

2013

CHANGE

>> **in motion**

PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

FROM ONE FOUNDATION

ALSTON & BIRD'S DIVERSITY INITIATIVES GROW FROM ONE PLATFORM—HOW IS THAT WORKING?

WHAT'S inside

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This issue of *Change in Motion* is dedicated to Barbara Bryant, our Chief Marketing Officer, who is retiring this month. Barbara has been a valuable member of our Diversity Steering Committee and the driving force behind *Change in Motion*. We will miss her passion and creativity.



John Latham
Diversity Steering Committee Chair, Atlanta

WELCOME

The simple phrase “from one foundation” encapsulates Alston & Bird’s fundamental approach to diversity: an arena of inclusion bolstered by the tools and resources necessary to achieve success. However, no matter how rich and harmonious our platform may be, the importance of personal initiative has never been greater. To illustrate the point, in this edition of *Change in Motion*, we interviewed four leading partners in the firm and asked what “from one foundation” means to them and how their own initiative molded their careers. Their answers are powerful, touching and illuminating.

At Alston & Bird, we take pride in putting our words into practice, day in and day out, with real-world strategies and practices developed to ensure that—no matter where or how their journey began—everyone who walks through these doors has a level playing field, limited only by their own ambition and imagination. As evidence of this reality, in January we were honored to accept The Coca-Cola Company’s 2013 “Living the Values Award.” This prestigious award serves as the Coca-Cola Legal Division’s recognition of the firm’s commitment and investment in the ideas and programming that advance diversity and inclusion. As I stood at the podium, I took the words written across the award to heart: “living the values.” This is what we aspire to, each day—for every single member of the Alston & Bird family.

We come from different parts of the world. We often speak different languages. We look different. Prefer different things. However, from wherever we came—wherever we’ve been—we have all converged at Alston & Bird to achieve one common purpose: the realization of excellence, both personally and for our clients. We each have the opportunity to begin this leg of the journey, together, from one foundation; where it ends, only the sky is the limit.



FEATURE

Jesse Jauregui
Partner, Los Angeles

HONORING THE PAST, IMPROVING THE FUTURE: Mentoring, Initiative and the Diverse Lawyer

“**T**here is a wonderful Spanish saying—*‘El que no tiene padrino, no se bautiza,’*” says Alston & Bird partner **Jesse Jauregui** from his Los Angeles office. “It means, ‘He who does not have a godfather, does not get baptized.’ It’s a great phrase, and one that applies to every organization’s culture and the need to understand it and to effectively navigate it.”

Jauregui speaks from a position of great insight and experience as he comments on Alston & Bird’s diversity platform and how both he and Hispanic attorneys following in his footsteps successfully navigate today’s changing legal environment. For Jauregui, the road was often difficult; however, his

gregarious presence does not so much highlight the obstacles along the way as the perseverance necessary to overcome them.

And the role of mentoring is, according to Jauregui, the critical plank in the firm’s diversity platform, a most necessary component that often is the catalyst to success—but success based on merit and personal initiative. “I think it’s important that we work further on mentoring the young lawyers and making sure they understand the importance of not only gaining skills, but developing new relationships and networks,” he says. “It’s often a matter of being bravely and quietly persistent.”

Jauregui's focus on mentoring comes from a surprising place: his utter lack of it in his own professional background. "You know, I guess I talk a lot about it because I did not have the kind of mentor at my first firm that I would have wanted." He had to take the initiative to find that person on his own outside his firm. "There were certainly a couple of elder lawyers that I didn't necessarily work with but who I could go to for advice—and their perspectives proved invaluable."

“Mentoring is the critical plank in the diversity platform.”

Determined to create a better environment for the next wave of attorneys, Jauregui, who is a member of the firm's Diversity Steering Committee, has thrown himself into the role of mentor with the same gusto he puts into his labor practice and everything else with his fingerprints on it. "I have several young lawyers who come in and close the door, and I really enjoy sitting and talking with them, everything from questions about a rule or how to prepare a declaration to what committees to join or how to reach out to clients—the kinds of things that can really make a difference. I think it's a very valuable use of my time, and when I see young associates going out there and achieving success, becoming the best, most excellent attorney they can become, it really makes me feel good."

Jauregui, the first of his family to graduate from college—"I am the product of the American Dream... from absolute poverty to Yale in one generation"—knows first-hand how hard the journey can be. The son of poor Mexican immigrants, Jauregui had no social advantages in his favor—except for strong parents who put a premium on his education, coupled with his own will to succeed. "Even in third and fourth grade, they were making sure I was doing well, that I was getting good grades, reinforcing the notion that I was a smart kid, that I could do this. I saw my parents, who don't have any formal education, going in and advocating for me, and making sure I went down the right road even though we were in a tough neighborhood. By my first year in college, they had instilled in me the confidence to keep pushing on. That was key."

Jauregui did push ahead in spite of racial, cultural and class differences between others in the room and him. "What do they call it?" he asks, with a twinge of defiant mirth in his voice. "The cognitive process of categorization? That's just a fancy kind of sociological term for stereotypes and how people are influenced in terms of how they perceive people that are different from them." Despite all that he has accomplished, it's something that still goes on—"little things happen day in and day out that remind you of that kind of thing"—but Jauregui preaches perseverance and moving forward: "It's something you've got to get over."

Which is in large part why Alston & Bird's policy of a level playing field appeals to him so much. When the opportunity for success is equally available to any attorney regardless of creed or color, that success becomes something well-earned, a source of pride. The level platform also fosters something else, notes Jauregui: a sense of responsibility and obligation to his fellow partners. "I feel I have to take advantage of the opportunity that's there, the fact that we are on equal footing, and bring my best to the table—which I think really does help bring the firm forward as a whole. It's the personal initiative, yes, but that initiative is also tied into the success of your colleagues, of supporting each other."

Jauregui also recognizes another crucial point when considering the diversity landscape: the world is changing. The demographics of the United States are changing; beginning next year, it is estimated that Latinos will be a plurality of the state of California. Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, estimated to top a population of 130 million by 2050. Not only that, it is a young community, roughly 10 years younger on average than the national population. Diversity, once thought of as a burden to professional advancement, is proving itself a boon; bilingual, bicultural attorneys can often navigate the nuances of legal issues that others can't. "It's important that there be people who can bridge both worlds, and I think Latino lawyers have a crucial role to play there."

And, in this context, the saying "*El que no tiene padrino, no se bautiza*" no longer applies, so long as there are godfathers like Jauregui to guide the next generation of young, ambitious attorneys to greater heights. ■

FEATURE

Kazu Shimizu
Partner, Atlanta



WE ARE ALL DIVERSE

Kazuhiro Shimizu Discusses the Power in Uniqueness

The word “diversity” means many things to many people, the borders of its definition sometimes nebulous, but never rigid. For **Kazuhiro “Kazu” Shimizu**, a respected Atlanta-based corporate partner at Alston & Bird and the leader of the firm’s Japan Business Team, diversity is a key to success, rather than a limitation. In his worldview, we are all diverse, with unique capabilities and backgrounds that can set us apart—and push us forward.

“ [D]iversity is a **key** to success, rather than a limitation. ”

Shimizu maintains a multidimensional practice through which he represents and advises Japanese corporations in connection with their investments and operations in the United States, as well as major U.S. corporations doing business in Japan. He specializes in the full gamut of corporate, commercial and intellectual property law, working on matters on both sides of the Pacific.

Born in Kyoto, Japan, the son of a “salary man” with a major Japanese trading company, Shimizu and his family followed his father on assignments in Portland (OR), New York, Osaka, Amsterdam and London. While they lived abroad, Shimizu’s parents insisted that he keep up with his Japanese school work—through Saturday school and tutoring by mail—in addition to attending the local schools. And English was not allowed at home. “I resisted it back then, but thanks to my parents’ stubbornness, I’m still Japanese.” After graduating from the International School of London, Shimizu moved to the United States and earned a business degree from the University of Southern California and his J.D. from New York University. Wanting to avoid the cold winters in New York, among other reasons, Shimizu began his practice in Atlanta in 1996. In Shimizu’s eyes, however, his narrative does not

make him different from his collaborators and competitors—in the most fundamental way, it makes him very much the same.

“We talk about diverse attorneys,” Shimizu notes, “but I think every attorney is in some ways diverse. And, especially on the business development front, diversity can be a positive leveraging point, the characteristics you bring to the table, whether they be certain language skills or cultural background, or having graduated from a certain school or belonging to a certain affinity group.”

This stance parallels Alston & Bird’s policy of providing a level playing field from which all attorneys can grow, and though the commitment to support all the firm’s attorneys is constant, the manner in which each attorney is supported can be tailored to their individual strengths, identities and ambitions. “One of the things that is noteworthy about our firm is that we are very flexible in terms of supporting various business plans based on attorneys’ strengths and ideas,” Shimizu says. “If an attorney comes up with a sensible business plan and commits to pursuing it, there’s a good chance that it will be supported—and that creates a very positive incentive.”

“ If an attorney comes up with a sensible business plan and commits to pursuing it, there’s a good chance that it will be supported—
and that creates a very positive incentive. ”

During his tenure at Alston & Bird, Shimizu has seen an increase in the amount of legal work in which diverse skills and perspectives can make a clear difference in services that attorneys are able to

offer. He sees it most immediately in the context of the Japan Business Team, both in the services and insight the attorneys are able to provide to Japanese clients, as well as in the influx of new business opportunities generating out of the Asian continent.

“ ...[D]iversity can be a **positive leveraging point**, the characteristics you bring to the table, whether they be certain language skills or cultural background...”

“Some of the more interesting matters that I worked on this past year involved Japanese companies acquiring targets in the Philippines or China, and our role was to look after the U.S. assets that the target companies happened to have. They are Western-style deals, but the main drivers of these transactions are in Asia, not just Japan. This is an important trend in the cross-border transactional scene. And there is definitely an increased demand for lawyers with Western-style legal skills and Asian language and cultural skills as a result.”

Within the firm’s platform, Shimizu emphasizes the importance of mentoring, particularly with respect to Asian-American attorneys—“it is so important in terms of providing opportunities, guidance and encouragement.”

Shimizu tells the story of his own mentor, an older attorney who many years ago changed the course of his career and life. From their discussions, Shimizu says, he learned the advantage of his own uniqueness and started to think of ways to leverage it. “At the time, I was practicing just like all of my fellow associates working on matters for U.S. clients, not speaking or writing a word of Japanese.” He changed direction, pioneering a new track that has seen his practice blossom. “It made a world of difference,” he says now.

But if Shimizu’s new perspective was the tinder, his ambition proved to be the flame. He believes strongly in mentors pushing young lawyers to see beyond the horizon, to not simply be satisfied with achieving success, but to push its limits. As Shimizu relates, he was the first lawyer to come out of his family, so early on he didn’t know what to expect out of his career. “I think it is especially important for minority attorneys to get past the stage of ‘Wow! I’m a lawyer with Alston & Bird!’ and start thinking, ‘Why shouldn’t I become one of the best lawyers in my field and develop a multimillion-dollar practice?’” He continues, “This is an aspect of mentoring without which attorneys are limiting themselves—good mentors and good role models are both very important so that young lawyers reach for greater heights.”

“ [G]ood mentors and good role models are both very important so that **young lawyers reach for greater heights.** ”

These are the points Shimizu keeps circling back to, ideas of diversity as leverage in a competitive field, as the means to challenge yourself beyond where you thought you could go. He promotes cutting your own path, and using your personal narrative to serve corners of the legal world that may be underserved, or best served in a new way. The one thing we all have in common is that we are all so vastly different, and those differences are exactly where our power lies. ■

FEATURE

Angela Payne James
Partner, Atlanta

THE POWER OF DISPARATE VOICES: How Angela Payne James' Journey Mirrors Alston & Bird's Diversity Platform

The pillars of Alston & Bird's diversity platform—a single foundation from which to grow based on one's own initiative and merits—had been ingrained in **Angela Payne James** long before she became a top national litigator at the firm. The benefits of listening to and learning from a chorus of sometimes disparate voices have been integral parts of her journey, from her childhood through her days at Harvard Law School and ultimately at Alston & Bird, where she has risen through the ranks of one of the biggest firms in the country.

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, James, a partner in Alston & Bird's Litigation & Trial Practice Group and chair of its Atlanta Diversity Committee, transferred in the seventh grade from her local public school to a highly competitive—and predominantly white—private school quite a distance from her more modest home and neighborhood. In fact, Angela was one of only two students of color within her grade. The immediate culture shock was difficult for Angela, but over the next six years, this gregarious woman worked to forge relationships with her classmates and learned “that we are all different, but we all

have a valuable perspective to offer. We need to appreciate how each of our backgrounds shape us.”

“ [W]e are all different, but we all have a valuable perspective to offer. ”

Her experience as a congressional page in the U.S. House of Representatives during her high school years continued her education regarding the importance of diverse backgrounds, as well as the pivotal role of the U.S. legal system—how laws are made and how they impact society. She learned that a law degree could be a path to making meaningful changes. This desire to make an impact shaped her years at Harvard, where she maintained an active extra-curricular life beyond her studies, volunteering in the community, including providing legal assistance to people with HIV and AIDS, and diligently serving in student government and organizations.

Spending her summers away from Harvard and splitting time between government and corporate law environments, James landed at Alston & Bird’s Atlanta office and was hooked, in part by the firm’s clear commitment to both public service and diversity. “I could see that the people here were well-rounded; in fact, not only were they well-rounded, but they were expected to be well-rounded. They were expected to do great legal work for their corporate clients, but also be a voice for change in the community.”

James was also impressed by the firm’s diverse makeup, by its roster of women attorneys and attorneys of color populating every level and practice. “That spoke volumes to me about the fact that I could succeed here if I was willing to work hard. And that, of course, is the kind of place where you want to start your career—you want to go somewhere where you’re going to be judged on your merits.”

And the level playing field that drew James to the firm as a young attorney is the very platform she strives to protect as a leader and mentor in the

firm today. She, however, does not see the current platform as static; rather, she deems it a living, breathing thing in itself, something that can and should be adjusted and recalibrated when new issues develop. “Occasionally, challenges arise that are unique to a group and the firm takes steps to address these specific challenges.” The firm’s platform does listen—just as James listened to a myriad of individuals growing up, their concerns and hopes—learning, growing and improving along the way.

While admitting the firm’s foundation of equality is powerful in its own right, James notes that without personal initiative, it lacks meaning. “The firm can, from a programmatic and macro sense, try to address issues that are facing a particular group and create a level playing field, but at the end of the day, there’s no question that the success of your career is ultimately up to you,” James asserts.

“ And that...is the kind of place where you want to start your career—
you want to go somewhere where you’re going to be judged on your merits. ”

That’s not to say any young attorney is left to navigate the rapids of the corporate legal arena alone; quite the opposite. James mentors numerous attorneys, both officially and unofficially, and feels that good mentoring is a key component to being able to successfully navigate firm life. For her, it’s a matter of coming full-circle, of sharing the lessons that she has learned over the course of her life’s journey from a multicultural, middle-class neighborhood to the pinnacles of legal success. “One aspect of our firm that I am especially proud of,” she notes, “is that we are expansive in our view of who can be great. Helping people, helping the community and helping others attain their goals are things that I’ve been focused on from an early age, and the diversity work that I do here formally and informally allows me to have a positive impact, I hope, on the lives of others.” ■



FEATURE

Mark McElreath
Partner, New York

A SPACE FREE OF HURDLES: LGBT Partner Mark McElreath Discusses His Journey Toward Equality in the Corporate World

Mark McElreath wears with ease his new management role at Alston & Bird. As co-chair of the firm's corporate practices and a gay partner, he has a unique vantage point from which to view the firm's diversity platform and its implications for LGBT attorneys. He has seen first-hand how that platform—a consistent effort to give every individual the opportunity to grow from a level playing field—has led to an environment of acceptance so well-known in the industry that the firm recently received a top rating of 100 percent from the Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) Corporate Equality Index for the eighth year in a row. "We have to consider the question: Has the

platform helped remove impediments to success?" he asks. And, indeed, from his own journey through the ranks of the firm and "out of the closet," McElreath's personal experiences demonstrate a resounding "yes."

"From my perspective as an LGBT attorney at Alston & Bird," he says, "I definitely think the firm's strategy is working. The accomplishments and effects of the firm's diversity program are strong and impressive, and I think where that firm-wide platform intersects with personal initiative is at the point of fostering a space free of hurdles." As long as there is no impediment—whether it is overt or subtle, in-your-

face or behind your back—to an attorney going after success, McElreath argues, the sky is the limit, both for them personally and for what they can bring to the firm.

“ As long as there is no impediment—whether it is overt or subtle, in-your-face or behind your back—to an attorney going after success...
the sky is the limit[.] ”

McElreath presides over practices for which success is based entirely on merit and achievement. In corporate America, this was not always the case. “In my 22 years practicing law, I’ve seen the corporate relationship to the LGBT community change dramatically,” he says. A “Georgia boy” his entire life, he began his legal career in Atlanta at Alston & Bird. “The day I started,” he remembers, “there wasn’t one single ‘out’ attorney in the entire law firm.” And that silence was industry-wide, particularly in the South. “Even in Atlanta, which had a big LGBT community—once you got into the professional ranks, there were very few LGBT people.” As late as the 1990s, there were still plenty of remnants of the “good ol’ boys” way of doing business. Upon moving to New York City in 2001, McElreath found himself comfortable enough to come out as a gay man, and he has never looked back since. “Once I told the firm, I was a little worried about relationships I had with people in Atlanta and clients in Atlanta. But I’ll be honest with you—I’ve had zero negative reaction from anyone in this firm or from any client.” The world had already begun to shift.

What any diverse attorney needs to bring to their career, notes McElreath, is a hunger and a passion to do great work. He notes that, besides the half-dozen New York firms that just get work based on reputation alone, everyone in the industry is in the same boat, and competition is fierce. He believes the difference between landing work or not is sometimes simply a matter of going the extra mile. “True initiative is this: you’re handed a project and you see there is something else there that needs to

get done other than what was specifically requested and you go ahead and do it. That makes a huge difference to the people you’re working with and adds true value. If I have somebody like that on my team, I’m going to go back to them before I go to somebody who is just sitting behind their desk doing only exactly what you tell them to do.”

The Alston & Bird diversity platform has created a template by which the hurdles for LGBT and other minority attorneys are removed, but also by which new doors have opened for an entire generation of hungry young attorneys who now have the capability to go as far as their ambition will take them. “What I tell our LGBT attorneys is no different than what I tell any attorney—it’s all about being an excellent attorney, being focused on the client, responsive and attentive to the details. I don’t care what color your skin is, or who you are attracted to or anything else—if you’re going to do good work, then I’m not going to interfere with that, and I think that goes for our clients as well.”

“I’ll tell you a story,” McElreath continues. “There are two young hires that are gay men on my team. All through the summer program and when they started working here, they did not identify themselves as LGBT. It wasn’t until several months afterward that we had a conversation, and they came out. At first, I was upset because I thought that they had done that because they perceived this to not be an LGBT-friendly place. But, in fact, they did it because they didn’t want to be hired because they were gay.”

Not only is McElreath’s anecdote a real-world, brick-and-mortar example of attorneys’ appreciation of and respect for the firm’s even-platform philosophy—the right to be judged solely on the merits of one’s work—it also illustrates how much the pendulum has swung, how much the world has truly shifted. ■

STANDPOINT >>

Inclusion Is Everyone's Responsibility

ROSALIE CHAMBERLAIN



Diversity is everywhere and encompasses far more than what we typically think it does. Most often, we restrict diversity to race, gender, sexual orientation or religion, for example. But diversity also includes geographic and socio-economic backgrounds, education, personality, learning styles, communication styles and much, much more. Within an organization, too, there are additional layers of diversity, such as roles, titles, office locations, departments—we could go on with many more examples. So, given the fact that there are so many aspects to diversity and that it is a natural part of our daily lives, it makes sense that we all understand that diversity is here and inclusion is everyone's responsibility. And that is where the challenge really begins.

We often live our lives happily because our choices may be “working” for us. On other occasions we may not even be thinking about our day-to-day actions—we simply act and respond out of habit. However, whether knowingly or not, our decisions and choices generally contain elements of inclusion or exclusion. And, within the context of a law firm, this fact can be crucial as careers can advance or be cut short based on relationships—both internal and external. Building awareness of how we make inclusive and exclusive decisions can't help but be beneficial.

To that end, we must challenge ourselves to start exploring what we think, say and do. We can ask ourselves: Where did I hear that point? Are there other perspectives? Did I end my search for answers too abruptly? And, if you were to revisit a message with this question—Is it still true and is it the best choice?—would you continue with the same course of action? Consider the power of collaborative potential, a critical reason for being aware of how we relate. The Japanese proverb “None of us is as smart as all of us” is an interesting perspective on innovation and inclusion. Thinking more broadly can be fun, inclusive and empowering.

The recent generational diversity panel comprised of members of the four generations that currently make up Alston & Bird, (see page 14) was an enlightening example of the differences, similarities and perspectives of individuals who grew up during very distinct time periods. The rich discussion was a great opportunity to learn more about ourselves and others, thus opening more doors toward awareness and inclusiveness.

The little things we do or say that can either support or discourage others are often based on old messages and habits that we don't consciously think about. The issue is not about being overly concerned or even paranoid; it is about being aware. I am reminded of the new employee who was giving his first presentation to a group of colleagues and managers. During the presentation, he noticed that his supervisor constantly rolled his eyes. The employee was determined not to be distracted during his presentation, which was difficult to do. Afterward he asked his supervisor what was so terrible about the presentation—to which the supervisor said in dismay, “Oh, it was a great program, I enjoyed it. I just got new contact lenses, and my eyes are killing me.” What a great illustration of a situation where intent and impact were 180 degrees apart! While most situations are seldom this extreme, it makes the point that awareness and understanding belong on a two-way street.

Does focusing on inclusion foster success in reaching personal and organization goals? The answer is yes. Inclusion drives engagement, which bolsters performance. And the power to include rather than exclude is not “out there” somewhere, or hidden in an executive suite; it exists all around us in our daily lives. Be aware of diversity and open to inclusion. Together they will make a world of difference. ■

Rosalie Chamberlain is CEO of Rosalie Chamberlain Consulting LLC. She is the former Diversity Coordinator of Alston & Bird and currently a consultant of the firm's Diversity Steering Committee.

The Temporal Divide:

Alston & Bird Hosts Generational Diversity Panel Discussion

Generational divides are seldom perceived as barriers to acceptance, but, in fact, prejudices over age can create the same sort of chasms between individuals as any other point of difference. A lack of understanding—whether coming from the younger toward the elder, or vice versa—can cripple a workplace environment, creating confusion, tension and, in its ugliest forms, ageism.

Recently, Alston & Bird held an in-house Generational Diversity Panel Discussion, a multi-office roundtable moderated by Alston & Bird Diversity Partner John Latham that featured representatives from four different generations currently working at the firm (for the purposes of the discussion, individuals were categorized in one of four groups: Matures/Traditionalists (1928 – 1945), Boomers (1946 – 1964), Gen X (1965 – 1980) and Gen Y/Millennials (1981 – 1995)). The discussion focused on the importance of building effective communication between generational divides and the intrinsic benefits, for all parties.

The discussion began with each individual asked how the experiences of their particular generation shaped them. Retired Managing Partner Ben Johnson noted three temporal landmarks for Traditionalists: the Depression, World War II and what he called the era of segregation. The first solidified attitudes toward economics: “It fixed your attitudes about the role of government, and most of us felt like capitalism and free markets had been saved by Franklin Roosevelt.” The war solidified attitudes toward responsibility: “It was never questioned that you had an obligation to serve.” The last, the horrors of segregation, solidified attitudes toward justice. When change in this area finally began to occur, Johnson was quick to note,

it was through the instrument of the law. “Nothing would have changed if it hadn’t been for the law.”

Those social changes gained momentum and were pivotal for Boomers. “To me, it felt like everything was in flux in terms of, you know, watching TV and seeing what certain segments of our society thought our America should look like—*Leave It to Beaver* and *Andy of Mayberry* juxtapositioned against the Vietnam War protests in the streets, Kent State, the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy and just seeing what some people were willing to do to hold that established order in place,” said Baby Boomer Pam Privett, a Los Angeles partner, describing her experiences. “So all of that had an enormous impact on me, really a struggle between the generations for what America was going to look like in the future.”

Those born and raised in the late 1970s and early 1980s—the Generation Xers—had a very different sort of canvas to work with growing up. “In terms of what was going on in the world, events led to conflicting feelings,” said Gen Xer Stacie Cargill, an associate in the firm’s Dallas office. It was a time of contrast; for every gas shortage, there was the fall of the Berlin Wall; for every expansion of the space program, there was a Challenger disaster. “You sort of found yourself in a place where you really had to question how to feel. I think that is where some of the stereotype about [Generation Xers] being skeptical comes from—things may be great for a while, but then they may get bad pretty soon. Things may be bad for a while, but then they may get good, you know, in the blink of an eye.”

LAN Support Specialist Russell Hefferon alluded to the “latch-key kid” world Generation X found

Traditionalists (1928 to 1945)	Baby Boomers (1946 to 1964)
• Practical	• Optimistic
• Patient, loyal and hardworking	• Teamwork and cooperation
• Respectful of authority	• Ambitious
• Rule followers	• Work-centric

Generation X (1965 to 1980)	Millennials (1981 to 1995)
• Skeptical	• Hopeful
• Self-reliant	• Meaningful work
• Risk-taking	• Diversity and change valued
• Balances work and personal life	• Technology savvy

itself in. “My parents were also of the divorce era and both of them worked, so they weren’t home all the time and we’d have to take care of ourselves or younger siblings,” he said. “I’m hungry—I’ve got to make a sandwich. How do I make a sandwich? Put bread and cheese and ham together and eat it”

Generation Y, which came into being at the same time as the personal computer, is forever linked to the ever-evolving technological changes that punctuated their early life. “When you look at terrorism, or 9-11 or Columbine . . . technology has had a much, much greater impact on the collective psyche of my generation, probably, than the other three combined,” admitted Rich McAvoy, a litigator in the firm’s Research Triangle office.

Each generation deals with stereotypes and false assumptions from members of a different era. As Washington Human Resource Manager and Baby Boomer Judy Scriber noted, “I think some people think that the Baby Boomers are techno-fobes, and we’re really not—it’s a challenge to keep up with the ever-changing technology, but you go into an Apple store and you’ll see as many Boomers as Generation X or Y.”

As such, each generation has to develop strategies to work with others, and part of that is identifying

strengths and qualities that you admire from across the divide. McAvoy highlighted the dedication and loyalty he sees in his elders. Privett noted her admiration of the Traditionalist work ethic—“I really like how the generation ahead of me approaches work: very calm, very thoughtful, very thorough, resisting snap judgments.”

This notion bleeds into how we communicate among the generations—something the roundtable discussed at length. The challenge was described as striking a balance between the pace of measured, thoughtful responses that Traditionalists and Baby Boomers are most familiar with and the instant and total connectivity that has been a staple of Generation Y’s existence. Sometimes the former is seen as unresponsive, while the latter can appear rash and impatient—perhaps even verging on disrespectful.

The answer, the group noted, may exist in the middle ground—a place where differences are accepted as valid and where open communication and a sense of humor bridges even the most disparate traditions. As Cargill explained, “I think it’s been pretty great for our generation [Generation X], because we’ve fallen in the middle between a time when technology really accelerated to a fevered pace and the first half of our lives without any of those things. The Internet wasn’t available to the public until I was almost 20—I had a long life of doing things without it, but was still young enough when things started moving to really adapt and be able to use technology as a tool, rather than being afraid of it or finding it difficult to learn.”

“And, you know, if the power goes out, we’re not freaking out.” ■



Diversity in Action



14

CHANGE
in motion

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINES: Ambassador Andrew Young Provides “Words of Wisdom” to Alston & Bird

In celebration of Black History Month, on February 4, 2013, Alston & Bird hosted civil rights legend Ambassador Andrew Young, who spoke at length to an overflow, firm-wide audience. Ambassador Young discussed diversity and inclusion, shared personal stories from his time with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and offered his template for how society today can ensure inclusion and equal rights for all.

Young was the first African-American since Reconstruction to be elected to the U.S. Congress from Georgia in 1972, and in 1977, he was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to serve as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations. He continued in public service by serving two terms as

Atlanta’s mayor from 1981 to 1989. In addition to his already notable résumé, Young was selected as co-chair of the committee responsible for bringing the 1996 Olympic Games to Atlanta. For his efforts, he was presented the Olympic Order, the highest award of the Olympic Movement.

However, what Young will likely be best remembered for is his work as a strategist and negotiator during the Civil Rights era and its campaigns, particularly the 1963 March on Birmingham, the 1963 March on Washington and the 1965 Selma-Montgomery March, which were catalysts to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

He worked closely with Dr. King, serving as a member of his inner circle of advisors, and admitted that organizing the nonviolent protests with him was “an easy burden to bear.” He explained, “We knew we weren’t doing this by our own wisdom or our own strength.”

And Young remembered that no matter how frightening the circumstances or unknown the consequences, “[King] would improvise comedy routines, giving the activists eulogies to make everyone laugh before they went on a march—knowing not everyone that traveled with him would come back. Some of them would certainly die.”

“He’d preach you right into heaven,” Young chuckled. “And it helped us to relax.”

A counterpoint to the laughter of the audience was a stark image recalled by Young—a scar on Dr. King’s chest from a stab wound inflicted by a deranged woman in Harlem during a book signing by King.

With a still-fierce pride, Young pointed to the nonviolent nature of his generation’s efforts against discrimination. “Dr. King urged us to ‘find a more excellent way...’ That was a biblical term King frequently used when talking about nonviolent social change and the marchers’ plans of action,” he said.

Young noted that “on the pulpit, [King] was incredibly well-read...he had a photographic mind...and would quote passages from Shakespeare and the Bible with almost 100-percent accuracy...but he was quiet in staff meetings and let others rant and rave until he had enough, then he synthesized the arguments. He was a listener and not one to debate.” From working with King, Young saw firsthand that “[w]hen you sit down and reason together, there are very few things you can’t resolve.”

The discussion turned to current events, with a special focus on social media and the rise in connectivity among individuals, families and nations. Young observed that with the proliferation of social media, the human race is now becoming closer, while, at the same time, the very nature of interpersonal relationships on a micro and macro level are shifting—age-old social hierarchies are crumbling before our eyes. This is both an



LEFT TO RIGHT: Angela Payne James, Richard Hays, Cari Dawson and Ambassador Andrew Young.

opportunity and a challenge, he stated. The event’s moderator, Diversity Committee Member Cari Dawson, dug deeper into the issue: “How can we make a change in our society...what civil and human rights do you see our generation focusing on and how is social media affecting social change now?”

In response, Young was unblinking in his awareness of the unique power—and responsibility—new technologies have impressed upon people across the globe. “[We] live in a world where, when a pushcart operator in Tunisia got frustrated because the government wouldn’t give him a permit to operate his pushcart and he set himself on fire...20 to 30 people with iPhones and iPads took pictures and videotaped it and put it on Facebook,” Young explained. “In the ‘40s, ‘50s and ‘60s, he might have been just one more dead peasant, but [because of those 20 to 30 people] we had the Arab Spring.”

Young’s final thoughts centered on his vision for the future. He relayed lessons he had discovered in *The Gardens of Democracy*, a book he particularly admires about diversity and inclusion. Young said, “[It describes] how the enlightenment...gave us a mechanized view of social change, [but] life is much more like a garden...it requires weeding...it requires acceptance of diversity, and you don’t put your flowers under the shade of the tree...you’ve got to accommodate for sunlight and rain.”

“If we look at democracy...with a garden as a metaphor, we come out with a much more humane view of the world and a much more realistic approach to its problems.” ■

Alston & Bird Tops Corporate Equality Index for Eighth Straight Year

Alston & Bird has received a top rating of 100 percent from the Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) 11th annual Corporate Equality Index. This is the eighth year in a row that Alston & Bird has received HRC's perfect rating.

"Alston & Bird is proud to once again be recognized by HRC as a leader in providing benefits, opportunities and protections for the LGBT community," said Richard Hays, Alston & Bird's managing partner. "We are committed to making our work environment conducive to all, and this designation, in addition to the ongoing accolades from FORTUNE magazine and the Great Place to Work Institute, proves we are achieving our goals."

HRC is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve LGBT equality, with more than one million members and supporters nationwide. Founded in 1980, HRC advocates on behalf of LGBT Americans, mobilizes grassroots actions in diverse communities, invests strategically to elect fair-minded individuals to office and educates the public about LGBT issues.

A copy of the 2013 Corporate Equality Index can be found at <http://www.hrc.org/cei>. ■



LEFT TO RIGHT: New York Partners James Sullivan and Mark McElreath.



Alston & Bird Earns Coca-Cola's 2012 "Living the Values" Award

The "Living the Values" Award is an opportunity for Coca-Cola's Legal Division to recognize a firm's commitment and meaningful investment in the ideas and programming that advance diversity and inclusion within Coca-Cola's major law firms. Firm responses are evaluated against best-in-class practices in the following areas:

- commitment of the firm's senior management to diversity with established systems for measuring progress and accountability;
- representation of minorities and women in the firm generally and in the firm leadership;
- success in hiring, development, promotion and retention of minority and women associates within the firm;
- creative partnering arrangements with minority and women-owned firms; and
- rigor in firm-wide diversity programming such that diversity, as a goal, enjoys firm-wide ownership and participation.

Alston & Bird Diversity Partner John Latham accepted the award on behalf of the firm at a celebratory reception and dinner held on January 10, 2013, hosted by The Coca-Cola Company. In accepting the award, Latham acknowledged that, "while we have worked with diligence and focus to create an environment where all attorneys and staff feel valued, we realize this is not the end of our journey, and that there is still much to be done."



LEFT TO RIGHT: Angela Payne James, John Latham, Scott Elder, Jane Thorpe, Bernhard Goepelt and Richard Hays.

"We are pleased to be recognized for our diversity commitment, but our greatest satisfaction comes from the success we see in lawyers who are given the opportunity to succeed."

In 2010, Alston & Bird was one of three law firms recognized by The Coca-Cola Company at the third annual "Living the Values" awards dinner, receiving an honorable mention for inclusion of women and people of diverse backgrounds and demonstrating a sustained commitment to furthering diversity in the legal profession. ■

Alston & Bird Hosts Celebration for Ballou Graduates

On Monday, June 25, 2012, the Washington, D.C. office of Alston & Bird hosted a celebration of Ballou Senior High School graduates who were recipients of scholarships from the Passport to Success Scholarship Program provided by the Friends of Ballou, an advisory/fundraising board for the high school made up of D.C. business leaders. ■

BY THE numbers

2013 *Vault Guide to the Top 100 Law Firms Rankings:*

#12 Overall Best in Diversity

Minorities Diversity **#9**

#22 LGBT Diversity

Women Diversity **#11**

100%

on The Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index for **eight consecutive years**

Selected among *Multicultural Law* magazine's 2012 Top 100 Law Firms for Diversity (**38th overall**)

Top 25 Law Firms for African-Americans

Top 100 Law Firms for Women

Top 50 Law Firms for Associates

Winner of the Coca-Cola Company's 2012 "Living the Values" Award

Diversity in Action >>

2013 California Women of Distinction Reception

Alston & Bird hosted its annual California Women of Distinction reception celebrating the firm's female clients and friends. This year, the firm honored Kate Kenealy, chief assistant attorney general of the Civil Law Division of the Office of the Attorney General and an Alston & Bird alumna, and Sandra Phillips, vice president and general counsel of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A.

The firm also recognized the Everychild Foundation, a nonprofit whose mission is to ease the suffering of children in the greater Los Angeles area due to disease, disability, abuse, neglect or poverty through grants. ■



LEFT TO RIGHT: Alston & Bird Partner Sharon Rubalcava; Everychild Foundation Director Jacqueline Caster; Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Vice President and General Counsel Sandra Phillips; Office of the Attorney General Chief Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Law Division Kathleen Kenealy.

Alston & Bird Ranked 12th in Diversity in 2013 *Vault Guide to the Top 100 Law Firms*

Alston & Bird has been ranked 12th in the nation in overall diversity in the 2013 *Vault Guide to the Top 100 Law Firms*. In breakouts, the firm was ranked 9th with respect to minorities, 11th with respect to women and 22nd with respect to LGBT individuals.

The *Vault Guide* rankings are determined by internal associate survey responses.

Los Angeles Office Holds Elimination of Bias CLE Program

On January 31, 2013, Alston & Bird's Los Angeles office held its annual Elimination of Bias CLE program and cocktail reception. California Public Utilities Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval, introduced by Labor & Employment Group Partner Jesse Jauregui, was the keynote speaker at the event, which was attended by in-house counsel from a wide variety of national, top-of-their-industry companies. ■



LEFT TO RIGHT: Alston & Bird Partner Jesse Jauregui, California Public Utilities Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval and Alston & Bird Los Angeles Partner-in-Charge Tom Wingard.

Lisa Gilford Named Among the "Top Women Litigators" in California for Third Year in a Row

Partner **Lisa Gilford** was named among the "Top Women Litigators" for 2012 by the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*—the third year in a row that she has been so recognized. The publication's list, which was created to highlight the work of talented women lawyers, focuses on the practices of 100 of the best in California. Lisa was cited this year for her continued efforts on behalf of Toyota in its unintended acceleration multidistrict litigation, including her recent success in getting a complaint by foreign plaintiffs in 14 countries dismissed from the case. ■

Diversity 2.0

On Thursday, April 26, 2012, Alston & Bird hosted "Diversity 2.0: Taking Diversity and Inclusion to the Next Level," an in-depth and candid panel discussion on how in-house and outside counsel can collaborate to take diversity and inclusion efforts to the next level. Our panel of senior corporate counsel explored innovative ways to partner with their outside counsel on diversity initiatives and shared their professional experiences, successes and challenges in this area.

The panel featured John Cooper, senior vice president and associate general counsel for Turner Broadcasting System, Inc.; Christopher Reynolds, senior group vice president and general counsel for Toyota Motor Sales, Inc.; and Leslie Turner, general counsel for Coca-Cola North America. Richard Hays, managing partner of Alston & Bird, and John Latham, the diversity partner for the firm, also spoke at the well-attended event. ■

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