

Brooks Pierce Receives Diversity & Inclusion Award

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Brooks Pierce is proud to announce that it has been selected as one of the 2021 Lawyers Weekly Diversity & Inclusion Award recipients for its work in promoting diversity and equal representation in the legal profession. Brooks Pierce is one of five law firms or organizations across North Carolina and South Carolina selected for the award.

“Diversity and inclusion are core values at Brooks Pierce. We have a strong emphasis on creating an inclusive environment in our firm, in the legal profession and in the broader community,” said Reid Phillips, the firm’s managing partner. “Our efforts are intentional, and it’s an honor to know that they are being recognized.”

Brooks Pierce was selected for the award because of its broad range of internal initiatives and external participation in efforts that increase diversity and inclusion in the broader community. The firm’s diversity and inclusion programs include:

- Creating the Chief Justice Henry E. Frye — Brooks Pierce Diversity Summer Fellowship in 2017. The fellowship provides a summer associate position and a \$10,000 scholarship to a student of color at an American Bar Association accredited law school who plans on practicing in North Carolina. It is named after retired Brooks Pierce attorney Henry Frye, who was the first Black Justice on the North Carolina Supreme Court and its first Black Chief Justice.
- Launching a “modern book club” where members of the firm are invited to read a selection of articles and books, listen to podcasts and watch movies about racial inequity and then meet to discuss them and share related experiences.
- A continuing series of educational programming within the firm to help provide a basic understanding of issues like structural racism and creating a common language for ongoing discussions related to race and diversity.
- Launching a speaker series on racial equity in various industries, bringing together attorneys within the firm and clients to discuss ways to improve diversity.
- Sponsoring diverse bar and professional association events and scholarships, both statewide and in its local communities.
- Supporting organizations that focus on promoting diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and broader community including the NorthStar LGBTQ Community Center, the North Carolina Lawyer Assistance Program’s Minority Outreach Conference, the National Conference for Community and Justice, the Capital City Lawyer’s Association and the

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Women's White Collar Defense Association.

“We really feel that we can't just give lip service to diversity and inclusion efforts, but have to give meaningful thought to how we can further incorporate a wide range of perspectives into everything we do,” said partner Justin Outling, who was appointed Brooks Pierce's first director of diversity and inclusion in 2020. “We have seen the impact these programs and initiatives have on advancing equality not just within Brooks Pierce, but within the broader communities we serve.”