Diversity

Mission

Law firms thrive or fail based on the quality of their work. And our work improves when we have diverse teams doing it. Diverse teams think deeper thoughts, generate more creative ideas, and provide broader perspective. Why? Because teams of lawyers with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives do not just echo each other. They challenge and question each other. And that process creates great results. We create strong diverse teams by cultivating an inclusive culture that helps everyone here succeed.

We don’t just print this mission – we live it from the top down.

Diversity at Schiff Hardin starts at the top. The firm’s managing partner, Marci Eisenstein, is one of few women leading an AmLaw 200 law firm, and four of our seven Executive Committee members are women or diverse lawyers. Three of those lawyers also serve on the firm’s Diversity Committee.

Recruiting

Our recruiting and retention practices help us hire and retain a diverse group of lawyers. To us, law student recruits are a lot more than their resumes. We use structured interviews with diverse panels of lawyers to minimize implicit bias, we interview at many job fairs, and we host regular 1L writing workshops at Howard University Law School to help us recruit diverse law students.

Our recent recruiting results bear out our efforts. Our 2017 summer program was 47 percent diverse. And the 2015 summer associate class had the highest percentage of women summer associates in firm history – 75 percent.

Our hiring approach has one additional unique feature: we allow new associates to spend up to a year working in their choice of practice areas before selecting a primary area. Further, once an associate has chosen a primary practice area, the associate may still work in others.

Professional Development

We plan on the success of every associate and lateral we hire. But at the same time we know that attorneys have different needs and goals at different stages of their careers and that no two career paths are the same. For these reasons, we mentor all associates and monitor our progress toward creating long, successful, and rewarding careers for each of them. We also have a professional development team and a legal writing coach to work closely with our summer associates and associates to improve their writing skills.

Giving Honor Where Honor is Due

We value our attorneys’ efforts to promote diversity and inclusion. In 2013, the Diversity Committee created the firm’s “Catalyst Award,” a prize to call attention to individual attorneys’ diversity efforts and to recognize firm members’ contributions to the firm’s diversity and inclusion efforts.

Our Communities

Each year, Schiff Hardin contributes time and financial resources to more than 100 community organizations. Our involvement is wide-ranging. It includes providing pro bono counsel to immigrants, tutoring at-risk high school students, and serving meals at a homeless shelter. For example, Schiff sponsors a team for the annual Playworks Illinois Corporate Kickball Tournament. Playworks creates healthy and inclusive play environments for diverse groups of kids. Further, several Schiff attorneys work with Women of Tomorrow Mentor & Scholarship Program, an organization that helps at-risk young women. We also support many diverse bar and pipeline organizations, especially those that encourage minority and first-generation students to continue their education and consider becoming lawyers. For more information on our pro bono efforts, visit Citizenship.

Diversity Committee

Schiff’s Diversity Committee plays a critical role coordinating the firm’s diversity efforts. The Diversity Committee has a singular and straightforward mission:

To enhance the firm’s ability to recruit, hire, develop, retain, and promote a diverse professional workforce on the basis of demonstrated merit and performance by continuing the development of an inclusive culture that promotes the likelihood of success for all lawyers at the firm.

The Committee oversees Schiff’s Inclusion Networks, our name for affinity groups. All firm attorneys who are interested in a specific Inclusion Network are encouraged to join and help plan and participate in programming. Our Diversity subcommittees, each led by firm
leaders, include the following:

**Race, Ethnicity and National Origin**

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender**

**Women**

**Family**

**Veterans**

**Attorneys with Disabilities**

**Insights**

09.15.2020
News Release
Schiff Hardin Achieves Mansfield Certification for Second Consecutive Year

08.13.2020
In The News
Faycurry Quoted on Lawsuit to Repeal Michigan “Tampon Tax”

08.12.2020
News Release
Schiff Hardin Provides Pro Bono Representation in Class Action Lawsuit Alleging Unconstitutional Tampon Tax in Michigan

08.03.2020
News Release
Schiff Joins Law Firm Antiracism Alliance As Charter Member

07.09.2020
Event
Women In Leadership: Emotional Intelligence and Why It Matters

07.07.2020
News Release
Schiff Joins Diversity Lab’s Mansfield Rule for Third Straight Year

06.17.2020
News Release
Schiff Hardin Statement on Black Lives Matter Movement

05.26.2020
News Release
Eisenstein Recognized Among Chicago’s Notable Women Executives Over 50 for Second Consecutive Year

05.14.2020
Event

05.11.2020
News Release
Eisenstein and Hickey Recognized as Influential Women in Law

**Awards & Honors**

- “Best Place to Work for LBGTQ Equality” (2019)
  Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index

- Schiff Hardin Named to 2018 *Working Mother* 60 Best Law Firms for Women List
  For the 7th straight year, we were recognized for leading the way in attracting, retaining, and promoting women lawyers
• Marci Eisenstein Named to CBJ’s 2018 Women of Influence
  Chicago Business Journal’s 2018 Women of Influence honors women business leaders who stand out for both their business achievements and their commitment to their community.

• Three Schiff Hardin Attorneys Join 2018 LCLD Leadership Programs
  Three of our attorneys will participate in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity’s 2018 leadership programs

• Imron Aly Named Among Most Influential Minority Lawyers in Chicago (2017)
  Crain’s Chicago Business

• Schiff Hardin Named a Best Place to Work for LGBTQ Equality
  Human Rights Campaign awards perfect score on 2018 Corporate Equality Index for 8th consecutive year

• Law360 Highlights Schiff As Leader In Maintaining Diverse Attorney Workplace
  We are one of 18 firms identified as consistently showing above-average representation of women and minorities at every level

• Schiff Hardin Recognized as a Top Firm for LGBT Equality
  For the seventh year in a row, we have been named a top law firm for “Raising the Bar” on LGBT inclusion by Equality Illinois