Diversity, Multiculturalism & Inclusion

Look around the offices of M&R, and what do you see? Remarkable people – women and men of differing backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities and orientations, all working together toward a common goal: the best interests and success of our clients.

M&R’s commitment to diversity, multiculturalism and inclusion is profound. Having been listed in Law360’s “Top 100 Firms for Minority Attorneys” and ranked amongst the 50 law firms in the United States with the highest percentage of minority equity partners, our culture is, in large part, driven by our focus on and dedication to a diverse workplace.

Toward that end, the firm has created a Diversity, Multiculturalism & Inclusion (DMI) Committee that meets bi-monthly to discuss and promote these issues.

DMI Committee Charter

DMI Mission Statement

We value diversity, recognizing that each individual brings a unique perspective to Michelman & Robinson, LLP (M&R). At M&R, diversity is about creating a culture of inclusion. A national law firm, we value our workforce for their unique talents, backgrounds and perspectives. We believe diversity includes race/ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, political affiliation, marital and familial status, disability, and veteran status, among others. We think that our culture of inclusion makes us a stronger law firm, and creates a positive ecosystem where everyone can thrive.

DMI Awareness

The firm is a patchwork quilt of so many different backgrounds and life experiences, and it is our policy and practice to continually highlight this diverse and inclusive makeup. We do so by featuring the varied personal histories of our attorneys and staff in monthly Spotlights on Diversity. Likewise, we observe designated National Heritage Months by celebrating diverse leaders in the legal profession. Programs like these, and other educational initiatives, enhance awareness, firm wide, of the critical importance that diversity, multiculturalism and inclusion play in our overall excellence, both as a law firm and place to work.

Focus on Women Attorneys of M&R (WAMR)

We take pride in the extraordinary talents and achievements of our women attorneys, and the firm seeks to do what it can to enable their continued success. We are committed to the advancement and empowerment of women in the legal profession. Women Attorneys of M&R (WAMR), a subcommittee of DMI, is a unique initiative that provides support as well as leadership and professional development opportunities for our female attorneys. WAMR holds regular meetings, and hosts seminars that focus on skill development, mentoring, relationship building, career development, personal growth, and achievement – within the firm and otherwise. These discussions often feature prominent female community leaders who impart valuable insight into achieving professional success. Topics have included strategic career planning, business development, mentoring and work/life balance issues.

Recruitment

Our recruitment efforts reinforce the firm’s ongoing commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce. While we seek diverse talent, we do so while maintaining an environment that is positive and inclusive of everyone. We believe that each partner, associate, of counsel and staff member brings his or her own unique background and perspective to M&R, and deserves a voice. We recruit staff and attorneys who hail from a broad range of cultures and experiences. M&R recruits at law schools with diverse student populations and sponsors and participates in diverse career-development events conducted by law schools. Additionally, M&R seeks to retain and promote minorities laterally within the Firm, and use the Summer Associate Program as a means of recruiting more diverse attorneys.

Client Needs
Clients are diverse and want to see a diverse law firm, and interface with diverse attorneys. Our workforce mirrors the varying backgrounds and viewpoints of our eclectic client base in order to best resolve business and legal issues. Therefore, we promote the expression of conflicting viewpoints in order to approach old problems in new ways. No doubt, our commitment to DMI enriches and deepens the firm’s understanding and analysis of issues and, ultimately, its work product.

**Firm Education**

An active Diversity, Multiculturalism & Inclusion Committee meets bi-monthly to address diversity at M&R. The Committee, which is chaired by a senior partner and consists of attorneys as well as staff, discusses initiatives that ensure that the Firm is taking proactive steps toward being more diverse and inclusive. We have a diversity corner in our quarterly marketing bulletin, highlighting the varied backgrounds and experiences of different employees. M&R also has monthly updates regarding diverse leaders in the legal profession. We understand that our commitment to diversity is ongoing, and that our Committee is responsible for educating the Firm on our mission.

**Bolstering Relationships**

We strive to create and frequently review internal policies and practices that result in a law firm with a diverse and inclusive complexion. By building a supportive and inclusive workplace environment, we foster the exchange of ideas and maximize our talent. This helps us build relationships within our legal profession, and the greater community as a whole.

The takeaway: M&R’s mission to foster an atmosphere of diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion makes for a dynamic, engaging firm with a roster of very satisfied clients.

**M&R Diversity, Multicultural, and Inclusion Definition and Intended Outcomes**

**Definition of diversity**

Inclusion of different types of people along the following elements (note - this is not intended to be an exhaustive list):

- Perspective – including beliefs, values, social norms, standards, traditions, and experiences
- Religious background – those from varying religious and spiritual backgrounds
- Race/ethnicity – those of varying cultural backgrounds
- Gender – experiences unique to each sex
- Sexual orientation – those of varying sexual proclivities
- Socio-economic status – including income, education, and wealth levels

**Intended outcomes of diversity efforts**

- Education of all team members to further culturally competent interactions
- Recruit for and support diversity in workplace
- Combat implicit bias
- Marketing diversity achievements with a focus on the value added by diverse individuals
- Enhance empathy toward others of diverse backgrounds

**Membership**

Membership is open to all attorneys and staff. All participating members are encouraged to maintain active engagement to promote the successful creation and implementation of programs. Current committee members include:

**Attorneys**

- Alex Barnet-Howell
- Allison Aguirre
- Camille Yona
Continued

- Jesse Contreras
- Jimmy Bennett
- Marc Jacobs
- Michael Smaila
- Samuel Licker
- Vincent Loh
- Warren Koshofer

Support Staff

- Kathleen Richter, Chief Marketing Officer
- Kimberly Wilson, Human Resources Director
- Mariam Tarzi, Legal Assistant Manager
- Sammy Elzarka, Chief Advancement Officer
- Sarabi Rodriguez, Legal Assistant
- Vishakha Jha, Project Coordinator

Meetings

The official committee meetings are held bi-monthly and for a duration of an hour.