PRESS RELEASES

Benesch Hosted Cannabis Law Panel During ‘B-Sharp at Breakfast’ Event

JANUARY 29, 2020

Benesch hosted a “B-Sharp at Breakfast” event on Jan. 23 at the firm’s Chicago office at 71 S. Wacker.

The event featured a panel discussion, “The Legalization of Cannabis and Implications Under State Law,” which dove into how businesses in Illinois should adjust to the state’s new adult use cannabis law. The discussion was led by Bryna Dahlin, a partner in the Benesch Regulated Industries Practice Group, and Ali Jubelirer, General Counsel of Revolution Enterprises.

B-Sharp was founded in 2018 by partners Margo Wolf O’Donnell, co-chair of the firm’s Labor & Employment Practice Group, and Tara Kamradt, partner in the firm’s Health Care & Life Sciences Group. O’Donnell and Kamradt saw the need for additional professional development opportunities for women in-house counsel. The group is now led by all eight of the women partners in Benesch’s Chicago office.

“We were excited to host this panel and discuss important new issues that have come out of recreational cannabis legalization in Illinois,” said O’Donnell. “Both Bryna and Ali bring varying perspectives on this important topic, and gave those in attendance the best practices on how to handle this new law.”

In October 2019, B-Sharp received the Benchmark Award from the Coalition of Women’s Initiatives in Law. The award recognized the group for demonstrating passion and commitment to leading the advancement of women's issues, and for its unique approach to increasing gender diversity in the legal profession.

With six events in the last 18 months, an active LinkedIn group, a 1,000+-person membership list, and plans to innovate with additional service offerings, B-Sharp is growing exponentially and helping to fill a gap in the industry for women in-house counsel.

“The firm is proud of what B-Sharp has accomplished since it began, and this panel is a great opportunity for industry leaders to share new ideas,” said Gregg Eisenberg, Benesch’s Managing Partner and Executive Committee Member. “Legalized cannabis is an emerging market, and a market in which best practices are still developing. Everyone wins when we provide the means for diverse groups to share their experiences.”

The group’s last event, “Implicit Bias: Experiences and Advice from In-House Counsel,” focused on issues impacting female general counsel. The panel speakers were Sarah Foley Kurup, Immigration Specialist, Jump Trading; Andrea C. Okun, Assistant General Counsel, Ryerson; and Stephanie R. Gaines, Senior Counsel - Employment Law, Adtalem Global Education. The panel was moderated by O’Donnell.