

Benesch



HONE YOUR CAREER
OWN YOUR CAREER



Please join our B-Sharp LinkedIn group, which currently has more than 100 women in-house attorney members. We look forward to connecting and collaborating with you!
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12181303>

UPCOMING EVENT

Current Business Trends and Legal Guidance in the Age of Covid-19—What You Need to Know in 2021

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021

11:00 AM–12:00 PM CST

Join us on January 13 for updates on significant lessons learned and developments arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will include business trends and current guidance involving privacy issues, employment law, and corporate disclosures for 2021.

Presented by:

Margo Wolf O'Donnell, Partner and Co-Chair, Labor & Employment Practice Group

Sarah M. Hesse, Partner, Corporate & Securities

Sara Helene Shanti, Partner, Benesch Healthcare+

To register, click [HERE](#)

A publication for Benesch's B-Sharp Community

Winter 2021

ON POINT

B-SHARP YEAR IN REVIEW



MARGO WOLF O'DONNELL

Founder, Benesch B-Sharp Initiative
Partner and Co-Chair, Labor & Employment Practice Group

Greetings to all of you and a Happy New Year! As I reflect on 2020, in the midst of a world of uncertainty, I cannot help but feel proud and motivated by our Benesch B-Sharp initiative and the women who make up this fantastic group. Since launching in 2018, B-Sharp has grown exponentially to a steering committee of nineteen women attorneys at Benesch who work to expand professional development opportunities for women in-house attorneys. What started out as a list of a few loyal clients attending our events has grown to over 1200 women corporate counsel who are connecting with one another and sharing their experiences through B-Sharp.

This year, the B-Sharp Steering Committee hosted nine different programs focusing on different areas of the law. Two of these programs were hosted in person in our Chicago office, and the remainder were virtual. CLE credit was provided. We also held smaller roundtables allowing women in-house attorneys the opportunity to benchmark regarding current legal challenges.

The hard work of this group has not gone unnoticed. In 2019, B-Sharp was recognized with the Benchmark Award from the Coalition of Women's Initiative in Law, an award that recognizes passion and commitment to leading the advancement of women's issues in the legal profession. In December 2020, B-Sharp was the winning recipient of the 2020 Legal Marketing Association's Your Honor Awards in the category of *Marketing Management and Leadership—Diversity and Inclusion*. And as one of the founders of B-Sharp, I was recognized with this year's Corporate Counsel Innovative Leadership Women, Influence & Power in Law Award.

Although 2020's landscape has looked different for everyone, we were and are committed to bringing a range of programming and resources to women corporate counsel through B-Sharp. Our steering committee continues to meet regularly to set up timely and informative programs for 2021. Wishing you all a happy, healthy 2021!

Cheers,

MARGO WOLF O'DONNELL

Welcome to *ON POINT*, a newsletter highlighting stories about gender diversity issues and women in the workplace.

Winter 2021



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RECENT EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Contact **Megan Thomas** at mthomas@beneschlaw.com for materials or recordings (if available) from these events.

FIRM EVENTS | OCTOBER 20, 2020

B-Sharp Webinar

A Media Slammed Your Product—Should you Sue?

This fall webinar, presented by Nicole Wrigley, Vice-Chair, Trial Practice Group and Partner, Litigation Practice Group and Kathryn Clausen, Associate, Litigation Practice Group, centered on practical steps to effectively combat defamatory or disparaging media reports. Detail included what impact a negative media report really has, what to do if the media targets your business, five steps to take after a media attack, how to tell if you have a claim and factors to consider before filing a lawsuit.

FIRM EVENTS | SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

B-Sharp Webinar

Challenges in Real Estate within the Era of COVID-19

Benesch Partners, Jennifer Desser, Kate Vasek and Dana Weiss, all who practice within the firm's Real Estate & Environmental Practice Group, hosted a webinar for 20+ attendees addressing the challenges in Real Estate within the Era of COVID-19 on September 22.

Discussion centered on the immediate impacts of COVID-19, practical considerations and the impact of COVID-19 into the future with respect to the following three sectors within real estate: leasing; office, multifamily and hotel properties and commercial mortgage lending.

FIRM EVENTS | SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

ACC Chicago Best Practices of General Counsel Program (Virtual)

Over 140 attendees participated in this virtual one-hour program courtesy of ACC Chicago and Benesch featuring Dorothy Capers, Executive Vice President and General Counsel of National Express LLC. The program was moderated by Margo Wolf O'Donnell, Partner and Co-Chair of Benesch's Labor & Employment Practice Group and centered on topics such as how to become a general counsel, best practices in hiring and managing outside counsel, dealing with COVID-19, serving as a business advisor to your client and promoting diversity and inclusion corporate sponsored racial injustice initiatives.

FIRM EVENTS | SEPTEMBER 2, 2020

B-Sharp Webinar

Virtual General Counsel Roundtable Discussion

B-Sharp hosted a virtual General Counsel Roundtable discussion moderated and hosted by Jennifer Nichols, Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of Harsch Investment Properties. The roundtable was attended by 30 other industry general counsels and the session covered best practices for addressing gender and racial equity issues within legal departments and business in 2020.



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<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12181303>

Member Profile



LEAH BEITNER

Partner

Corporate & Securities Practice Group

lbeitner@beneschlaw.com

1. What advice would you give for women just starting out in the legal profession?

The advice that I would give is not particularly novel or unique, but I think it's very important—don't be afraid to speak up when you have thoughts and ask questions when you want to gain a better understanding. It can be intimidating when you are just starting out, but it's an excellent habit to develop early. It also shows that you care and are focused on developing your legal skills.

2. What special challenges, if any, do women face in the field of tax? What do you like best about your practice?

Although being a woman in law has its challenges, I do not feel that any of those challenges are particular to tax—I feel the opposite, and believe that tax is an excellent practice area for all genders. It's intellectually stimulating and clients genuinely value good tax advice. I am certainly biased, but I strongly believe that tax is the best practice area. I love that I get to be creative with my practice and work collaboratively with clients and other professionals to achieve shared goals. I also enjoy being a specialist—it affords me the opportunity to work on a large variety of matters at all times, so things never get boring.

3. Tell us how Benesch's programming has helped support women attorneys.

Benesch's programming for supporting women is incredible. There are a number of formal programs, including our Woman's Initiative and B-Sharp groups, which provide dedicated forums for addressing issues that are relevant to women attorneys. The formal programming has been fantastic, but I think that its strongest benefit is that it has translated into a culture of support for women at the firm more broadly. While I certainly enjoy the dedicated formal programming, I find that I benefit most from the day-to-day support that I get from my colleagues and firm management.

Winter 2021



Noteworthy Achievements and Media Mentions

Below is a sampling of Benesch women noteworthy achievements and media mentions over the past quarter.

U.S. News & World Report—Best Lawyers Rankings 2021 (Benesch Women)

We are pleased to announce that 7 Benesch women attorneys have been named to the 2021 Best Lawyers in America rankings list, 10 have been named Best Lawyers—“Ones to Watch” and 1 has been recognized as Best Lawyers 2021 “Lawyer of the Year”.

Lawyer of the Year:



Janet K. Feldkamp
Health Care Law, Columbus

Benesch’s 2021 Best Lawyers (Women):

CHICAGO



Margo Wolf O'Donnell
Commercial Litigation



Zaiba Baig
Litigation—Intellectual Property (*Ones to Watch*)



Leah Beitner
Corporate Law; Mergers and Acquisitions Law;
Tax Law (*Ones to Watch*)



Amy L. Craig
Mergers & Acquisitions Law (*Ones to Watch*)

CLEVELAND



Yelena Boxer
Commercial Litigation; Litigation—Labor and
Employment



Leslie A. Drockton
Corporate Law; Mergers and Acquisitions Law;
Securities/Capital Markets Law



Megan L. Mehalko
Corporate Law; Securities/Capital Markets Law;
Securities Regulation



Johanna Fabrizio Parker
Employment Law—Management; Labor Law—
Management



Alison K. Evans
Technology Law (*Ones to Watch*)



Yelena G. Katz
Labor and Employment Law—Management
(*Ones to Watch*)



Mariam Keramati
Real Estate Law (*Ones to Watch*)

Noteworthy Achievements and Media Mentions (cont'd)



Kelly D. Noll
Real Estate Law (*Ones to Watch*)



Connie A. Porter
Corporate Law; Mergers and Acquisitions Law
(*Ones to Watch*)



Deana S. Stein
Commercial Litigation; Litigation—Labor and
Employment (*Ones to Watch*)

COLUMBUS



Janet K. Feldkamp
Health Care Law



Martha J. Sweterlitsch
Health Care Law; Non-Profit/Charities Law

WILMINGTON



Noelle B. Torrice
Commercial Litigation (*Ones to Watch*)

MEDIA MENTIONS

DECEMBER 4, 2020

Nicole Wrigley Named to the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin & Chicago Lawyer's 2020 Class of 50 Exceptional Women Lawyers

DECEMBER 3, 2020

**Janet Feldkamp quoted in I Advance Senior Care
"Management Skill Requirement: Work on Staff
Resilience"**

DECEMBER 2, 2020

Benesch adds Litigator Ruby Kazi to San Francisco Office

NOVEMBER 20, 2020

Benesch Associate Ashleigh Morpeau Joins National Black Lawyers' "Illinois Top 40 Under 40"

OCTOBER 29, 2020

Benesch's O'Donnell Named to Corporate Counsel's "Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards" List

OCTOBER 23, 2020

**Jeanne Hammerstrom quoted in Law360
"Legal Marketers Embrace 'Vulnerability' To Lead Amid
Virus"**

OWN POINT

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OCTOBER 13, 2020
Emily Dillingham Featured in Crain's Chicago
["People on the Move"](#)

OCTOBER 7, 2020
Margo Wolf O'Donnell featured in Crain's Labor &
Employment Law Roundtable
["Roundtable on Labor and Employment Law What
Employers Need to Know"](#)

OCTOBER 2, 2020
Bryna Dahlin and Bill Doran Mentioned in Chicago Daily
Law Bulletin
["CDLB People"](#)

SEPTEMBER 28, 2020
[Benesch Adds Litigator Emily Newhouse Dillingham in
Chicago](#)

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
Margo Wolf O'Donnell and Suzanne M. Alton de Eraso
mentioned in Chicago Daily Law Bulletin
["CDLB People"](#)

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
[Rachel Winder Selected as National Association
of Women Business Owners \(NAWBO\) Columbus
Women's Business Champion](#)

SEPTEMBER 9, 2020
[The National Black Lawyers Announces Vanessa
Richmond as One of Its Top 40 Under 40 Members in
Illinois](#)

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020
Margo Wolf O'Donnell and Bryna Dahlin mentioned in
Crain's Chicago
["Crain's Chicago Notable Women in Law 2020"](#)

AUGUST 31, 2020
[Margarita Krncevic Named to Crain's Cleveland 2020
Notable Immigrant Leader List](#)

AUGUST 31, 2020
[Margo Wolf O'Donnell's My Start Story Re-airing
Nationally on September 1, 2020](#)

AUGUST 19, 2020
[Zaiba Baig Named Top ANDA Litigator for 2020](#)

AUGUST 17, 2020
Yelena Boxer quoted in The Columbus Dispatch
["Ohio victims of anti-Semitism getting free legal help"](#)

AUGUST 11, 2020
Addisah Sherwood quoted in Oprah Magazine
["How are you supporting the Black Lives Matter
movement?"](#)

JULY 21, 2020

Michael J. Barrie, Jennifer R. Hoover and Elliot M. Smith mentioned in Law360

GenCanna Bankruptcy Control Fight Heads To 6th Circ.

JULY 6, 2020

Suzanne M. Alton de Eraso, Sara H. Shanti and Margo Wolf O'Donnell mentioned in Chicago Daily Law Bulletin

“B-Sharp Virtual Presentation on Diversity & Implicit Bias Challenges and Strategies for Inclusion”

JULY 1, 2020

Susan White Named to Cleveland Bridge Builders Class of 2021

JUNE 30, 2020

Harmon Elected DSBA Vice President, New Castle County

JUNE 29, 2020

Margo Wolf O'Donnell quoted in Law360

“Making Antibody Tests Optional Won't Erase Legal Risks”

GC discusses goals for partner law firms to help improve diversity

DECEMBER 4, 2020

As the Chief Legal Officer at AbbVie, Laura Schumacher discussed goals the company set for law firms to achieve by 2023 to ensure that it's receiving a diverse and representative bench of outside counsel, across ranks, on matters. These include: Guaranteeing at least an equal representation of female and male partners work on legal matters; Doubling representation of minority partners leading company accounts compared to representation in 2018; and Ensuring partner firms maintain a mix of at least 50% underrepresented lawyers, including members of certain racial and ethnic groups, women, members of LGBT+ groups, and lawyers with disabilities, on AbbVie matters.

Source: Law 360 (sub. req.)

Bank of Canada boosts targets for women, minorities in top roles

DECEMBER 3, 2020

Canada's central bank unveiled plans to double the number of senior officers who are visible minorities by 2030, and to raise the number of women in those roles by 45% over the same period. The move, if successful, would bring the number of visible minority senior officers to 14 from seven, and the number of female senior officers to 32 from 22. There are currently 76 senior officers, including members of Governing Council, the group of policy makers responsible for setting interest rates, as well as the chief operating officer, advisors, managing directors and other senior management in various departments. That would mean 18% of senior management would be visible minorities and 42% would be women, from 9% and 29% at the present time.

Source: BNN Bloomberg

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Winter 2021



Executives examine if female CEOs have coped with coronavirus challenges better than men

DECEMBER 2, 2020

Avivah Wittenberg-Cox, CEO of 20-First, a firm that supports businesses in enhancing gender diversity, says male bosses have been trying to copy their female opposite numbers this year, from being more caring of their stakeholders to improving their communication skills. Ann Francke, CEO of the Chartered Management Institute, said the pandemic has led to more bosses embracing flexible working. Yet despite the progress, a study found women, in general, are still not seen as being as suitable for leadership roles as men. People were asked whether they thought men or women made better leaders, or whether there was no gender difference, across 22 political, government, legal and business sectors. The overall score across G7 nations was 73 out of 100 points, the same as last year, and just one higher than in 2018. The U.K. and Canada had the joint highest score of 81. For the U.K. this was up from 73 in 2019, while Canada had increased from 77.

Source: BBC

Study finds correlation between female leadership, ESG transparency

DECEMBER 2, 2020

According to a study led by BloombergNEF and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, there is a correlation between gender diversity, climate performance and business innovation. An analysis of 11,700 companies globally showed that if a third of the board are women, firms are likely to outperform in addressing ESG issues. In fact, the number of companies with more than 30% women on the board of directors has increased eightfold in just over a decade, from 2% in 2009 to 16% today.

Source: Proactive Investors

Nasdaq wants to require listed companies to have at least two diverse directors

DECEMBER 1, 2020

Nasdaq is pushing for the more than 3,000 companies listed on its U.S. stock exchange to make their boardrooms less overwhelmingly male and white by hiring directors which better reflect the diverse population of the U.S. In the proposal filed with the SEC, companies on the exchange would be required to disclose the breakdowns of their boards by race, gender and sexual orientation. Those which don't comply could be delisted or kicked off the exchange. The proposal would also require most Nasdaq-listed companies to have at least two diverse directors or, if they cannot meet the mandate, to explain why not. Foreign companies and smaller companies would have additional flexibility in satisfying this requirement with two female directors.

Source: The Associated Press

Bank of America expands the Bank of America Institute for Women's Entrepreneurship at Cornell

NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Due to the program's success, Bank of America will add 30,000 seats, bringing the total enrollment of small business owners to 50,000, and will work with Cornell to develop a Spanish language curriculum and hire Spanish-speaking teaching assistants to more effectively support Hispanic-Latino entrepreneurs. The Bank of America Institute for Women's Entrepreneurship at Cornell is the only Ivy League program offering a certificate in women's entrepreneurship, and at no cost. Since its launch in 2018, the institute has enrolled more than 20,000 individuals, primarily women, of whom 86% identify as women of color. Registration is open to anyone worldwide, regardless of gender, educational background or business

(continued on page 9)

stage. As part of the program expansion, Bank of America will partner with several nonprofits, including the National Urban League, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders and Prospera, to create more enrollment opportunities for Black and Hispanic-Latino entrepreneurs. According to a study by McKinsey, while women made up 46% of U.S. employment pre-coronavirus, they account for 54% of overall job losses year to date, with women of color the hardest hit.

Source: Bank of America

Survey shows founders of color face challenges accessing VC funding for digital health startups NOVEMBER 14, 2020

Rock Health's diversity in digital health report found over half of white and Asian digital health company founders are backed by venture investment, while less than a third of Black founder respondents are venture-backed. Black female founder respondents are the most likely group to have bootstrapped their company (57%), while white men are the least likely (10%), the report showed. In addition, 42% of digital health startups had female founders, but the data suggest women digital health founders are less likely to be venture-backed (40% of female founders compared to 62% of male founders). Black leaders rate access to capital and investors as more significant barriers to building their companies relative to their white and Asian counterparts, the survey found.

Source: Rock Health

Pension plan identifies solutions to tackle threats to gender equity worsened by COVID-19 NOVEMBER 9, 2020

In its latest research, CPP Investments engaged with diversity, capital markets and governance experts about the steps companies and policy makers can take to protect the gains to date and assure future progress. The report identifies seven recommendations for corporate and policy leaders: Set measurable diversity targets for board seats and executive positions by adopting targets for female representation; Track diversity at all organizational levels and build the talent pipeline; Support childcare for working parents to enable more women to return to work; Re-examine existing systems to identify and combat bias in the corporate culture; Go beyond diversity to inclusion in corporate culture; Institutionalize beneficial practices introduced during the pandemic, such as remote work or flexible schedules; and Leaders must lead, setting the tone at the top but also within the "frozen middle" management.

Source: CPPIB

Report looks at how firms can transform women's leadership in law OCTOBER 30, 2020

A report by Acritas shows the extent of the gender diversity problem at senior levels in law firms, providing a baseline from which future progress may be measured. The study also investigated barriers to women's progression into senior leadership roles and sought to evaluate the effectiveness of each approach to overcome those barriers that was identified, both as perceived by law firms and through numerical analysis.

Source: The Lawyer

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Deloitte survey finds pandemic negatively impacts health, work-life balance for women

OCTOBER 28, 2020

Research from Deloitte Global found nearly 82% of women in Canada, the U.S. and seven other countries said their lives have been negatively disrupted by the pandemic and nearly 70% of women who have experienced these disruptions are concerned about their ability to progress in their careers. To address these issues, Deloitte recommended employers make flexible working arrangements the norm, provide networking and mentoring opportunities and implement learning experiences that work for employees' daily lives. The firm also advised employers to address unconscious bias in succession and promotion planning.

Source: Deloitte

JPMorgan halfway to its \$10B loan to women commitment

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

In 2019, JPMorgan announced a three-year, \$10-billion lending commitment to women small business owners to help them grow and scale their companies. To date, the bank says it's reached the halfway mark of that goal, having committed \$5 billion to female entrepreneurs thus far. In addition to its lending commitment to women entrepreneurs, JPMorgan also invested \$51 million in initiatives over the past year that benefit women overall.

Source: CNBC

KPMG, PwC, EY, Deloitte among companies joining global push to adopt gender, diversity KPIs

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

KPMG LLP is among 56 companies and organizations joining the Gender and Diversity KPI Alliance (GDKA) to support the adoption and use of a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure gender and diversity. Other companies that joined the GDKA include EY, Deloitte, PwC, Accenture, Bank of America, Chevron, Google, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble, Uber and Visa. By signing on to GDKA, signatory companies commit to using or working to implement three KPIs to evaluate diversity in their organization: Percentage of representation on an organization's board; Percentage of representation by employee category; and Pay equality: the ratio of compensation by employee category. The KPIs focus on the pipeline of women and underrepresented groups moving through the organization, with the aim of better enabling organizations to track their progress.

Source: Gender & Diversity KPI Alliance

Morgan Stanley launches initiative to help women with financial literacy, professional development

AUGUST 26, 2020

Morgan Stanley Wealth Management launched Women Without Limits, an initiative to provide guidance and advice to address the financial needs of female clients and support female employees within the firm. The initiative encompasses three pillars of support: Clients: Through women-focused educational financial content and resources, the program provides education and professional guidance for female clients; Communities: It creates access to financial empowerment and literacy resources through national partnerships and affiliations such as Girls Scouts of the USA, in which Morgan Stanley Wealth Management serves as the brand's national partner to provide young girls with education in financial management; and Career: By showcasing female Morgan Stanley leaders, supporting equality in the workplace and developing initiatives to encourage young female talent, it provides career support for both established and emerging female leaders in finance.

Source: Morgan Stanley Wealth

Law firm diversity, core value strategies must acknowledge pandemic’s outsized impact on women

JULY 27, 2020

Roberta. D Liebenberg, a partner at Fine Kaplan & Black and Stephanie A. Sharf, a partner at Scharf Banks Marmor, say the pandemic and subsequent lockdown has forced women attorneys working from home to try to juggle a full-time professional career with their home life. Many are forced into the primary role for home-schooling and other childcare on top of cooking, grocery shopping, chores and tending to aging parents. This was an issue prior to the pandemic when research found 54% of experienced women lawyers reported that they were fully responsible for arranging childcare, compared to 1% of men, while at the same time over 60% report their firms viewed women as not sufficiently committed to their careers. Liebenberg and Sharf say in the face of the pandemic when many firms expect lawyers to work the same number of hours as before the pandemic, leadership must understand the pandemic’s impact on women and step up to ensure female lawyers aren’t being shortchanged and ensure implicit biases aren’t seeping into decision making. They also note we’re in a watershed moment where the upheaval of the pandemic has created an opportunity to implement structural and cultural changes that can benefit female lawyers and the firms they work at.

Source: Law 360

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Procter & Gamble assists women-owned businesses to reopen amid pandemic

JULY 19, 2020

The company and two of its hair care brands provided economic relief to 20 Black salon owners and stylists, whose women-owned businesses have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, through the Salon Give Back Grant Program. Each business was awarded \$10,000, for a total of \$200,000.

Source: Cincinnati Business Courier

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