

**DEI**DIVERSITY  
EQUITY &  
INCLUSION

# UPDATE

ROBINS **■** KAPLAN LLP

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## OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Robins Kaplan is committed to attracting, retaining, and advancing top diverse talent who will help drive innovation and success. Diverse teams are more creative, nimble, and generate stronger results. Through our efforts, we leverage the power of our collective diversity. By doing so, we redefine and expand the possibilities of success for our clients and ourselves.

## NEW LEADERSHIP APPOINTED FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE



ELIZABETH BURNETT

Elizabeth Burnett (Minneapolis) and Jason Fair (Los Angeles) have been appointed to serve as co-chairs of the firm's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee effective July 1. Tim Purdon (Bismarck) and Sherry Roberg-Perez (Minneapolis) have served as co-chairs for the past two and three years, respectively.

Tim and Sherry's focus as DEI co-chairs has been on achieving meaningful progress related to the five overarching DEI goals adopted by the firm in 2020. Specifically, in 2021 they presented detailed recommendations to the Executive Board with a focus on measuring results, which were approved.



JASON FAIR

Their efforts include launching a new tool to track the identity of attorneys involved in pitches and to ensure equitable distribution of opportunities. Additionally, a new collaboration with Business Development was launched to identify and collaborate with companies demonstrating a public commitment to diversity.

Managing Partner Steve Schumeister shared, "We appreciate the leadership of Sherry and Tim, and everything they have done and will continue to do for our firm and our DEI initiatives. We all look forward to working with Liz and Jason in their new DEI leadership roles."

## WoRK RESOURCE GROUP COLLABORATES WITH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TO OFFER TRAINING

The firm recently hosted a business development (BD) training program titled "Characteristics of Top Women Rainmakers" in collaboration with the Women of Robins Kaplan (WoRK) Resource Group. Partner and WoRK Chair Holly Dolejsi and Senior Business Development Coach Nancy Newman introduced BD expert Laura Meherg, who presented on skills, traits, and habits of top women rainmakers, including:

- **CHECKING IN.** Calling clients, prospects, and referral sources to check in, share industry news or provide insight into a recent matter.
- **SUBSCRIBING TO ALERTS.** Spending time each week learning about client business by reading news and litigation alerts.
- **BEING PERSISTENT.** Recognizing that it can take months or years to cultivate a new client relationship.
- **BEING INTELLECTUALLY CURIOUS.** Talking less and listening more to gain a better understanding of your client's pressures, expectations, preferences, and challenges.
- **BEING A PEOPLE CONNECTOR.** Looking to your personal and professional networks as opportunities to connect with others and build relationships.
- **PAYING IT FORWARD.** Mentoring someone in your network or asking to be mentored by a colleague or client.



HOLLY DOLEJSI



NANCY NEWMAN

## MENTORING PODS LAUNCHED

In the wake of the pandemic and racial and social unrest, the Attorneys of Color Resource Group (AOCRG) sensed a need for more personal and professional engagement across offices and practice groups for the attorneys of color (AOC). After surveying the AOCs, the AOCRG started a new program called "Mentoring Pods." Mentoring Pods bring together AOCs across the different offices, practice areas, and experience levels in small groups of four or five with the intention of building deeper relationships and trust across the community and providing professional and personal support and resources to its members. The Mentoring Pods meet monthly or quarterly to discuss anything from personal reactions to things occurring outside the firm, to professional development, questions, and support for issues internal to the firm.

The Mentoring Pods are led by **David Martinez, Sherry Roberg-Perez, Brandon Vaughn, Annie Huang, and Christine Yun Sauer.**



DAVID MARTINEZ  
LOS ANGELES



SHERRY ROBERG-PEREZ  
MINNEAPOLIS



BRANDON VAUGHN  
MINNEAPOLIS



ANNIE HUANG  
NEW YORK



CHRISTINE YUN SAUER  
SILICON VALLEY

Groups are open and welcome to any AOCs who would like to join. Please contact [Christine Yun Sauer](#), and/or [Raj Olson](#) if you are interested.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** The AOC Resource Group is seeking volunteers to plan activities for firm Heritage Months. Please contact [Christine Yun Sauer](#) if interested.

- Black History – February
- Asian / Pacific Islander – May
- Native American – October
- Women's History – March
- Hispanic-Latinx – September



## PROMOTED TO COUNSEL

**Manleen Singh**, an attorney in the firm's Boston office, has been promoted to Counsel. She advises businesses of all sizes on all facets of corporate transactional law, including mergers and acquisitions, commercial leasing, international transactions, contract drafting and negotiation, corporate formation, and general business counseling. She represents clients in a variety of sectors, including retail, food and beverage, and manufacturing. She is also a skilled litigator, who can spot potential disputes and resolve them pre-suit or go to court for resolution.

Singh has a diverse *pro bono* practice, which includes representing survivors of human trafficking and work on federal acknowledgment of a Native American tribe. Her commitment to *pro bono* work earned her recognition as "Empire State Counsel" by the New York State Bar Association. Singh currently serves as a Trustee for the Boston Bar Foundation and is Vice Chair of the Board of RIA, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting women with experience in the commercial sex trade and its associated exploitation, trafficking, and prostitution.

## 2022 LCLD FELLOW AND PATHFINDER



CHRISTINA LINCOLN

**Christina Lincoln** has been accepted into the 2022 Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) Fellows Program! The Fellows Program connects high-potential, diverse attorneys from LCLD member organizations for a year-long professional development program focused on leadership and relationship building. The program provides participants with the opportunity to learn from top leaders in the legal profession as well as experts in the fields of learning and development and executive coaching. The 2022 program will consist of virtual and in-person events developed exclusively for Fellows.

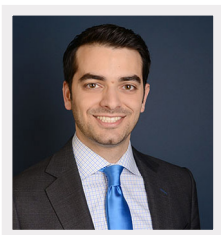


RASHANDA BRUCE

**Rashanda Bruce** has been accepted into the 2022 LCLD Pathfinder Program! The Pathfinder Program is designed for diverse, high-potential, early-career attorneys at LCLD member organizations. The goal of this program is to provide Pathfinders with practical tools for developing and leveraging:

- Internal professional networks through relationship-building skills
- Foundational leadership skills
- Understanding of career development strategies applicable to both in-house and law firm practice

**DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT: RAJIN S. OLSON**



**What is one fun fact about you?**

While in university and law school, I participated in (and sometimes led) competitive bhangra dance teams. Bhangra is a dance style from Punjab, India, where my mother was born. I still do choreographed bhangra dances occasionally for community or family events, including for my sister’s dual Sikh/Christian wedding in November. You can see a video of the University of Minnesota team I participated in during law school here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueaWDjU1j0o>

**What inspires you?**

Two main things: Curiosity and people. You never stop learning, and everyone has something to teach you.

**Why is diversity, equity and inclusion important to you?**

So many reasons. DEI is about making humanity whole. We are not operating at our fullest potential unless we can honor our differences, learn from each other, and encourage everyone to share who they are. DEI is about eliminating barriers and leveling the playing field so that everyone has the same opportunities to succeed.

**What are you looking forward to most in 2022?**

Traveling! The two things I have missed the most during the ongoing pandemic are family and traveling. I have been fortunate to see family more often since getting vaccinated, but I definitely have some catching up to do on traveling, conditions permitting. Hopefully a wedding in Sweden I’ve been hoping to attend won’t get postponed a third time this summer.



**NOTABLE WOMEN IN LAW**

Kellie Lerner and Meegan Hollywood have been named to *Crain's New York Business'* fifth annual “Notable Women in Law” list. The list honors “dedicated, gifted, and determined female lawyers” in New York, recognizing both their achievements in the legal profession and their contributions to their communities.

**ROBINS KAPLAN JOINS WANTON INJUSTICE LEGAL DETAIL AS A FOUNDER**



Robins Kaplan LLP is proud to join the [Wanton Injustice Legal Detail](#) (WILD) as a founder.

WILD provides a platform through which volunteer attorneys within Twin Cities Diversity in Practice (TCDIP) can actively combat anti-Black racism and all forms of racism through direct support and partnerships with existing community organizations. WILD is an affiliate non-profit to TCDIP. By harnessing the collective expertise of TCDIP member organizations and volunteer attorneys, WILD seeks to amplify and support the work of community organizations across the Twin Cities to create a community free of all forms of racism. As a founder, Robins Kaplan will join WILD on the front lines of these efforts.