

Gender Inclusion

A key component of our ongoing Diversity and Inclusion initiative, the Gender Inclusion Committee promotes understanding of gender diversity; it provides support and encouragement to underrepresented genders (female, nonbinary, transgender), and seeks to attract talented people to the Firm and make them feel welcome. Among the Committee's most important goals is creating clear pathways to leadership positions for underrepresented genders within the Firm. Beyond our internal commitment, our attorneys and staff contribute time and effort to community organizations such as the NC Bar Association's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee. (See below for other alliances and associations.) We're proud of our public visibility in support of welcoming diverse genders. We believe it makes us a stronger organization and better able to serve our clients.

The Voices of Brooks Pierce

Observations on our commitment to promoting gender inclusion.

"The Gender Inclusion Committee reflects the Firm's commitment to make sure that those efforts are intentional, deliberate, and sustained. Its very existence says to gender diverse people that we care and that we are not going to leave things to chance. The Committee is populated by people at various stages in their career which provides a space for communication about issues and an opportunity for leadership development."

— **Jennifer Van Zant**, Partner

"Brooks Pierce's commitment to its lawyers is exemplified by its dedication to create opportunities to talk about issues that impact diverse groups, particularly through firm retreats, seminars, and book club discussions. I believe that discussing the challenges unique to diverse groups benefits all, including me, because we develop greater empathy and understanding for each other. As a young attorney, my days are full of challenges but there are also unique struggles that I often contend with as a diverse attorney that sometimes compound the difficulties. Knowing that my colleagues are familiar with such struggles and are practiced in listening and learning more helps me feel comfortable reaching out to them as I progress in my career."

— **Katie Wong**, Associate

"One of the things that truly sets Brooks Pierce apart from other law firms is its unwavering commitment to the success of its people. The Gender Inclusion Committee is a concrete example of how the firm strives to create a culture where everyone feels like they can be successful in their own way - emphasizing that success can mean different things to different people and that success

can be achieved in a variety of ways at Brooks Pierce."

– **Anna Tison**, Partner

"In all levels of the Firm, we are committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. The Gender Inclusion Committee ensures that Brooks Pierce is focusing its time and resources to provide opportunities for success to underrepresented genders within the Firm and in our local communities."

– **Jim Phillips**, Management Committee Chair

Gender Inclusion Committee Members

Kimberly M. Marston, Chair

Melissa W. Bailey

Jennifer Griffin Scotton

Kasi W. Robinson

Craig D. Schauer

Elizabeth E. Spainhour

Adam P.M. Tarleton

Jennifer K. Van Zant

Awards and Recognitions

Our lawyers have been honored with the following awards and recognitions:

Recognition in *Benchmark Litigation*

Top 250 Women in Litigation in *Benchmark Litigation*

Recognition by *Chambers USA*

Recognition as "Legal Elite" By *Business North Carolina*

Recognition in *North Carolina Super Lawyers*

Named among the "Top 50 Women Attorneys" by *North Carolina Super Lawyers*

Named among the "40 Leaders Under 40" by *Triad Business Journal*

Named "Outstanding Women in Business" by *Triad Business Journal*

Leadership in our Communities

Our lawyers serve in the following leadership capacities in their communities:

Chair, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee, American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division

Co-Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, NCBA Young Lawyers Division

Board of Directors, Guilford Green Foundation

Chair, GreenHill Center for North Carolina Art

Global Vice Chair, Labour Law Practice Group, Geneva Group International

Volunteer Attorney, Legal Aid of North Carolina Lawyer on the Line Program

Board of Directors, National Conference for Community and Justice of the Piedmont Triad

Board of Directors, United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County

Chair, Young Lawyer's Committee, NCBA

Community Involvement

Our lawyers are active members of the following organizations:

Capital City Lawyers Association

Business Women of the Triad

Morehead-Cain Foundation Regional Selection Committee

North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys

North Carolina Council of School Attorneys

NCBA Pro Bono Committee

Raleigh Professional Women's Forum

Women's White Collar Defense Association

Gender Inclusion Committee Initiatives

A sampling of initiatives hosted by our Gender Inclusion Committee, include:

- Book club and discussion on First: Sandra Day O'Connor, by Evan Thomas, accompanied by a presentation by Julia Ambrose on her first-hand experience clerking for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor
- Roundtable discussions on pathways to leadership at Brooks Pierce
- Lunch and learn program on executive presence
- Interactive session on best practices when working with the media

Our Gender Inclusion efforts are a key component of our Diversity & Inclusion initiative. We proudly work with the following organizations in furtherance of their goals.