

While we've made some headway in the fight for equality,
there is still work to do.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION OVERVIEW

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION ARE IN OUR DNA

At BSP, we believe that each of us must be intentionally fierce and conscientious advocates for the deliberate elimination of gender, racial, cultural, and other inequality. We prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion to create a place where people are encouraged to bring their whole selves to work. We believe that the diverse backgrounds of our lawyers and staff fosters creativity and drives innovation that enable us to provide a higher level of service to our clients.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

- Attracting, recruiting, and maintaining a diverse workforce
- Creating a work environment where all are included, valued, and celebrated
- Holding service and leadership roles in numerous bar associations and affinity groups
- Offering mentorship, clerkship, and networking opportunities to diverse law students and attorneys
- Promoting training and education programs for employees
- Encouraging pro-bono and community outreach



ORGANIZATION INVOLVEMENT

- Center for Automotive Diversity, Inclusion & Advancement
- Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan
- Federal Bar Association for the Eastern District of Michigan, Diversity Committee
- Michigan Muslim Bar Association
- Oakland County Bar Association, Diversity Committee
- Women Lawyers Association of Michigan



COMMITMENT TO HIRING DIVERSE CANDIDATES

BSP uses a multi-pronged approach to add and support diverse attorneys to and on our team. BSP participates in Diversity Lab's Mansfield Rule for Midsize Firms and has reached Certification Plus status for 2022 - 2023. Mansfield Rule aims to increase the representation of diverse lawyers in leadership by broadening the pool of women, LGBTQ+ lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and/or racial/ethnic minority lawyers who are considered for entry-level and lateral attorney job openings, leadership opportunities, equity partner promotions, and opportunities to connect with clients.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY DIRECTOR

In addition to practicing law, Lena Gonzalez is BSP's Professional Development & Diversity Director. In this role, Lena provides strategic direction to develop BSP's goals and initiatives to foster diversity and inclusion at BSP and in the larger legal community while organizing several DE&I events for the firm.

TRAINING AND EDUCATING EMPLOYEES

BSP is always looking to expand efforts in educating and training our employees. We hold quarterly "Lunch and Learn" programs with past topics including: LGTBQ+ in the law, Black History Month, Autism Awareness, Ramadan, Juneteenth, and International Women's Day. BSP also launched a monthly internal newsletter with a Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion section to highlight holidays and observances of religious and cultural events, including webinars about mental health and mindfulness to address the reality of practicing law today.

PRO BONO AND COMMUNITY WORK

BSP encourages our attorneys to serve the community by providing free legal services for those who have difficulty accessing the judicial system. In 2020, BSP expanded its pro bono efforts through a partnership with Project Clean Slate, a program through the City of Detroit to help residents get their criminal records expunged to gain access to better opportunities. BSP also launched the Joel Stern Scholarship Fund, which provides financial support to students from diverse backgrounds who contribute to the diversity of their law school student body.

FEATURED CASE: BSP attorneys worked on a pro bono case for David Bennett. David was 17 in 1972 when he was sentenced to life without parole and has served the past 48 years in prison suffering from undiagnosed and untreated schizoaffective disorder. The now 66-year-old cancer survivor is on a path to release after the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled that a Wayne County judge violated Bennett's rights after citing mental health as a reason to keep him behind bars for the rest of his life. Thankfully, Bennett joins hundreds of individuals in Michigan who were convicted as teens whose cases recently became eligible for new hearings after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled minors must be evaluated differently than adults at sentencing.

BSP DE&I COMMITTEE



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Community outreach and access to justice are important to us.
That's why we support

PROJECT CLEAN SLATE

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