

DEAR CLIENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE FIRM,

Thank you for reading our annual report on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at Parker Poe. We are proud to present the progress we have made and the initiatives we have undertaken in the past year to promote DEI within our firm and in our communities.

DEI is a core value at Parker Poe, an essential element that shapes our culture and decisions. Our annual report provides an overview of our efforts to empower the next generation, collaborate with organizations that serve diverse populations, and create opportunities for meaningful discussions and reflections on DEI topics for our attorneys and business professionals.

In 2022, we embarked on a new DEI initiative that we believe will make a meaningful difference for years to come: pursuing Mansfield Rule certification from Diversity Lab. The certification process requires law firms to consider at least 30% underrepresented talent when recruiting lateral candidates, appointing to leadership roles, promoting into the equity partnership, and making other key decisions. We are already benefitting from the knowledge, best practices, and data shared through Diversity Lab. We believe repeating this process – each year – will help us create the change that we want to see.

Highlights from 2022 also include:

- A firmwide, in-person training to move beyond mere awareness of unconscious bias and commit to behavioral strategies to better collaborate and bring about structural change.
- An evaluation and expansion of our parental leave policy, as well as other enhancements to give working families additional flexibility and support.
- A daylong program we hosted for the 15th year to help minority students in the Southeast navigate law school and thrive on their career paths.

You will find more details on those initiatives and much more in the following pages. We are grateful for your support and partnership as we continue our journey toward creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace, and toward making a positive impact in the legal profession and our communities. All of us play a role in creating change – our clients, our peers, and each member of the Parker Poe family.

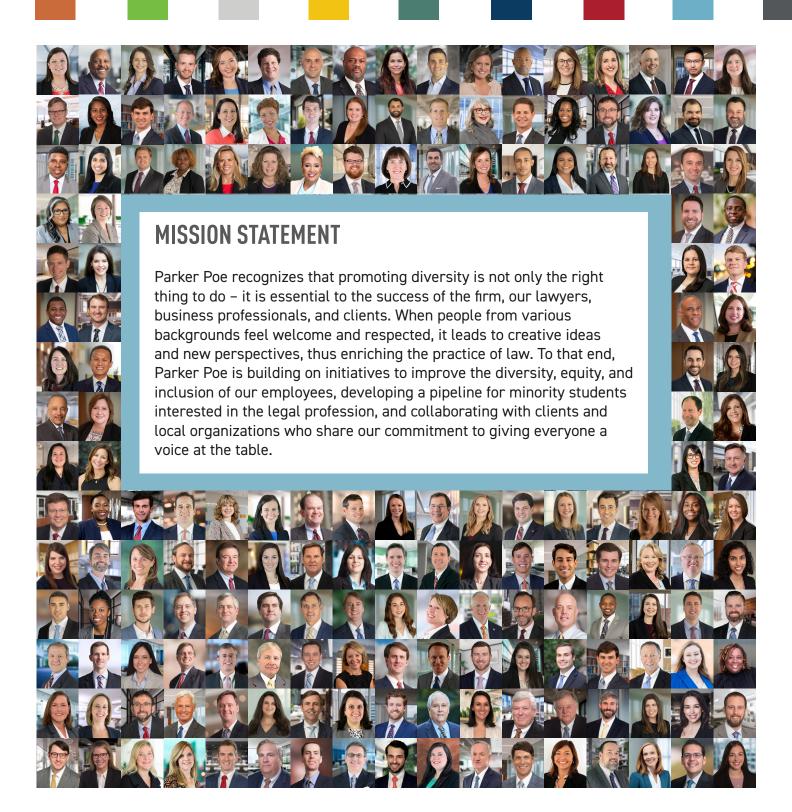
Tom Griffin
Managing Partner



Shalanna Pirtle
Chief Talent, Diversity &
Inclusion Officer

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PURSUING MANSFIELD RULE CERTIFICATION

In late October, Rebecca Joyner from Parker Poe's board of directors traveled with DEI Manager Crystal Jones to San Francisco for an important firm initiative. They were taking part in a two-day Knowledge Sharing Forum about the Mansfield Rule, which Diversity Lab created to increase and sustain diversity in law firm leadership.



"I believe wholeheartedly in what Mansfield is all about, so I felt it was a great opportunity to learn more about it and bring that knowledge back to our board."

REBECCA JOYNER

Partner | Member of the Board

Parker Poe had begun pursuing Mansfield Rule 6.0 certification in July 2022. That process will conclude this July. The certification effort is focused on four historically underrepresented groups in the legal profession: women, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities.

Rule 6.0 certification requires law firms to consider at least 30% underrepresented talent when appointing to leadership roles and promoting into the equity partnership, among a dozen other activities that focus on the path to leadership.

"What I like about this program is it's addressing head-on these disparities in our industry – both on the law firm side and the client side," Rebecca says. "We all know it's a problem – what are the concrete steps to fix it? Mansfield requires you to track and measure the firm's progress in getting diverse voices to positions of power and that is how real change is made."

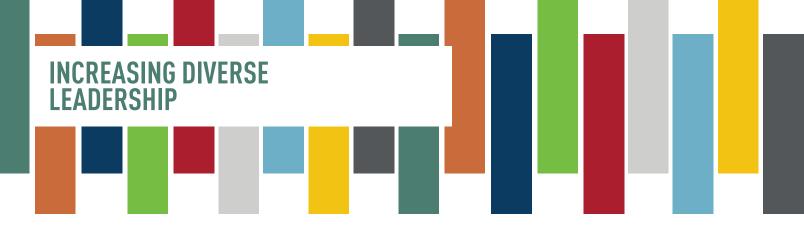
The Knowledge Sharing Forum brought together law firm and legal department leaders from around the country to discuss best practices as part of Mansfield certification, which initially launched in 2017.

"There were people at the forum like us who were new to Mansfield, and then there were people who have been part of it since the beginning. Getting the opportunity to talk to them about what's worked, what hasn't, and how to move the needle was extremely valuable."



CRYSTAL JONES

Manager of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



The pursuit of Mansfield certification is the next step in a process our firm started more than 15 years ago, when we were one of the first law firms in the Southeast to set up central oversight of diversity initiatives. As part of Mansfield certification, we must meet routine check-in, data-collection, and reporting milestones.



"After detailed conversations with our clients and peers in the legal profession, we really believe that pursuing Mansfield certification is a meaningful step in advancing our overall DEI efforts."

SHALANNA PIRTLE

Partner | Chief Talent, Diversity & Inclusion Officer

"It also fits into our new data initiatives that will enable us to get a quicker, clearer view of where we are having success – and where we need to make improvements – in getting diverse talent in the pipeline and up the leadership chain," Shalanna says.

At the board level, Parker Poe exceeds the Mansfield criteria of having at least 30% underrepresented talent. Our nine-member board includes three women and one racial minority. Rebecca and others on the board see Mansfield as a "change tool" to drive further progress across the firm.

"I think every year we ought to send a board member to a Knowledge Sharing Forum," Rebecca says. "We could rotate who that person is so that everybody has a deeper grasp of the concepts and the program, which would be another concrete step toward permeating those ideas across the organization."



BEYOND BIAS: BECOMING A GAME-CHANGING LAW FIRM

Parker Poe's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee organized firmwide, in-person diversity training in late 2022 called "Beyond Bias: Becoming a Game-Changing Law Firm." It was conducted by The Break Point Initiative and ReelTime Creative Learning Experiences.

The training was a tangible expression of the firm's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. To maximize the training's value and encourage conversation, we limited the number of participants in each session. After completing the training, our attorneys and business professionals are better equipped to:

- · Identify and commit to behavioral strategies for moving beyond bias awareness.
- · Leverage their unique passions and abilities to bring about meaningful change.
- Identify structural and systemic challenges the firm can address to further DEI work and become a stronger ally within the communities we serve.

PARKER POE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Firm leadership has recognized the challenges our diverse attorneys face in navigating the path to equity partnership and has been working to increase the number of those attorneys within the equity ranks. To that end, Parker Poe established the Sponsorship Program, through which diverse non-equity



partners (Protégés) are paired with equity partners (Champions) who can give the Protégés additional support in various areas en route to meeting the requirements for equity partnership. The formal pairings will last from 12-24 months with trainings at various intervals to give the Protégés and Champions the support they need to be successful.

PARKER POE INSTITUTE & MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

In addition to the Sponsorship Program that is focused on diverse attorneys, the firm in 2022 enhanced existing programs that aid in the inclusion and development of all attorneys.



We made the Parker Poe Institute more robust, including its tiered training for associates based on their years of experience at the firm. The Institute teaches them the nuts and bolts of being an attorney, our firm's culture, processes, tools, and resources, and helps them transition through their early years at Parker Poe.

We also strengthened a Mentorship Program to ensure the next level of support for our associates. We are intentional about pairing associates with partners and counsel based on common likes, career goals, and needs. The program provides mentors and mentees the opportunities and resources to build meaningful relationships.

ADVANCING DEI INTERNALLY

2022 WOMEN'S RETREAT



In September, our women attorneys from across our eight offices traveled to Isle of Palms, South Carolina, to build new connections, strengthen relationships, and support one another. The two-day Women's Retreat was part of our larger firmwide retreat. Our attorneys took part in various wellness activities, discussed best practices and business priorities, and created memories together.









EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

PARKER POE'S THRIVE PROGRAM

Since 2007, Parker Poe has hosted a daylong program in the Carolinas to help minority students navigate law school, make a successful transition into the practice of law after graduation, and thrive as they pursue the different paths a legal career may take.



In 2022, our THRIVE program expanded to Atlanta. Our keynote speaker there was Micheal Binns, associate general counsel at Meta. His role includes serving as Meta's head of patents and trade secrets. Earlier in his career, he helped open Parker Poe's Atlanta office and later served as one of its leaders.

Our keynote speaker in Raleigh was Bakari Sellers. He made history in 2006 when, at just 22 years old, he defeated an incumbent state representative to become the youngest member of the South Carolina state legislature and the youngest African American elected official in the nation. The Raleigh program was held virtually because of a rise in COVID-19 cases in the area ahead of it.

In addition to gaining practical insights and advice from the keynote speakers, the students learned in presentations and breakout sessions about different practice areas, branding, financial literacy, and alternative uses of a JD. There was also a breakout session specifically for first-generation lawyers to ask any and all questions. The event finished with mock interviews to help the students strengthen their interviewing skills.

After THRIVE 2022, more than 775 students have attended the program since its inception.

"I'm a first-generation law student, so there are lots of things that I have yet to experience. But as I continue to navigate this journey, the THRIVE program is there and is a beacon to serve as a resource."



DECHINO DUKE1L Student, Georgia State University







PARKER POE'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AT JOHNSON C. SMITH UNIVERSITY

Brandi Barron's goal to be a lawyer became more tangible over the past year.

It was the second year she received Parker Poe's scholarship at Johnson C. Smith University, a historically Black university in Charlotte, North Carolina. In addition to the scholarship's financial benefits, it has opened doors for Brandi to learn more about a legal career, including allowing her to participate in Parker Poe's THRIVE program designed for law students.

"It was an amazing experience to be able to speak with law students and go to the different sessions and engage with them as if I were already in law school," Brandi said. "Plus, I was able to network among the professionals who are already lawyers and get their different perspectives."

Parker Poe created the scholarship at JCSU in 1993 and expanded its scope three years ago. It now covers the cost of tuition, fees, and room and board for one student per academic year.

"Having this scholarship takes off the financial burden of being a student," Brandi said.
"It means I can concentrate more on my studies, getting involved more in the community and in my campus versus trying to figure out how am I going to pay for school."

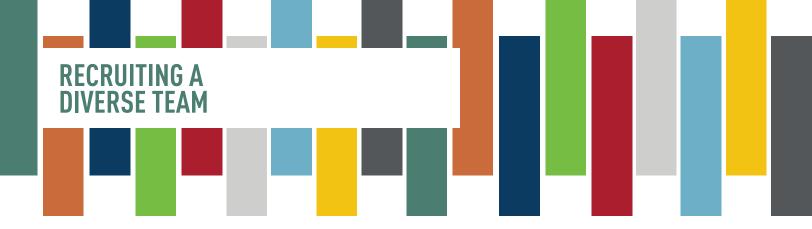


The scholarship features a mentoring component as well. During her time as a mentee, Brandi has built strong connections with Shalanna Pirtle, Crystal Jones, Olabisi Ajao, and others at Parker Poe that will last beyond her college years.

"I actually have their phone numbers on call at any moment if I really need something," she said. "In addition to the mentorship, just having those connections and being able to speak with someone who is willing and ready to help – with whatever – has been great."

Brandi says her experience with Parker Poe has affirmed her decision to pursue a career in law.

"Having someone who has already been through the process that you're trying to go through, and being able to get their insight and knowledge to help you navigate your journey, has been amazing," she said.



EXPANDING THE TALENT POOL

"What initially drew me to Parker Poe was my interaction with attorneys during THRIVE. The chance to meet and learn from diverse professionals within the firm truly captivated me, and it opened my eyes to the mentorship opportunities that Parker Poe has to offer. It made me excited about the prospect of joining the firm."



TREY ELLIS
Associate

Recruiting minority, female, LGBTQ+, and other diverse attorneys – directly out of law school and later in their careers – is a constant focus of our firm in general and our Recruiting Committee in particular.

At the entry level, we set a plan in motion in 2022 to expand our opportunities for first-year law students in Atlanta. We joined the Atlanta Bar Association's Minority and Diversity Clerkship Program, which provides diverse students opportunities to clerk for a law firm, corporate legal department, or judge the summer after their first year of law school.

The program is similar to the Charlotte Legal Diversity Clerkship Program through the Mecklenburg County Bar, which we have been a leader and participant in since the program's inception in 2006.



In Durham, we started a new initiative: a welcome reception for minority students at law schools around the Triangle. We were thrilled with the turnout and connections made, and we will continue that reception each year.



We also expanded our efforts at the Southeastern Minority Job Fair (SEMJF), which brings together a pool of approximately 1,600 diverse students from law schools around the region. Based on our past success hiring students from SEMJF, we essentially doubled our presence there in 2022.

As for lateral hires, our adoption of Mansfield Rule guidelines in the middle of 2022 resulted in clear progress and expanded talent pools in all the metrics of diversity we track. We look forward to reviewing and learning from our first full year of Mansfield Rule data in July 2023. We are confident that repeating the certification process each year will be a significant, lasting tailwind for our recruiting efforts.

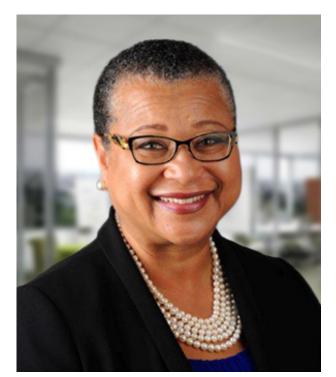
DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT

MARIE JOHNS CEO, PPC-LEFTWICH

Marie Johns is the CEO of PPC-Leftwich, our consulting subsidiary in Washington, DC. This profile was written by the Federal City Council, where Marie was featured in its District Leaders series.

Marie always loved amusement parks, but the one near where she lived in Indianapolis as a child in the 1950s was segregated. There was only one day a year when Black children could go. Her father refused to take her. If his daughter could not go every day, then he would never spend his money there. He drove her to Cincinnati to the closest unsegregated amusement park instead.

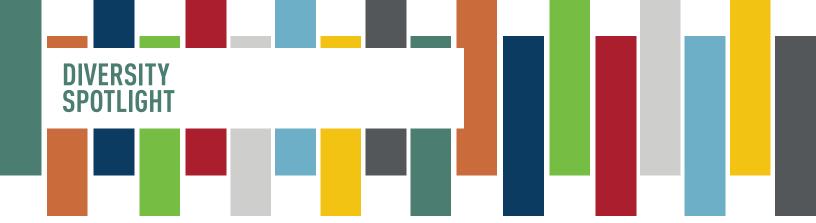
She would be among the first cohorts of Black students to integrate the North Central High School in Indianapolis. She was one of maybe 100 students of color in a graduating class of over 1,000 students. In her classes, she was usually the only one. She was lonely. It was hard.



Neither of her parents had the opportunity to go to college, but they worked very hard. Her mother was a secretary and her father was one of the first Black police officers in the city. Despite relentless discrimination, he would rise to the rank of lieutenant. Her mother insisted all her three daughters graduate from college. They are proud to have given their mother the gift of seeing that happen, and all three even have advanced degrees. Both of Marie's sisters are educators.

Marie went on to Indiana University, obtaining degrees in public administration, aspiring to be a city manager. She liked the interplay between policy and operational management. The Indiana Legislative Services Agency recruited her in the mid-1970s to help score legislation for fiscal impact. She was the first Black person hired in the office.

Out of the blue in the early 1980s she got a call from a friend who worked at Indiana Bell. They needed to hire up to prepare for the divestiture of the AT&T and Bell systems, the largest breakup of a company by anti-trust judgment in the country's history. It had to split into long distance and local companies, which is how the regional "baby bells" were formed. She joined and would stay in telecommunications for 28 years.



She and her family soon after moved to Bethesda, where she worked at the "baby" Bell Atlantic office. She did service cost estimates, calculating how much the local providers should charge for long-distance companies.

The phone company, as it was called then, was a white male dominated industry. By now, she was used to being one of a few or the only Black person in the room. She had to assert herself to get the support she needed. She was aware that the bar for promotion was higher for her. It was, again, lonely and hard. But she learned a ton about the industry and how to grease a large organization into loosening up for change. She felt honored to have contributed to important processes that affected every person in the country who used a telephone.

In 1998, she was named President & CEO of Bell Atlantic Washington, the first woman to serve in that capacity. That's when she started making her mark on the civic life of the city. She helped form the DC Tech Council back in the rough and tumble early days of the internet. Telecoms were changing fast in those days, with various mergers and market-shattering regulatory changes. She had to navigate the company through it all.

She retired in 2004, starting a small consulting practice and excited for a quieter work schedule. Then she got a call from the White House Personnel Office. Surely, she thought, this must be a hoax. They wanted her to be the Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration (SBA). She did not hesitate and would serve for Obama's first term.

Marie is proud of the mark she made while at Bell Atlantic and the SBA, particularly for minorities and women. She created a training program for at-risk youth to land telecom jobs. At SBA, she helped install new loan programs for underserved and minority-owned businesses. And she made sure to fill out the network of women's business centers across the country that had been long neglected.

Her husband Wendell made an equally impressive mark with his career. A CPA by training, he was one of the first Black people hired into what is today PwC. He would become a nationally renowned expert in real estate finance at Fannie Mae, pioneering the use of LIHTC.

Each July, she joins her grandchildren and goddaughter for a trip to Hershey Park. They ride every roller coaster. Marie's had to fight battles every step of her life, and her first battle was to go to an amusement park no matter the color of her skin. She feels blessed to have been the first in so many ways, but she's damned sure she won't be the last. At least her grandchildren and goddaughter won't be so lonely on their way up to pierce the glass ceiling. They have women like Marie to thank.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES

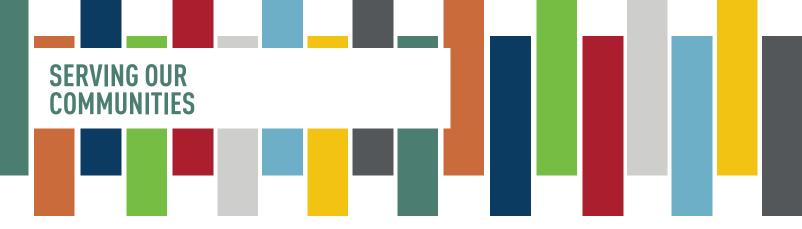
PARKER POE'S COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY

In 2022, Parker Poe hosted its fifth annual community service day. Our DEI Committee launched the event in 2018 to raise awareness about the mission of an array of organizations that serve diverse populations and support the programs of those organizations. Last year, across our offices in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Washington, DC, volunteers prepared Thanksgiving dinner meal kits, built and delivered furniture for children in need, cleaned and sorted children's books, worked on building a home, assembled bags for the homeless, and more. Our attorneys and business professionals were eager to serve their communities in person in 2022 after the prior challenges of hosting in-person activities during the pandemic.









PRO BONO EFFORTS SUPPORTING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Parker Poe attorneys provide thousands of hours of free representation every year, and those pro bono efforts frequently focus on serving diverse communities. Here is a snapshot of our pro bono impact from the past year:

- Providing legal assistance for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees seeking asylum. Raleigh associate Tiffany Burba organized the firm's efforts to represent Afghan and Ukrainian refugees through multiple partnerships with Pisgah Legal Services, Lawyers for Good Government (L4GG), other law firms, and companies. Charleston counsel Elizabeth
- Applegate Dieck, Raleigh counsel Miguel Manna, Raleigh associates Laura Goode and Zack Anstett, and Columbia associate Dayton Riddle are among the attorneys who represented asylum seekers.
- Helping the formerly incarcerated get back on their feet. Charlotte partner Elizabeth Trenary
 played an extensive role in the creation of the Excel Pilot Program, which is a partnership between
 StepUp Durham, the City of Durham, the Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University
 of Pennsylvania, and Mayors for a Guaranteed Income. The program provides formerly incarcerated
 individuals with a guaranteed income check each month, and it will evaluate guaranteed income's
 effects on recidivism, employment, economic security, and income volatility.
- Championing the work of the Charlotte Triage Pro Bono Partnership, which involves the Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, Legal Aid of North Carolina's Charlotte chapter, Bank of America, Duke Energy, Wells Fargo, Husqvarna, and several law firms. Charlotte partner Nicholas Lee has served as a champion for Charlotte Triage's expunction work for three years. He helps recruit, train, and support volunteers who represent low-income clients in expunging their criminal records and broadening their opportunities with work and housing. Nicholas represents expunction clients directly as well.



ENHANCING INCLUSIVE POLICIES

Over the years, the needs of working families have evolved, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure we continue to adapt with inclusive and flexible policies, the firm established a Working Families Committee. Last year, the committee's efforts included:

- Hosting town halls and conducting surveys to gather feedback from attorneys and business professionals.
- Expanding our parental leave policy to provide all personnel at least 12 weeks of 100% paid leave to care for newborn, newly adopted, or foster children.
- Refreshing and formalizing a hybrid work policy to provide flexibility for all personnel.
- Formalizing a policy providing short-term flexibility to all personnel for caregiving needs when they arise.
- Identifying emergency child care solutions and elder care resources for all personnel.
- · Partnering with Milk Stork to support breastfeeding parents and providing mini fridges for lactating mothers to store breast milk at their workstations while nursing.

"These initiatives have always existed, and I've always felt the firm is really supportive, but we wanted to make sure that at all levels of the firm, people had access to parental leave, and felt empowered to use it."



SARAH HUTCHINS Partner & Working Families Committee Member



Associate

"It isn't lost on me how fortunate I am to have a 16week paternity leave. It allowed me to be there for my partner and our new son during those critical early weeks, and to bond with him in a way that I wouldn't have been able to otherwise. Being able to take that time off work and still have the support of my colleagues and the firm was truly invaluable. It made me feel like I could be a consistent part of my family's life during a time of great change and adjustment."

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF WOMEN



JOSEPHINE HICKS

Josephine Hicks remembers exactly how she felt when she heard she was the second recipient of the Catharine Arrowood Women's Achievement Award.

"I was completely stunned and deeply honored because Catharine is such an icon, not only in our law firm but in the state of North Carolina and beyond in terms of her trailblazing and leadership among women lawyers," Josephine said.

Parker Poe created the award in 2021 to recognize the achievements of women in the legal profession. Catharine – the first female partner at Parker Poe and one of the first female chairs of an executive committee at a major law firm in

the Southeast – was its inaugural recipient. The award is now named after her and is presented every year.

Josephine is also a female pioneer in North Carolina's legal community. She practiced law at Parker Poe for over 30 years before following her faith and passion for community service to become the vice president for Episcopal Church Programs at Episcopal Relief & Development, where she works to build supportive relationships across The Episcopal Church and raise awareness of the transformative work of this international relief and development agency. She now serves as chief church relations officer.

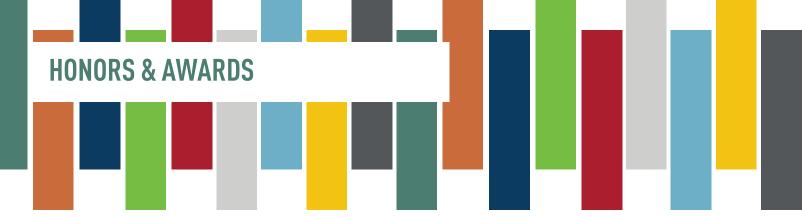
Our entire firm came together virtually for Josephine's award ceremony, which featured a candid conversation between her and Catharine about their lessons in leadership, diversity, community service, and the practice of law. Josephine shared her perspective as an openly gay woman who blazed the trail for people to be open about their identity and embrace their differences.

"In the conversation we had as part of the award ceremony," Josephine said, "it was humbling and very heartening to hear some of the stories women shared about the impact I had on them. I expect I'll remember that much longer than I remember any specific case I worked on."

Josephine said the Catharine Arrowood Women's Achievement Award is another demonstration of Parker Poe's commitment to DEI.

"It shows the firm's commitment to advancing careers for women and creating an environment in which women can be their whole selves and succeed," Josephine said. "It's not easy – the whole profession knows it's not easy. But Parker Poe is committed to it, and I think this award is a tangible manifestation of that and a wonderful celebration of women who have made a difference."







Charlotte counsel Michael Chen was appointed to the board of directors for the International House of Charlotte, which is a nonprofit dedicated to helping immigrants and international culture thrive in local communities.



Charlotte partner Ashley Edwards was named among Charlotte Business Journal's 40 top business leaders under the age of 40 in the region. Ashley was selected for her impact on Charlotte's business and civic community.



Raleigh associate Nana Asante-Smith was named among North Carolina Lawyers Weekly's Leaders in the Law. Nana was recognized for going above and beyond in her profession and community.



Atlanta partner Alonzo Llorens became general counsel of the American Association of Blacks in Energy. Alonzo is serving as the AABE's top legal officer in a pro bono capacity.



Crystal Jones, Parker Poe's manager of diversity, equity, and inclusion, was named among North Carolina Lawyers Weekly's Unsung Legal Heroes. Crystal was recognized for the critical role she plays behind the scenes in helping Parker Poe further its commitment to DEI.



Shalanna Pirtle, a Charlotte partner and chief talent, diversity, and inclusion officer, was named to Savoy Magazine's list of 2022 Most Influential Black Lawyers. The list recognizes a diverse range of partners within leading law firms and corporate counsel from Fortune 1000 corporations.



Charlotte associate Jasmine Little and Raleigh associate Laura Wright were ranked in Lawyers of Color's Annual Hot List. The list, comprised of in-house counsel, government attorneys, and law firm associates, recognizes early to mid-career attorneys excelling in the legal profession.



Raleigh associate Tiffany Burba graduated from the Raleigh Chamber Emerging Leaders program and was named the Intellectual Property Section Member of the Year for 2021-2022 by the North Carolina Bar Association.



Atlanta counsel Emily Hart Breece graduated from the 2021-2022 Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) Atlanta Leadership class.



DEI COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A strong commitment to creating a diverse work environment is central to Parker Poe's core values and strategic vision. The diverse background and experiences of Parker Poe's attorneys and business professionals enhance our practice of law and our service to our clients.

Parker Poe has worked hard to bring that vision to life. The firm was one of the first in the Southeast to set up central oversight of diversity initiatives more than 15 years ago. Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee plays a pivotal role in advancing our efforts. Below are the members of our DEI Committee from 2022.



Kate V. Abdullah



Margaret M. Cart



Michael W. Chen



Lauren A. Cook



Thomas N. Griffin III



Angelica E. Gumucio



Laura C. Hampton



Jasmyn L. Jackson



Marie C. Johns



Crystal M. Jones



Debbie E. Kleman



Dominic M. Lerario

DEI COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Elena Lopez



Craig T. Lynch



Carlos E. Manzano



C. Kyle Musgrove



Angela A. Nelson



Brian K. Parker



Jake R. Parrott



Shalanna L. Pirtle



Jennifer N. Roberts



Katherine E. Ross



Char C. Scott



Kalyn N. Simmons



Mallory S. Sparks



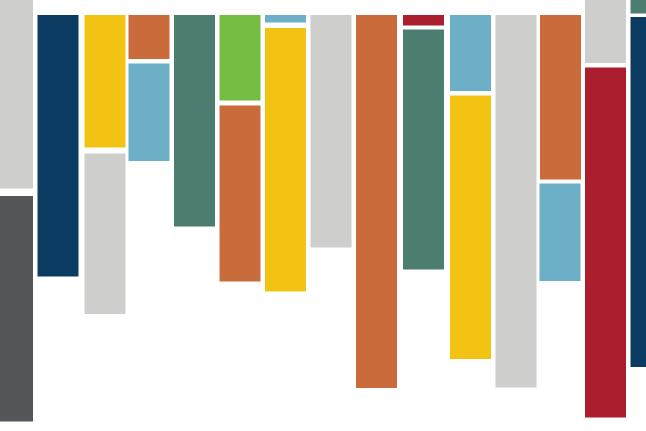
Michael A. Tomsic



Fabian D. Walters



For more than a century, Parker Poe has represented many of the Southeast's largest companies and local governments in transactions, regulatory issues, and complex litigation. Our attorneys have extensive experience representing clients in the education, energy, financial services, government, health care, life sciences, manufacturing, real estate, sports and entertainment, and technology industries. Parker Poe has more than 275 attorneys serving clients from eight offices in Charlotte and Raleigh, North Carolina; Charleston, Columbia, Greenville, and Spartanburg, South Carolina; Atlanta, Georgia; and Washington, DC.



For more information on Parker Poe's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, please contact:

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