

1st Quarter 2021

Updates from Benesch's

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Committee



Inside This Issue:

2021 Committee Changes

Racial Justice Donation Match Update

ADC Civic Engagement Charitable
Giving Drives

Bar Prep to Pass Program A Success!

Welcome First Year Associates

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Programming Update

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Event
Sponsorships

Benesch Team Recognitions



A Message From Our Co-Chairs:

A New Year, A Renewed Focus

Benesch has always been committed to creating a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout all levels of our firm and it is one of our core strategic goals. As we begin 2021 and our tenure as co-chairs of this committee, we have made structural changes to the Committee to better reflect the Committee's goals and priorities, starting with a change to the Committee's name.

Effective January 2021, the Diversity & Inclusion Committee is now the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. While the Committee will continue to focus on cultivating a culture of diversity and inclusion at all levels of the firm, to really meet our strategic goals, equity must also be a core tenant of the Committee to ensure that everyone has access to the same opportunities at our firm. This name change has significant importance as it signifies our commitment to a more equitable approach of how we run our firm, which is imperative to becoming a truly inclusive organization.

In addition to the name change, we combined oversight of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and WIN, our Women's Initiative Network. This change will allow us to capitalize on the shared goals and resources between the two committees.

We are currently putting the finishing touches on an exciting new strategic plan for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the firm. Be on the lookout for further updates from the Committee as the plan is finalized.

Congratulations to our New Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Co-Chairs



Barbara Lum
CLEVELAND, Partner
Litigation Practice Group



Juan Morado, Jr.
CHICAGO, Partner
Benesch Healthcare+
Practice Group



Margo Wolf O'Donnell
CHICAGO, Partner
Labor & Employment
Practice Group

Racial Justice Donation Match Update

The racial injustices that continue to be witnessed in our country have caused Benesch to seek out ways in which we can make a meaningful difference in our communities as it relates to racial equality. Along those lines, in mid-2020, our firm made a commitment to “Be Part of the Change.” As part of this commitment, Benesch implemented a donation matching gift program, agreeing to match up to \$2,500 per employee, up to a maximum of \$100,000 total, for donations made to approved 501(c)(3) organizations that promote racial justice, human rights and equality, and work to eradicate systemic racism, eliminate police brutality and improve police-community relations. Since the inception of the program in 2020, we are pleased to share that \$37,272 has been donated to organizations. We are proud to support the cause and will be further encouraging our team to Be Part of the Change, and to continue to support these organizations again with donations throughout 2021.

Total Employee Contributions:		\$18,636
Total Firm and Employee Contributions:		\$37,272
Organizations Donated to in 2020:		
<div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Akron Urban League• Anti-Defamation League• Beech Brook — Police Assisted Referral Program• Boys & Girls Club of Chicago• Chicago Learning Exchange• Cleveland Peacemakers• Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio• Edwin’s Leadership & Restaurant Institute• Equal Justice Initiative</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Rights Campaign Foundation• La Casa Norte• Legal Aid Society of Cleveland• My Block. My Hood. My City. (Role Model Movement Inc.)• NAACP Legal Defense Fund• National Lawyer’s Guild• Southern Poverty Law Center</div></div>		

ADC Civic Engagement Charitable Giving Drives Focus on Diversity

Each year, Benesch’s Associate Development Committee’s Civic Engagement Subcommittee holds a charitable giving drive. Keeping with the firm’s commitment to Be Part of the Change, the Chicago and Cleveland chapters focused their 2020 Charitable Giving Drives on organizations that met the criteria of Benesch’s matching gift program.

In Chicago, Benesch associates were encouraged to make donations to La Casa Norte, a not for profit organization that works to rectify issues of social injustice and racial discrimination by providing the most basic need of all—housing. Chicago associates donated \$2,047 to the organization, amounting to a total donation of \$4,094 with the firm match.

The Cleveland Civic Engagement Subcommittee selected the Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio (DCNEO) as the receiving organization for its Charitable Giving Drive. DCNEO promotes understanding and respect and institutional equality on all matters of diversity and they seek to achieve that through youth programming and by promoting diversity and addressing institutional bias in the workplace. Cleveland associates donated \$1,490 as part of the drive, for a total donation of \$2,980.

Bar Prep to Pass Program A Success!

In 2020, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee's Retention and Recruiting subcommittee piloted a new Benesch program led by now-Benesch alums Addisah Sherwood (Dominion) and Amanda Parker (First Energy) to assist our incoming first year associates as they studied for the Ohio bar exam. The program, known as the Bar Prep to Pass Program, facilitated the first year associate's introduction to the firm through in-person meetings with our attorneys in an outdoor, socially-distanced setting and motivational communications via text. The first year associate who participated this year, Jaquan Williams, was provided with a strategy for studying for the Ohio Bar, including Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) study tips, developing active studying habits, and timed practice exams. On average, each practice exam session was two hours, followed by another two hours of review to go through and thoroughly discuss all incorrect answers. Jaquan not only participated in the Benesch program, but also completed a secondary Bar Prep program. We are proud to report that our initial Bar Prep to Pass program was a success—Jaquan passed the Ohio Bar, built personal relationships with our attorneys before starting full time at the firm, and has paved the way to an expansion of the program in 2021!

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Programming Update

Benesch is committed to offering programming that provides a virtual space to connect and learn about diversity and inclusion topics. Below is a listing of some of the most recent programming events that the firm has conducted in this area:

- **“Current Business Trends and Legal Guidance in the Age of COVID-19—What You Need to Know in 2021”:** Held January 13, this program provided updates on significant lessons learned and developments arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Presenters Margo Wolf O'Donnell, partner and co-chair of our Labor & Employment practice group, Sarah Hess, partner in our Corporate & Securities practice group and Sara Shanti, partner in Benesch Healthcare+, discussed business trends and current guidance involving privacy issues, employment laws, and corporate disclosures for 2021.
- **“Dialogues for Equity Series”:** This two-part educational program was held in November and focused on providing the tools, skills and training needed for Benesch team members to engage in meaningful dialogue on the topic of race and racism with colleagues, clients, personal contacts, and beyond. Part two of the series featured the following panel of Benesch attorneys of color: Rachel Chatman, Ashleigh Morpeau, Vanessa Richmond, and Brooke Tyus. Panelists shared their personal and professional experiences and provided a safe place for effective conversations and growth.

continued on page 4

Welcome First Year Associates

On February 1, 2021, Benesch welcomed its newest class of associates. This diverse group all served as summer associates with Benesch in 2019 and we're very pleased to have them officially join the Benesch team as first year associates.



Marissa Atterholt



Amanda Bulot



Kaitlyn Heintzelman



Nick Lacey



Patrick Lipaj



Julia Rolniak



Jaquan Williams

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Programming Update

continued from page 3

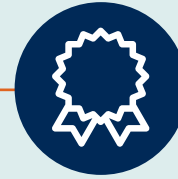
• B-SHARP WEBINAR

“A Media Slammed Your Product—Should You Sue?”: Held October 20, this webinar was presented by Nicole Wrigley, vice-chair of our Trial practice group and partner in our Litigation practice group, and Kathryn Clausing, associate in our Litigation practice group. This event provided practical steps to effectively combat defamatory or disparaging media reports and 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, and how to tell if you have a claim and factors to consider before filing a lawsuit.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Event Sponsorships

Benesch is proud to have sponsored The Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio's 66th Annual Humanitarian Award Celebration which took place virtually on November 11, 2020.

On Thursday, February 18, 2021, Benesch was honored to support ACG Cleveland and Karamu House on ACG Cleveland's first Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion event in celebration of Black History Month. This virtual event featured a Karamu House theatrical production of “Looking Back to Go Forward”, as well as provided attendees with an opportunity to have deeper conversations with key members of the Karamu House.



Benesch Team Recognitions

In recent months, several Benesch Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Women's Initiative Network members received various honors, recognitions or mentions from a range of publications as outlined below:



Carl M. Johnson, Associate, Litigation, and **Ashleigh Morpeau**, Associate, Litigation, were selected



for inclusion in The National Black Lawyers—Top 40 Under 40 Black Lawyers in Illinois, an honor given to only a select group of lawyers for their superior skills and qualifications in the field. Membership in this exclusive organization is by invitation only and is limited to the top 40 attorneys under the age of 40 in each state who have demonstrated excellence and have achieved outstanding results in their careers.



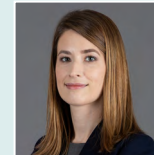
Juan Morado Jr., Partner, Benesch Healthcare+, was appointed by Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot to serve as Director on the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) Board. Additionally, Juan was also featured by the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism which is a series that highlights Illinois lawyers that are demonstrating the ideals of professionalism in their personal lives.



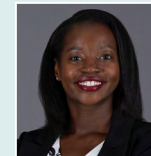
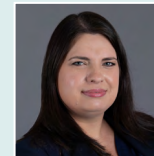
Margo Wolf O'Donnell, Partner and Co-Chair, Labor & Employment, was named a 2020 “Women, Influence & Power in Law Awards” honoree by Corporate Counsel in the Law Firm Awards’ “Collaborative Leadership” category. This award honors top women lawyers who have made a remarkable difference in the legal profession.



Nicole E. Wrigley, Vice Chair, Trial Litigation, was named to the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin & Chicago Lawyer's 2020 Class of 50 Exceptional Women Lawyers.



Benesch has chosen **Sarah Hesse**, Partner, Corporate to be a member of the 2021 class of Fellows, participating in a landmark program created by the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) to identify, train, and advance the next generation of leaders in the legal profession.



Additionally, the firm has selected **Yelena Katz**, Associate, Labor & Employment, and **Vanessa Richmond**,

Associate, Benesch Healthcare+, as members of the 2021 class of LCLD Pathfinders, a program for diverse, high-potential, early-career attorneys. The goal of this program is to provide Pathfinders with practical tools for developing and leveraging their internal professional networks through relationship-building skills.

Sarah, Yelena and Vanessa have all demonstrated a commitment to our firm's diversity, equity and inclusion strategic goals and we are pleased to have them participate in these valuable and well-respected programs.