in a scrape with the law.” Laurie’s *National Law Journal* profile is available here: [http://www.nixonpeabody.com/linked\\_media/publications/NLJ\\_influential\\_women\\_miller\\_laurie\\_2010.pdf](http://www.nixonpeabody.com/linked_media/publications/NLJ_influential_women_miller_laurie_2010.pdf).



Several Nixon Peabody colleagues from around the firm joined Laurie at the Willard InterContinental hotel in Washington, DC, where the awards ceremony was held. Managing Partner and CEO **Dick Langan**, Operations Partner **Brian Flanagan**, and Government Investigations and White Collar Defense co-Practice Group Leaders **Melissa Tearney** and **Ed O’Callaghan** came in from out of town to congratulate Laurie. They were joined at the Nixon Peabody table by DC partners **Kelly Kramer**

and **Jeff Lesk** (the DC Office Managing Partner) and DC secretary **Duane Haneckow**. Several NP alumni and HUD’s general counsel were also in attendance.

Congratulations to Laurie for this tremendous and well-deserved recognition!



# New hires:

## Building our diverse workforce

We'd like to say welcome to the following new additions to Nixon Peabody's staff. We've successfully added several diverse attorneys in recent months, and we look forward to benefiting from their viewpoints and from their unique work and life experiences. Here is a brief overview of our latest hires:



**Kari K. Harris** is a new partner in the Boston office and a member of the Fund Formation & Investments team. She has broad corporate experience focusing on the representation of private investment funds in connection with their fundraising and ongoing activities and of institutional investors in connection with their alternative investments.

Kari's institutional investor experience includes representation of numerous private equity funds of funds and other institutional domestic and international investors in connection with their alternative investments, including primary investments in hundreds of private equity funds, mezzanine funds, venture capital funds, real estate funds and special focus funds, traditional and synthetic secondary investments, and direct co-investments.

Kari earned her J.D. degree from Boston College Law School, where she graduated cum laude.



**Irene C. Kuei** is an associate in the firm's San Francisco office in the Affordable Housing practice group. Her practice focuses on tax, regulatory, real estate development, acquisitions and dispositions, joint ventures, operations, leasing, and transactions pertaining to commercial, multifamily residential, and mixed-use properties.

In 2010, she was recognized in *Legal 500 USA* as a Leading Lawyer in the area of Real Estate for both real estate transactions and capital market transactions. Irene speaks Chinese (Mandarin) and is a graduate of the University of San Diego School of Law, LL.M, Taxation (Graduate Law Merit Scholarship) and Boston University School of Law, J.D.



**Allan E. Low** is a lateral hire and a new partner in the San Francisco office. He joined the Real Estate team. Allan has more than 20 years of industry experience and focuses his practice on real estate finance, transactions, and real estate development projects. Throughout the years, Allan has developed a deep niche practice with the Asian bank community and has many strong connections to the Chinese business community. Allan will make significant contributions to the growth of our China practice, led by David Cheng.

Allan earned his J.D. degree from the University of California, Hastings College of Law.



**Mavis Yee** is a new partner in the Silicon Valley office. She joined the firm's Global Business & Transactions group based in our Silicon Valley office. Mavis has extensive experience representing emerging growth companies in all stages of their life cycle, including incorporations, venture capital financings, mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and public company transactions. She also represents venture capital firms in their equity and debt investments. Her clients include private

and public companies in a wide array of high growth industries, including social gaming and media, internet, software, semiconductors, telecommunications, and life sciences.

She received her J.D. degree from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, where she graduated cum laude. She also holds an MBA from the University of California, Irvine.

Please take a minute to say hello and offer a warm welcome to these new additions to the firm.

## Congratulations to John Higgins



We'd like to say congratulations to our longtime colleague and diversity champion **John Higgins** who was recently promoted to partner in recognition of his commitment and dedication to the firm.

John has made numerous contributions to the firm and to furthering diversity not only within the firm but within the entire legal community. Thank you, John, for your dedication to enriching the legal community through the promoting of a diverse culture.

John is a partner in the Albany office on the Labor and Employment team. He has more than 20 years of experience counseling and representing employers in all types of employment, employment discrimination, employee benefits, and traditional labor litigation matters. John earned his J.D. degree from Albany Law School of Union University.