



KMK Law D&I Newsletter

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KMK Law Hosts Third Annual Diversity Case Competition

On January 15 & 16, 2021, KMK Law, in partnership with the University of Cincinnati College of Law's Center for Professional Development, hosted the third annual Diversity Case Competition for first-year minority law students – the nation's first and only competition of its kind. This year the competition, which was held virtually, was comprised of 17 teams from 7 area law schools: Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, Indiana University Maurer School of Law, Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, University of Cincinnati College of Law, University of Dayton School of Law, and the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law.

The competition simulates the real-world associate experience, complete with the evaluation and feedback processes used in most law firms. Using the case model students competed for cash prizes by displaying their analytical, problem solving, and communication skills – all skills that are key to success in the legal industry. The competition also exposed students to practicing attorneys and Fortune 500 corporate counsel, who served as coaches and judges.

This year's program opened with guest speaker Malik Zaire, former quarterback for the University of Notre Dame and the University of Florida, and current commentator for college football on the CBS Sports Network. Zaire shared the importance of networking, communication, and taking advantage of professional opportunities.



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DIVERSITY CASE
COMPETITION
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The program also included guest speakers Chief Judge Jeffrey P. Hopkins of the United States Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Ohio and Dean Verna Williams from the University of Cincinnati College of Law. Judge Hopkins shared insights from his career and spoke of the importance of the Cincinnati Bar Association and BLAC Roundtable efforts in supporting the diverse population of young lawyers. Dean Williams talked about the success of the Annual Case Competition and the significance of the competition being held on Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. «

Additional information about next year's Diversity Case Competition will be made available in Fall 2021. If you are interested in being involved with the competition, please contact Joe Lehnert, Co-Chairperson of the Diversity Committee.

Cash prizes were awarded to the following teams:

First Place (\$3,000)

University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law
Shantale Davis and Ashlei McPherson

Second Place (\$2,000)

The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law
Ashtar Abboud and Ghofran Miari

Third Place (\$1,000)

University of Cincinnati College of Law
Inma Sumaita and Ashley Nkdai

KMK Law Women's Initiative

The KMK Law Women's Initiative continues to support other local women's groups and initiatives and participate in forums to learn best practices for women leaders and engage in thoughtful discourse on how we can best achieve our ultimate goals of attracting, retaining, and advancing our female attorneys. The members have participated in the following:



Kenzie's Closet – Girls Night In

On February 25, 2021, KMK sponsored Kenzie's Closet's 2021 re-imagined Virtual Girls Night In, a fun-filled evening complete with their signature designer handbag raffles and entertainment. 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.



YWCA Career Women of Achievement

KMK is a proud sponsor of the 2021 YWCA Career Women of Achievement TV/online broadcast held on Thursday, April 22. KMK Law supports the YWCA's mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. Congratulations to all of the 2021 Career Women of Achievement!



KMK Sponsors The 2020 Think Tank on Equity & Inclusion

On September 24, 2020, KMK proudly sponsored and participated in the 2020 Think Tank on Equity & Inclusion, a virtual Think Tank that reviewed health, economic, and other inequities and disparities based on race and discussed proven strategies to provide equity and inclusion for all people.



Greater Cincinnati Minority Counsel Program (GCMCP)

On February 17, 2021, in celebration of Black History Month, KMK attorneys joined other GCMCP members for a virtual coffee hour with special guest Means Cameron, owner of BlaCk Coffee and BlaCk Owned Outerwear, to hear Mr. Cameron's story as a local black business owner—and enjoy a cup of BlaCk Coffee's famous house blend WAKANDA.



BLAC Shanda L. Spurlock Recipient – Janelle Thompson

We congratulate the 2021 Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati Scholarship Recipients including KMK Law Summer Associate Janelle Thompson, recipient of the Shanda L. Spurlock Scholarship.

Diversity Fellowship Program Recipient

KMK Law is pleased to announce that Kenneth D. (Ken) McQueen, Jr. is the 2021 recipient of the KMK Law Diversity Fellowship.

Ken McQueen is a 2017 graduate of Berea College with a bachelor's degree in Political Science and currently a first year law student at the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law. McQueen is a member of the University of Kentucky BLSA and Phi Alpha Delta student groups. McQueen was also a participant in the 2021 KMK Law 1L Diversity Virtual Case Competition.

"As part of our ongoing commitment to diversity, we are proud to sponsor the KMK Law Diversity Fellowship Program along with the 1L Diverse Student Case Competition", said Bethany P. Recht, KMK Partner and Co-Chairperson of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee. "We congratulate and welcome Ken to KMK Law as a first-year summer associate."

The KMK Law Diversity Fellowship Program is intended to further our mission of recruiting and retaining a skilled, high-performing diverse workforce. Selected applicants are hired as a first-year summer associate. «



FBA PLEDGE Award Recipient Sarah Vonderbrink Geiger



On March 25, 2021, the Gender Equity Task Force of the John W. Peck Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Chapter of the Federal Bar Association recognized its second class of PLEDGE award recipients, including KMK litigation attorney Sarah Vonderbrink Geiger. Geiger was one of eight women lawyers recognized as emerging leaders in the local federal bar. PLEDGE—Promoting Lawyer Excellence & Driving Gender Equity—is a program developed to place a spotlight on the professional successes of exceptional woman lawyers in the greater Cincinnati area at a critical point in their careers. The honorees

were selected for their notable legal experience, exceptional legal talent and skill, professionalism, and commitment to their workplaces and communities.

Geiger is an active member of the Gender Equity Committee of the Cincinnati Federal Bar Association, which was created to increase the number of female attorneys (and, by extension, young attorneys in general) who argue in court. She serves as a member of the KMK Law Women's Initiative Committee – a sub-committee of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee that was established to encourage and support a culture that promotes equality in the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women attorneys. Geiger is a champion of community causes and actively participates in many organizations.

Geiger has successfully represented a wide variety of business clients, including financial institutions and regional and national corporations. Her practice is concentrated in the area of litigation, with a focus on general civil litigation, business and commercial litigation, and personal

injury/medical malpractice/wrongful death litigation. She has represented clients in a wide variety of litigation and business disputes, including class actions, collective actions, toxic tort litigation, multidistrict litigation, arbitrations, mediations, actions for breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, fraud, and other business tort claims. Geiger has experience advising trustees of mass tort settlement trusts on issues relating to trust administration, as well as in intellectual property/patent litigation and False Claims Act (qui tam) litigation.

Geiger earned her law degree in 2014 from the University of Virginia School of Law, where she was a member of the Virginia Sports & Entertainment Law Journal, and the Family Alternative Dispute Resolution Clinic. Before graduating from law school, she worked as a judicial intern for Judge Lawrence VanMeter, then on the Kentucky Court of Appeals. Geiger earned her B.A. from the University of Richmond in 2010, cum laude. «

2021 KMK Law Summer Associates

KMK Law is please to announce the



Kennedy Ellen Brooks
University of Louisville



Michael DeWine
New York University



Laura Gates
University of Cincinnati



Olivia King
University of Cincinnati



Kenneth McQueen, Jr.
University of Kentucky



Kassidy Michel
University of Cincinnati



Madeline O'Toole
University of Cincinnati



Carlos Schemmel
University of Cincinnati



Brandon Sullivan
Northern Kentucky University



Janelle Thompson
University of Cincinnati

2021 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 (Co-Chairperson)
Joe Lehnert (Co-Chairperson)

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Melanie Cheek | Dave Popp |
| Brittany Kolonay | Adrienne Roach |
| Shannon Lawson | Kal Steinberg |
| Lori Moser | Jason Stitt |
| Claire Parrish | Allie Westfall |

Women's Initiative Committee

Sophia Holley (Co-Chairperson)
Darcy Watt (Co-Chairperson)

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Mike Cappel | Mary Ellen Malas |
| Sarah Vonderbrink Geiger | Caroline Musekamp |
| Megan Hymore | Adrienne Roach |
| Carly Knue | Antoinette Schindel |
| Margaret Kubicki | Nick Simon |



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