

# KMK Law D&I Newsletter

Volume 2 | Issue 1

## KMK Law Hosts Second Annual Diversity Case Competition

On January 17 & 18, 2020, KMK Law, in partnership with the University of Cincinnati College of Law's Center for Professional Development, hosted the second annual Diversity Case Competition for first-year minority law students—the nation's first and only competition of its kind. This year's competition was comprised of 17 teams from 8 tri-state area law schools: University of Akron School of Law, University of Louisville Louis D. Brandies School of Law, Case Western Reserve University School of Law, University of Cincinnati College of Law, University of Dayton School of Law, University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and University of Toledo College of Law.

Different from law school moot court and trial practice competitions that simulate a court hearing or trial, the case competition places first year law students into the shoes of a law firm associate tasked with a late Friday afternoon assignments from a supervising partner for a series of Saturday morning meetings. In this year's competition, competitors were tasked with representing a commercial developer with respect to a proposed riverfront development and asked to present on a variety of legal and local constituent issues to judges who played the roles of city planning officials, city

council staff members and city solicitors. The assignments required competitors to use their analytical, problem solving and communication skills to provide legal and practical advice regarding the proposed development's compliance with municipal and state legal requirements, while also addressing the concerns of various community stakeholders.

The competition also gave law students the benefit of networking with KMK Law associates, who acted as professional development coaches on the first day of the competition. Additionally, competitors were exposed to KMK Law partners and Fortune 500 corporate counsel, who judged the competition. The competition has become an integral part of KMK Law's ongoing commitment to inclusion and diversity. KMK Law is dedicated to partnering with law schools, clients, and community leaders to make this a tangible and rewarding experience that provides students with first class learning opportunities that go beyond the classroom, internships, or summer experience. <<

*Additional information about next year's Diversity Case Competition will be made available in Fall 2020. If you are interested in being involved with the competition, please contact Julie M. Mulhern, Director of Legal Recruiting & Professional Development.*



LAW STUDENT  
DIVERSITY CASE  
COMPETITION  
The Nation's First and Only

KMK | Law  
CINCINNATI | LAW

### Cash prizes were awarded to the following teams:



#### First Place (\$3,000)

University of Cincinnati College of Law  
Rosita Ortiz and Janelle Thompson



#### Second Place (\$2,000)

The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law  
Shayla Kendricks and Pierre Collins (Left)

#### Third Place (\$1,000)

Case Western Reserve University School of Law  
Makela Hayford and Sierra Lipscomb (Right)



## Recent Activities and Events



LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL  
ON LEGAL  
DIVERSITY

### Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)

KMK is a proud member of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD), a national organization of corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners dedicated to creating a diverse legal profession. Several KMK attorneys have served as mentors to students at Northern Kentucky University Chase College of Law and University of Cincinnati's College of Law through LCLD's law school mentoring program. Moreover, on June 21, 2019, KMK hosted a rooftop happy hour for LCLD Pathfinders in connection with the Third Annual LCLD Pathfinder Alumni Meeting held in Cincinnati. KMK's Joe Lehnert, a 2017 LCLD Pathfinder, served on the planning committee for the Pathfinder Alumni Meeting.



DRESS FOR  
SUCCESS  
CINCINNATI

### Dress for Success Cincinnati Fashion Show

Dress for Success Cincinnati celebrated its 20th anniversary in style at its 18th annual fashion show on September 12, 2019. KMK is proud to continue to support the mission of Dress for Success Cincinnati to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and development tools to help them thrive in work and in life. KMK's Kelley Brandstetter Tracy currently serves on the board of Dress for Success Cincinnati.



### The State of Diversity & Inclusion in the Legal Profession – Cincinnati

Members of KMK participated in the October 10, 2019 one-day symposium presented by the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession at Procter & Gamble. The symposium focused on the coordination, communication, and cooperation needed to stay abreast of trends and developments and to learn about the many different facets of diversity, including the diversity within diversity.



### BLINK 2019

KMK hosted professional women from the Greater Cincinnati area on our rooftop deck for the opening night of BLINK. The women enjoyed a cocktail reception with a special view of the kickoff parade for the BLINK festivities.



GCMCP  
Greater Cincinnati Minority Counsel Program

### Greater Cincinnati Minority Counsel Program (GCMCP) Annual Meeting

The GCMCP Annual Meeting, entitled "Legal Diversity: Actions Speak Louder Than Words," held on November 6, 2019, educated attending attorneys on how to most effectively promote diversity and inclusion in the legal profession, with an end-goal of applying this knowledge to improve the culture of law firms and corporate legal departments such that all attorneys have equal access to client opportunities that will develop their skills. KMK's Shannon Lawson moderated a panel of local attorneys who shared their experiences and observations of diversity and inclusion efforts in the Cincinnati legal community.

## Women in the Legal Profession

The 2019 KMK Legal Update Seminar featured a panel session on "Women in the Legal Profession: Understanding & Eliminating Gender Bias." KMK's Kasey Bond served as the moderator and the panel included: Eileen Brumback, General Counsel and Leader of Legal Operations at GE Aviation; Sue Erhart, General Counsel & Senior Vice President of Great American Insurance Group; Erica O'Brien, Senior Labor & Employment Practices Counsel of Cintas Corporation; and Karen Woods, General Counsel of First Financial Bank. The panel discussed the importance of understanding gender bias and stereotypes with an emphasis on the application of the ABA's Model Rule 8.4(g). With real-world examples, the panel offered practical advice to break through gender bias and improve gender equality in the legal profession.







### Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

KMK was proud to attend and participate as sponsor of the 2019 Hispanic Chamber Cincinnati USA Annual Gala held on November 7, 2019. Jill P. Meyer, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber President & CEO, was the Gala's keynote speaker and addressed the future growth of Cincinnati. KMK's Joe Lehnert currently serves as the firm's liaison with the Hispanic Chamber.



### GE Diversity Day

KMK attorneys attended GE Aviation's Diversity & Inclusion Day held on November 21, 2019. KMK's Shannon Lawson served as a panelist with other law firm attorneys to discuss diversity and inclusion efforts in the legal community. Topics that were addressed were how firms are approaching diversity and inclusion, responses to client requests for diverse representation, and what is and isn't working when it comes to diversity and inclusion efforts.



### Minority Law Student Holiday Reception

KMK was proud to once again host and sponsor the Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati – Cincinnati Bar Association Round Table's holiday reception for minority law students. Students from a variety of law schools enjoyed cocktails and connecting with members of the Cincinnati legal community.

# FBA Gender Equity Task Force Awards KMK Attorney Sophia Holley Inaugural PLEDGE Award

On January 30, 2020, the Gender Equity Task Force of the John W. Peck Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Chapter of the Federal Bar Association recognized its inaugural class of PLEDGE award recipients, including KMK litigation attorney Sophia Holley. Holley was one of eight women lawyers recognized as emerging leaders in the local federal bar. PLEDGE—Promoting Lawyer Excellence & Driving Gender Equality—is a program developed to place a spotlight on the professional successes of exceptional women lawyers in the greater Cincinnati area at a critical point in their careers. The PLEDGE honorees were selected for their notable legal experience, exceptional legal talent and skill, professionalism, and commitment to their workplaces and communities.

Holley has been an active member of the Gender Equity Committee of the Cincinnati Federal Bar Association since its inception, which was created to increase the number of female attorneys (and, by extension, young attorneys in general) who argue in court. She helped to drive the creation of a CLE series that focuses on making changes to improve the participation and advancement of women in the profession. She also serves on the KMK Law's Women's Initiative Committee—a sub-committee of KMK's Diversity & Inclusion Committee that was established to encourage and support a culture that promotes equality in the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women attorneys.

Holley advocates for a wide variety of business clients, including large financial institutions and other business clients both inside and outside the Cincinnati area. Holley has experience in all aspects of commercial litigation, including depositions, oral argument, motion practice, written discovery, trial preparation, trials, and appellate litigation. Holley has successful first-chair trial experience to both the jury and the

bench, and has tried cases in both federal and state courts throughout the country. She devotes a portion of her practice to employment litigation, and has successfully represented both employees and employers in non-compete disputes. Holley also represents companies and individuals in real estate litigation, and has obtained favorable results for her clients in litigation surrounding real estate, eminent domain, zoning disputes, and real estate taxation.

Holley earned her J.D. from the University of Cincinnati College of Law in 2013, Order of the Coif, Law Review Executive Board. Prior to attending law school, she advocated in the non-profit sector as the Communications & Outreach Coordinator at the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky. Holley was also a founding member of the executive planning committee for Louisville's Stand Down/Project Homeless Connect, an event which provides resources to homeless veterans. Holley earned her B.A. from the University of Kentucky in 2008, *magna cum laude*. Holley is admitted to practice law in Ohio and Kentucky. <<



# More Recent Activities and Events



## 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Handbags for Hope

KMK was proud to support The Literacy Network's 9th Annual Handbags for Hope fundraiser on Thursday, February 6, 2020 at the Newport Syndicate. The celebration of literacy included dinner, drinks, auctions, and raffles honoring the 2020 Hope Award Winner.



## Letters of Love

On February 11, 2020, the KMK Women's Initiative supported Cradle Cincinnati with "Letters of Love" to support new and expectant mothers. Cradle Cincinnati was founded in 2012 by Todd Portune as a collaborative effort between parents, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and community members with a commitment to reduce infant mortality in our community.



## Girls Night Out

KMK sponsored Kenzie's Closet's Girls Night Out at The Summit Hotel on Thursday, February 27, 2020. Kenzie's Closet was founded in 2001 by Brynne Coletti and is a nonprofit organization providing prom attire for female juniors and seniors in financial need.



### KEATING MUETHING & KLEKAMP PLL ADRIENNE J. ROACH, PARTNER

Adrienne is a member of the Board of Directors at Keating Muething & Klekamp ("KMK Law") and serves as a Practice Group Leader of the firm's Private Client Services Group. She represents clients in matters related to family law. She is a founder and member of the KMK Law Women's Initiative, which focuses on attracting, retaining, and advancing female attorneys in the industry and community.

She is also the former chair and a current member of the KMK Law Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Adrienne is active with many organizations, including Dress for Success. She is a current Trustee with both the Cincinnati Bar Foundation and Cincinnati Bar Association.

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## Cincinnati MAGAZINE Women Who Move Cincinnati

KMK congratulates Adrienne Roach on being featured in the February 2020 issue of Cincinnati Magazine in the special feature of "Women Who Move Cincinnati."

## 2019 Diversity Committee and Women's Initiative Committee

KMK recognizes the current members of the Diversity Committee and Women's Initiative Committee. Please reach out to any of these members with input or questions regarding KMK's diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### Diversity Committee

Bethany Recht (Chairperson)

Jim Burke	Claire Parrish
Shannon Lawson	Dave Popp
Joe Lehnert	Adrienne Roach
Rob Lesan	Jason Stitt
Julie Muething	Allie Westfall
Julie Mulhern	

### Women's Initiative Committee

Antoinette Schindel (Co-Chairperson)  
Claire Parrish (Co-Chairperson)

Mike Cappel	Caroline Musekamp
Sarah Geiger	Adrienne Roach
Sophia Holley	Nick Simon
Megan Hymore	Darcy Watt
Mary Ellen Malas	

# KMK | Law

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