

# Diversity Inclusion Equity





DREW | ECKL  
FARNHAM

ATTORNEYS AT LAW



2022

# ANNUAL REPORT

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## Commitment to Inclusion For All

Drew Eckl & Farnham has reaffirmed its commitment to creating and supporting initiatives that not only provide education to combat issues of racism but that, more importantly, create specific opportunities to increase representation of attorneys from underrepresented backgrounds in leadership positions and the partnership ranks at our firm. We commit to holding ourselves accountable to create change. Listening, education and acknowledgment is the first step.

We are proud of the steps we have taken as a firm over the years to support diversity and inclusion, but we know that we have much to learn and much to do to create lasting change. We have assumed the responsibility to educate ourselves about the struggle faced by many our colleagues and to get involved in making our firm better tomorrow than it is today.



# Executive Summary

As one of the largest litigation defense firms in the Southeast, Drew Eckl & Farnham has both extraordinary opportunity and a special responsibility to maintain a culture that nurtures diversity in interests, sexual orientation, age, religion, and physical ability.



Not only is diversity extremely important to the firm but also to the clients that we are selected by and have sustained long-term relationships with over the past 35 years.

Our commitment to promoting and encouraging diversity is illustrated by policies, initiatives, and programs established across offices, including efforts in recruiting, training and retention. Our firm-supported affinity groups include those who self-identify as or are allied with African American, Hispanic, Asian, LGBTQ, and women lawyers.



# A Letter From Our Managing Partner

*“We know that we have much to learn and much to do to create lasting change.”*



**As with all people of good will, the death of George Floyd last year was a shock that led our firm to reflection, discussion, and commitment to action in support of diversity, inclusion, and racial justice. We have learned this past year that every day we, as a firm, have to make the commitment to create change. Listening, education and acknowledgment are the first steps. However, we know that meaningful change will not come without action.**

Last year's events caused us to reflect on our firm's history. Ever since our inception in 1983, diverse lawyers have been represented in every level of our firm, including our founding equity partner ranks. We're happy to report that we meet or exceed NALP's benchmarking averages for representation of diverse attorneys within law firms and that we have diversity at all ranks within the firm – from our administrative leadership to our equity partnership. Today, diverse lawyers are members of our Board of Directors, Compensation Committee, and other groups who make important decisions about our firm's management. We're proud that our founding partners created a foundation and culture that values merit and mutual respect above all.

However, we also agreed that our status quo is not good enough, so we discussed our firm's responsibility and opportunity to lead the legal community as a place where diverse talent is sought, welcomed, and provided a professional environment in which to thrive. Our Diversity Committee led discussions with our Board of Directors and our partnership to identify specific initiatives to ensure that we

eliminate conscious or unconscious impediments to opportunity. We agreed to take action on several legal industry leading initiatives and we are on our way.

We've provided unconscious bias training for everyone in our firm. We've created a 1L Diversity Fellowship for every summer associate class. We agreed to do on-campus recruiting at a historically black law school every year. And we were one of the first mid-sized firms in the nation to enroll in the Mansfield Certification process to hold ourselves accountable to specific, verified benchmarks for representation of diverse lawyers throughout our leadership.

We know that we have much to learn and much to do to create lasting change. This report provides an overview of our commitment to this change and is supported by the partnership of Drew Eckl & Farnham.

**- Joseph Chancey**



# By The Numbers

*The Diversity Committee tracks gender and race for purposes of benchmarking them against national metrics issued by the National Association for Legal Placement (NALP). As of July 2021, DEF continues to meet or exceed most of the national numbers for diverse attorneys as published in 2021 by NALP.\**

## Race and Ethnicity

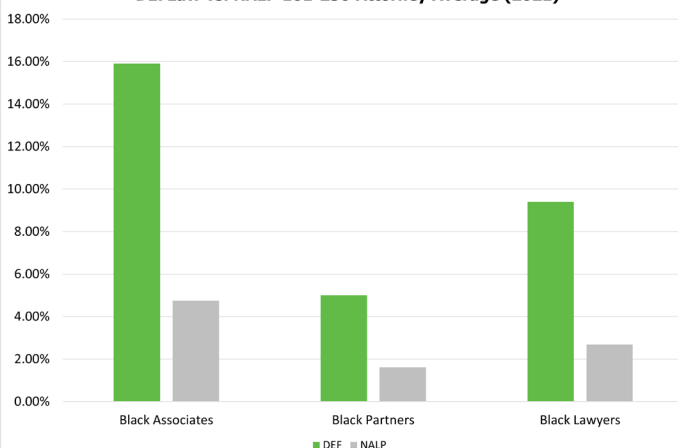
### Distribution

African American	9.4%
Hispanic/Latinos	2.56%
Asian	1.71%
White/Caucasian	85.47%

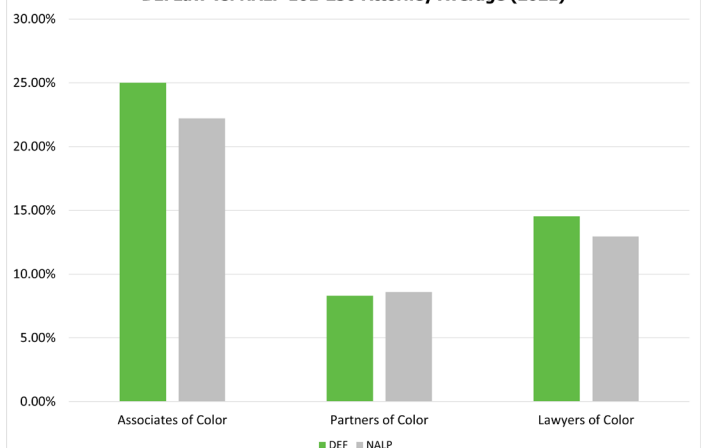


**25%**  
**Associates of**  
**Color**  
**(22.2% NALP)**

Percentage of Black Lawyers  
DEFLaw vs. NALP 101-250 Attorney Average (2021)



Percentage of Lawyers of Color  
DEFLaw vs. NALP 101-250 Attorney Average (2021)



## Women in Law



**37.6%  
Women  
Lawyers  
(34.08%  
NALP)**



**46% PROMOTED  
TO PARTNER  
IN 2022 WERE  
WOMEN**

### Distribution

Associates

Partners

Lawyers

Women

Women of  
Color

45.45%

13.64%

31.67%

5%

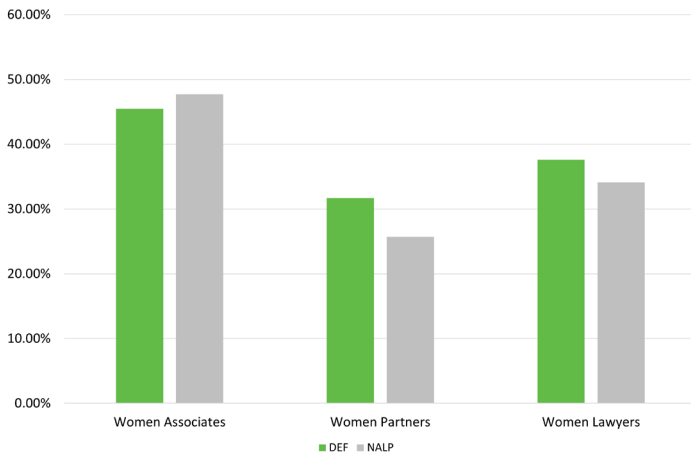
37.61%

7.69%

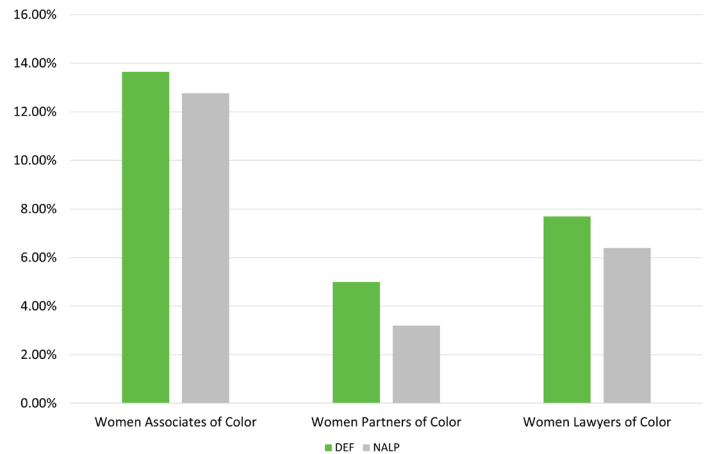


**13.6% Women  
of Color  
Associates  
(12.77% NALP)**

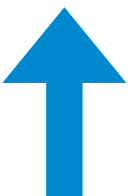
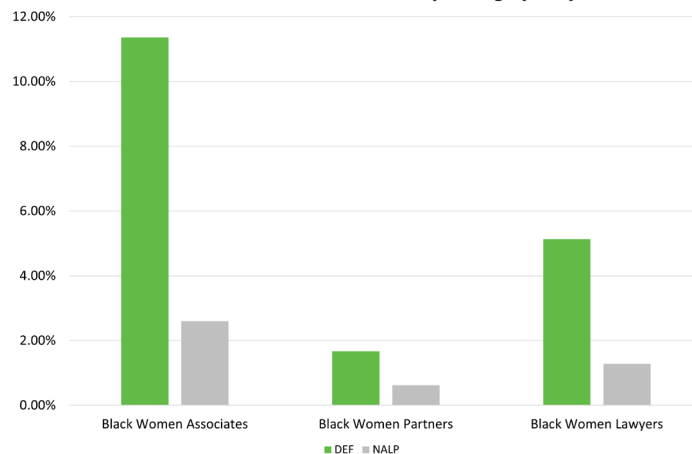
Percentage of Women Lawyers  
DEFLaw vs. NALP 101-250 Attorney Average (2021)



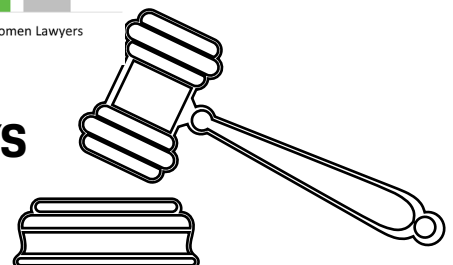
Percentage of Women Lawyers of Color  
DEFLaw vs. NALP 101-250 Attorney Average (2021)



Percentage of Black Women Lawyers  
DEFLaw vs. NALP 101-250 Attorney Average (2021)



**117 TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTORNEYS**  
40% Increase in the Past 9 Years







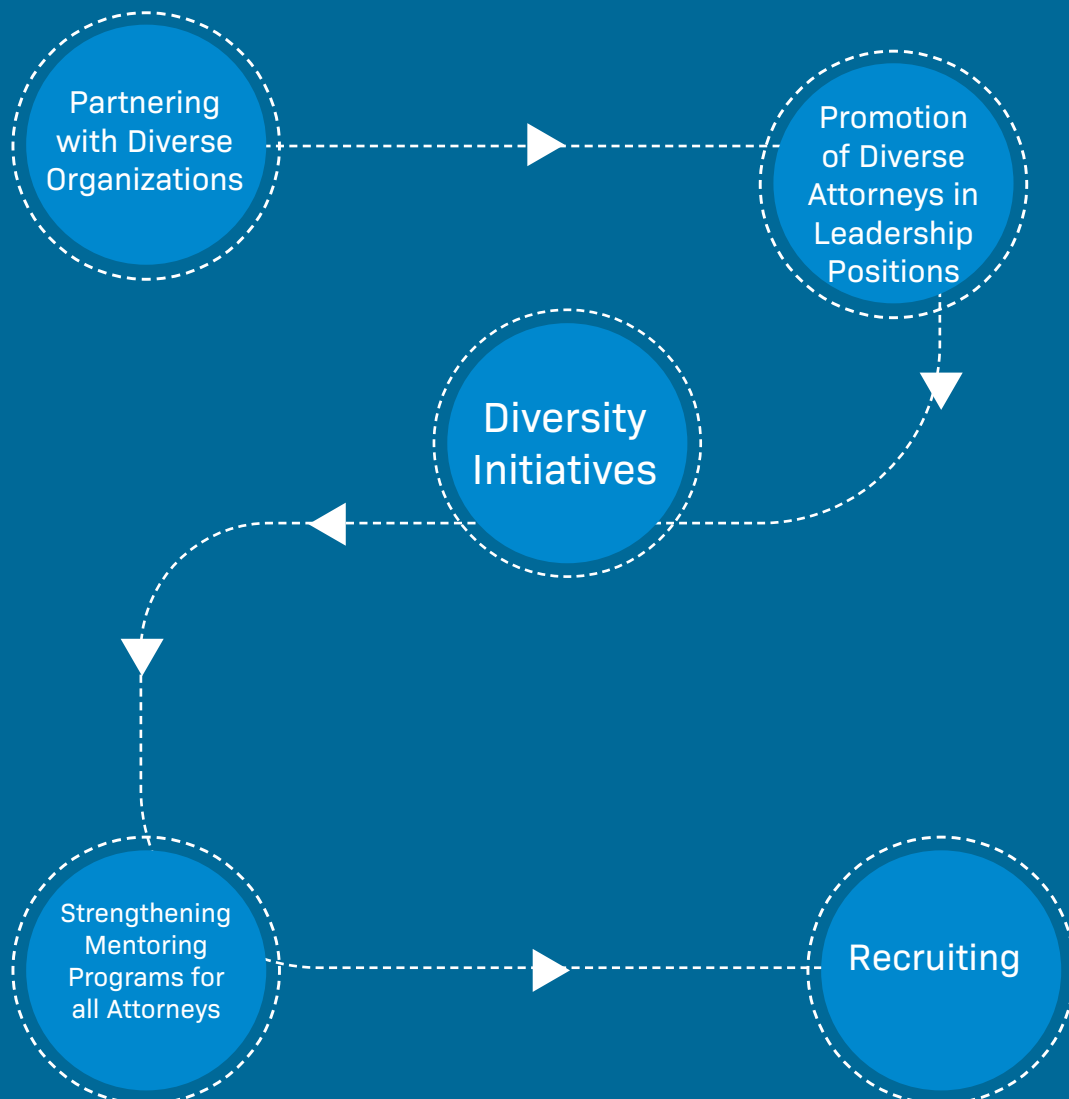
# Diversity Initiatives

*The Diversity Committee is responsible for leading initiatives that will increase awareness and improve the overall diversity of the firm. In 2020-2021 the committee focused on:*

In addition to our involvement in the organizations mentioned in the organizations section of this brochure, we also serve as:

- Corporate partner in the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce;
- General Counsel for the Georgia Minority Supplier Diversity Council; and Member of the prestigious certification committee for the Georgia Minority Supplier Diversity Council.

- Senior associates introduced to leadership positions by creating a “future leader” co-chair position in internal committees.
- Launched a “Path to Partnership” Leadership Training Program with admission criteria intentionally designed to be inclusive.



- Southeast Minority Job Fair
- Partnered with various diverse bar organizations to announce attorney job openings to boost diverse candidates in interviews
- Increased Diversity in Summer Associate Program
- Member of the prestigious certification committee for the Georgia Minority Supplier Diversity Council.



# 2022 Diversity Committee

*Drew Eckl & Farnham formed, and has continuously had an active Diversity Committee since 2006. Our Diversity Committee consists of 16 attorneys, 2 functional directors - Marketing and HR/Recruiting, and the managing partner. The committee meets on a monthly basis and spearheads the firm's overall diversity efforts which exceed over 100 hours, both internal and external, over any given year.*



**CHAIR**

**Meredith Riggs Guerrero**



**CO-CHAIR**

**Douglas Burrell**



**Gary Beelen**



**Paul W. Burke**



**Joseph C. Chancey**



**Lara Clark**



**Camille Dizon**



**Javier Gonzalez**



**Whitney Greene**



**Melody Kiella**



**Hall McKinley**



**Garret Meader**



**Dave Orlowski**



**Taylor Poncz**



**J.C. Roper**



**Robert Welch**



# Midsize Mansfield Rule Certification



We are excited to announce that Drew Eckl & Farnham is one of the trailblazing firms partnering with Diversity Lab to pilot the inaugural Midsize Mansfield Rule. Mansfield Rule certification measures whether law firms have affirmatively considered women, attorneys of color, LGBTQ+ attorneys, and attorneys with disabilities as at least 30 percent of the candidate pool for recruitment, governance roles, equity partner promotions, and inclusion in formal pitches to clients.

Beginning September 15, Drew Eckl & Farnham will work collaboratively with more than 20 midsize law firms throughout the US to pilot a new iteration of the Mansfield Rule. The Midsize Mansfield Rule certification process, modeled after the original version, has been fine-tuned to boost diversity in leadership for firms with smaller lawyer populations, fewer office locations, and leaner firm leadership structures.

Throughout our history, it has been important to us to create a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion at Drew Eckl & Farnham. We are excited about the opportunity to engage with the Diversity Lab and other participating firms during the Mansfield Rule certification process to create defined and measurable initiatives that will support inclusivity at our firm and in the legal profession,” said managing Partner, Joseph Chancey.

Similar to the large law firm version of the Mansfield Rule, once Drew Eckl & Farnham successfully completes the Midsize Mansfield Rule criteria, the firm will be designated as “Mansfield Certified” and will have the opportunity to send diverse partners to the Mansfield Rule Client Forums in late 2022 to build relationships with and learn from Diversity Lab’s in-house counsel collaborators. To date, more than 80 legal departments have contributed to or hosted Client Forums, including Barclays, Facebook, Fannie Mae, Ford Motor Company, Google, McKesson Corp, MetLife, Pfizer, PNC Bank, Uber, and US Bank.

# 1L Diversity Fellowship Program

*At Drew Eckl & Farnham, we understand that we have both an extraordinary opportunity and a special responsibility to maintain a culture that nurtures a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Drew Eckl & Farnham 1L Diversity Fellowship is one of many diversity programs we utilize to promote diversity here at our firm and in the legal profession at large.*



The program is designed for students who have just finished their first year of law school and are from diverse and/or underrepresented backgrounds. The 1L Fellow will also possess a long-term interest in practicing law in a Georgia law firm. There is one available paid 1L Fellowship position for a student from a diverse and/or underrepresented background that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

- The 1L Fellow will participate in the program for a total of 10 weeks during the summer of 2020. The recipients must be able to commit to the full 10 weeks of the program.
- The 1L Fellow will work on matters across Drew Eckl & Farnham's practice areas, which can be found on our website here.
- Upon successful completion of the 1L Fellowship Program, our 1L Fellow is eligible to earn an offer to return as a 2021 Summer Associate at Drew Eckl & Farnham.





# Association of Women Lawyers (AWL)

*The goal of this business resource group (BRG) is to improve the retention and promotion of women attorneys at Drew Eckl & Farnham without harming the success of others.*

## Building a Stronger Path to Partnership

The Path2Partnership (P2P) Program has given the opportunity for many of our women associates in becoming partners at Drew Eckl & Farnham. Our number of women attorneys has grown over the past few years and the P2P Program will continue to collaborate with the AWL to succeed in its mission.



## The MotherBoard Podcast

We understand the importance of giving a platform for all DEFlaw women staff, and The MotherBoard Podcast has allowed the mothers of DEFlaw to voice their experiences and insight on life as a woman attorney, the trials and tribulations of balancing responsibilities at home and at work, and the bonds they've created along the way.

## Community Outreach

A strong pillar of the AWL's mission is its community work and involvement. Our women attorneys do extraordinary work outside of the office by volunteering and working with organizations in their communities that support and uplift other women, setting the example for all attorneys at Drew Eckl & Farnham.



## **Atlanta Habitat for Humanity Women's Build**

Female women attorneys and staff at Drew Eckl & Farnham participated in the Habitat for Humanity Women's Build of two homes to assist other females in the Atlanta area.

## **GDLA Women Litigators Section Event**

GDLA Women Litigators provided CLE with a panel of judges titled "A View from the Beach." Partner Jennifer Parrott moderated the panel, allowing attendees to gain insight on what the judges look out for and expect.

## **Women & Finances**

Attorney Karen Karabinos and Sonya Jacobs presented to Google's women at the Atlanta office on Women & Finances: Know, Plan, Protect. Juliana Neelbauer and Taylor Poncz were in the crowd to support the DEF presenters.

## **Women in Trucking**

Drew Eckl & Farnham is proud to be an emerald sponsor for the Accelerate! Women in Trucking Seminar. Attorneys Jennifer Parrott, Melody Kiella, and Whitney Greene will be speaking on a panel titled "Tips & Success Stories from Females in the Male-Dominated Trucking Field."

## **DRI Women in the Law Seminar**

Drew Eckl & Farnham proudly sponsored "Night Visions," benefitting the Center for the Visually Impaired. Funds raised through Night Visions support CVI's life-changing services and programs for those impacted by vision loss and are crucial to ensure that we can help those in need.

## **The Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association**

Two of our attorneys attended the 2nd Annual Women's Leadership Network Dinner. This opportunity allowed them to network and meet other Asian Pacific attorneys in the Atlanta area.

## **Women in Law Summit Series**

Drew Eckl & Farnham is sponsored this event in 2019 and had several of our women partners in attendance. Partner Barbara Marschalk presented on "Succeeding in Male Dominant Environments." The seminar was on November 1, 2018 at the Intercontinental in Buckhead. The conference focused on how to create change for women and minorities in the legal profession.

We have already committed to be a speaker and sponsor this event in 2019. Partner Jennifer Parrott will serve on a panel once again discussing "Succeeding in Male Dominant Environments."



# Seminars & Sponsorships

## DCI Women in the Law

- Seminar Lanyard Sponsor
- **Speaker** Partner Karen Karabinos spoke at the seminar on “Minding Your Insurance Matters,” guiding attendees through coverage claims, bad-faith disputes, and what actually is in the claim file.
- **Champion** Partner Douglas Burrell was featured in the “WITL Champions” column of the DRI Magazine. Coming from a family of strong and intelligent women and men who are progressive in women’s issues, Douglas is a strong champion for women lawyers.
- **Panel Counsel Subcommittee** Partner Karen Karabinos was appointed the Vice Chair of the DRI Women in the Law’s Panel Counsel Subcommittee. Partner Taylor Poncz was appointed the Chair of the Substantive Law Committee Liaisons.

## Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

- **Legal Breakfast Series** An ongoing series and partnership providing education on various legal topics to their members.
- Legislative Breakfast Sponsor
- Annual Awards Gala Sponsor
- Women’s Conference Sponsor & Exhibitor
- Business Expo Presenter; Booth Sponsor

## GDLA Women Litigators Section

- Partner Karen Karabinos was appointed Chair of the Section
- Several other Drew Eckl Farnham attorneys serve on the board, including Allison Escott, Jennifer Parrott, and Lisa Higgins
- Lanyard Sponsor
- 9 DEFlaw attorney attendees

## DRI Diversity for Success Seminar & Corporate Expo

- Diversity Committee sponsors two diverse associates to attend the corporate expo with a diverse partner to encourage mentorship and education on client development.
- Diversity Committee Chair attends the education conference and provides best practices to the committee.

## Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association (GAPABA)

- Drew Eckl Farnham is proud to be a platinum sponsor for the GAPABA Gala. Seven of our attorneys went to the Gala and enjoyed a night of networking, raffles, and wonderful speakers at the Georgia Aquarium.

## Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council

- Lunch & Learn Education Sponsor & Presenter

## EnrichHer Spark Conference

- Attorney Julia Neelbauer was a judge for the conference’s pitch competition. This conference gathered a community of funders and founders who share a vision, like Juliana’s, for sustainable women-led ventures.

## “Night Visions” Event for The Center for the Visually Impaired

- Drew Eckl & Farnham proudly sponsored “Night Visions,” benefitting the Center for the Visually Impaired (CVI). Funds raised through Night Visions supports CVI’s life-changing services and programs for those impacted by vision loss and are crucial to ensure that we can help those in need.



# Awards & Recognition

## DCI Richard H. Krochock Award

Douglas Burrell received the DRI Richard H. Krochock Award, which honors an individual who has provided exemplary leadership to the DRI Young Lawyers Committee and who has promoted those qualities which enhances the public image of the Civil Defense Trial Lawyers. He is also the DRI-Secretary Treasurer.



## Vault/MCAA Law Firm Diversity Survey

Our firm has participated in Vault's 2019 Law Firm Diversity Survey which provides statistics and other crucial information on diversity. We can benchmark valuable diversity programs and present a comprehensive picture of our diversity commitment.



## GDLA President's Award

Partner Karen Karabinos was honored with the President's Award for creating and chairing the GDLA Women Litigators Section at the 52nd GDLA Annual Meeting.



# Organizations & Associations

*Our attorneys and staff actively participate in and attend events for organizations and associations that support the promotion of diversity and inclusion.*

## **Defense Research Institute (DRI)**

Throughout our history with DRI, our attorneys have served as chair of the DRI Diversity Steering Committee, chair of the DRI Diversity for Success Seminar and Corporate Expo, members of the DRI Women in the Law Committee and co-authored the eBook “Women Rainmakers: Roadmap to Success.”



## **Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GHCC)**

The firm has made great strides to partner more formally with the organization to both educate and counsel its members on a number of legal topics. We are currently co-hosting a monthly breakfast series focused on legal topics hand-picked by members of the chamber, as well as speaking at the chamber’s annual leadership conference and business expo. We continue to sponsor the annual gala, provide legal advice on a pro-bono basis during the GHCC’s fall Community Fair, and speak at the GHCC Women’s Business Speaker Series.



## **Georgia Minority Supplier Diversity Council (GMSDC)**

One of our partners serves as the General Counsel, executive committee, and board member for the organization which has provided the firm an opportunity to partner with the GMSDC. One of our associates serves on the prestigious certification committee that certifies minority business enterprises.



## **Memberships**

- International Association Defense Counsel Diversity Committee
- Georgia State Bar Diversity Committee
- Atlanta Association of Insurance Professionals/National African-American Insurance Association
- Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association
- Gate City Bar Association
- Georgia Alliance of African American Attorneys
- National Association of Women In Construction - Atlanta Chapter organization
- Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys

# Looking Forward

## HBCU Recruiting

Drew Eckl & Farnham has expanded its recruiting network to schools across the Southeast and expects to increase its presence at HBCUs, offering law opportunities to the brilliant minds that attend or have attended these institutions. Networking within communities is crucial to DEFlaw's overall goal for greater representation and inclusion.

## Mansfield Rule Certification

Exemplified by being one of the pilot law firms in its new Midsize Mansfield Rule program, Drew Eckl & Farnham will continue to build a diverse team of attorneys that represent and build to the communities it represents, with the expectation of officially being Mansfield Certified.

## Moving the Needle

At last analysis in 2019, we had more female than male associates. Our goal is to retain an equal number of associates by gender for the next 5 years and increase number of female partners too. We also plan to increase our associate numbers for total minorities up to 35% by 2025. In 2019, we were at 26%.

## Diversity in Partnership Growth

Our Path2Partnership Program has not only developed a supportive and transparent route for associates to potentially become DEF partners, but it has also given opportunities for associates of various backgrounds in building their own journeys to succeeding at Drew Eckl & Farnham.

## Commitment to Inclusion For All

