

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

A core value at Morris James LLP BY DAWN SHEIKER AND PATRICIA A. WINSTON

MORRIS JAMES BELIEVES that promoting diversity, equity and inclusion is critical to our quest for excellence and our ability to understand and meet our clients' expectations. Our culture fosters an open and welcoming environment that not only encourages, but also expects, contributions from people with diverse views, experiences, and backgrounds.

We strive to cultivate a leading workforce of diverse professionals across all practice areas and offices, where cultural differences are embraced, appreciated, and respected, and policies and practices are inclusive thereby positioning Morris James as a leading provider of legal services in Delaware.

As such, we developed a five-year strategic plan for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion at Morris James. Our mission is to recruit, retain, develop, engage, empower, and promote talented lawyers and professionals with diverse backgrounds, experience, and skills, fostering a work culture that values perspective, creativity, and contribution from all resulting in superior client service and astute counsel.

Our Diversity & Inclusion Committee is charged with overseeing implementation and guiding the firm in adopting best practices and policies. The D&I Committee was also broken into sub-committees to focus on specific aspects of strategic plan implementation: Firm Commitment, Workforce Diversity, Workforce Inclusion, Supplier Diversity, and Leading by Example.

The Commitment Sub-Committee seeks out opportunities for Morris James to invest in D&I through communications, outreach, training, professional development, and community engagement. The D&I Committee guides these efforts to ensure accountability and advancement of the firm's D&I Mission and Vision.

Morris James recognizes the advantages to having a diversified workforce with similarities and differences in thought, experience, and background. The Workforce Diversity Subcommittee seeks to recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, talented, and qualified workforce to service its clients.

The Workplace Inclusion Sub-Committee works to ensure that Morris James is an inclusive workplace, where employees are recognized for contributions. This Sub-Committee works with the firm to encourage diversification in client teams and firm committees, recognizing that an inclusive workplace is in the best interest of our clients and employees.

Morris James also understands that commitment to D&I extends beyond the firm. The Supplier/Vendor Diversity Sub-Committee seeks out opportunities to engage minority-owned and women-owned businesses,



*Morris James LLP donated \$10,000 to the Culture Restoration Project, an organization dedicated to developing critical thinking skills and social understanding of youth in Wilmington through culturally appropriate and relevant programming.*

when possible, to ensure that these companies are better able to compete.

As a respected leader within the legal and businesses communities, Morris James utilizes its Lead by Example Sub-Committee to position the firm as a driver of change. This committee works with clients, bar associations and schools to foster a stronger environment for D&I.

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is very important to us and has earned us high regard with the community and our clients. We believe this is not only the right thing to do, but also gives us an advantage in a competitive market. Diverse working groups strengthen our ability to provide superior client service and innovation. ■



**Dawn Sheiker** is director of client relations at Morris James LLP.



**Patricia A. Winston** is partner and diversity & inclusion committee chair at Morris James LLP.