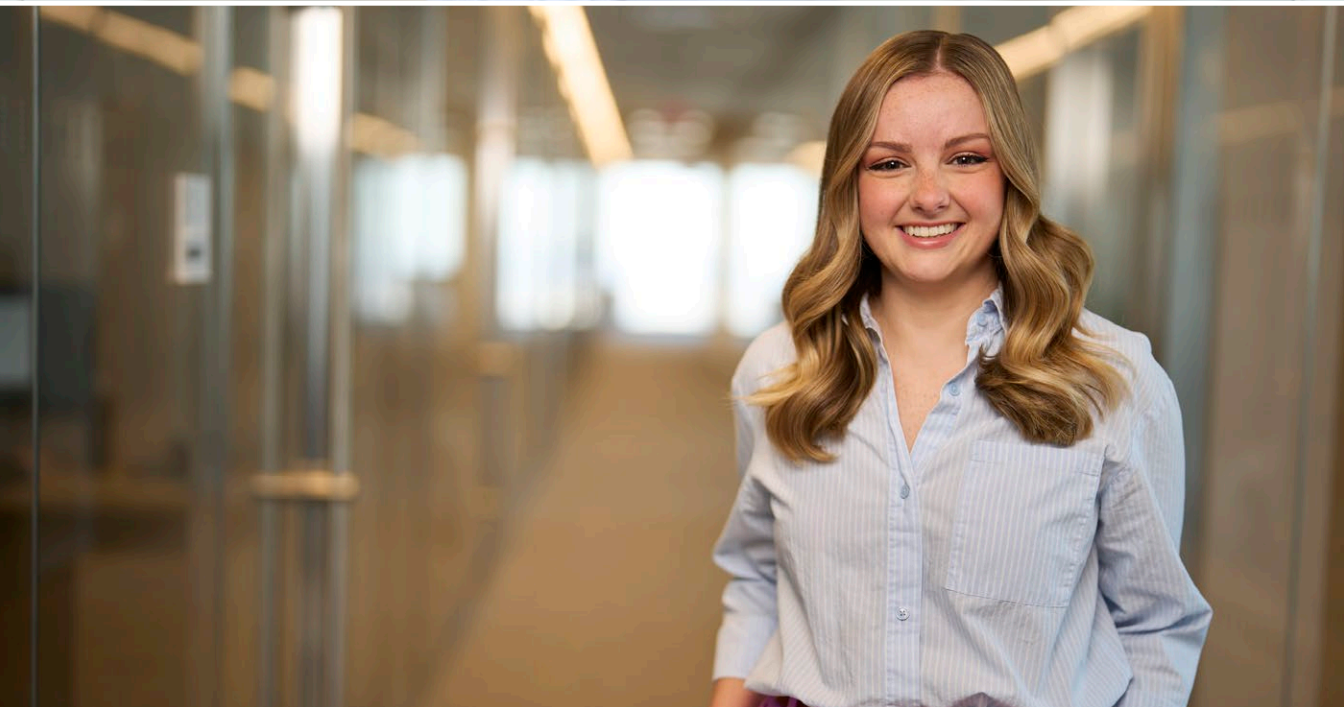


Debevoise  
& Plimpton

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion





## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Drive Our Firm

At Debevoise, we are committed to building and sustaining an inclusive community in which all of our associates are able to thrive—a goal we believe is aligned with our ability to provide the best legal services to our clients. That's why we are convinced that the inclusion, sponsorship and development of our lawyers, including lawyers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, women lawyers, LGBTQ+ lawyers, lawyers with disabilities and veterans, are not only the right things to do for our community, but cornerstones of our continued success.

Creating a more inclusive community takes continual investment in resources and opportunities for lawyers at different career stages. Celebrating differences and valuing individuals—through our affinity groups, DEI programming and strong relationships with national and regional affinity bar organizations—are some of the ways we build a workplace that supports each lawyer's journey.



“Our collegial and collaborative culture thrives on the diverse set of perspectives, skills and experiences that our lawyers bring to the firm. When we are intentional about creating inclusive teams, we empower individuals to achieve their fullest potential which in turn allows us to provide the highest level of service to our clients.”

**Winston M. Paes**  
Litigation Partner and Co-Chair of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

## Community and Connection

One of the greatest strengths of Debevoise is our community. This has been true throughout the history of the firm. More recently, we have built upon that strong foundation with specific community-building initiatives and firmwide events.

### Community Support

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee.** The DEI Committee is comprised of associate and partner representatives from each Affinity Group and meets quarterly to discuss issues attorneys and professional staff face. The committee also provides a forum where various members can bring up ideas and collaborate with each other.

**Affinity Groups.** Our Affinity Groups play an integral role in the firm, providing an invaluable source of community. They include the Asian Affinity Group, Black Lawyers Affinity Group, First Generation Professionals Affinity Group, International Lawyers Affinity Group, Jewish Affinity Group, Latin@ Affinity Group, Lawyers with Disabilities Affinity Group, LGBTQ+ Affinity Group, Middle Eastern North African (MENA) Affinity Group, Muslim Affinity Group, Native American Affinity Group, Parents Resource Group, Veterans Resource Group, and Women's Resource Group.

**Debevoise Women's Review.** The Debevoise Women's Review, a first-of-its-kind platform among law firms, was developed to inspire the legal and business communities to engage in discussion and collective action around gender diversity. Unlike a traditional marketing platform, the content is developed and the editorial process managed almost entirely by lawyers at the firm, most of whom are associates, allowing for an authentic, first-person perspective.

**Trans in Big Law.** The firm partnered with the National LGBTQ+ Bar Association to launch the first program in the legal sphere for those who identify as trans and/or non-binary lawyers and professional staff working in various Big Law firms. The program has successfully been at the forefront of creating a safe space for transgender individuals, especially within the law firm context.

**Associate Liaison Committee.** The committee works with partners and senior firm staff on a range of topics and programs important to all lawyers at the firm.



“I wouldn’t be where I am today without the support, guidance, and mentorship of my Debevoise colleagues. As a firm, we remain committed to providing all lawyers with the training, the opportunities and the platform to thrive in their careers, regardless of their backgrounds or identities.”

**Natalie Reid**  
Litigation Partner and Co-Chair of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

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“Diversity and inclusion are an inherent part of the work environment. This includes ensuring that associates from a wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences see a career path for themselves at Debevoise.”

**Tigist Kassahun**  
Corporate Counsel



# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Programming

## 2023 Programming Examples

### **Evidence-Based Insights for Inclusive Leadership with Jerry Kang**

As a refresher course on implicit bias, and an opportunity to present new research on implicit bias that he had incorporated into his work since he last spoke at the firm, Professor Kang introduced concepts such as stereotype and identity threats, and provided strategies to assist in overcoming implicit biases and stereotype and identity threats.

### **Kenji Yoshino: Say the Right Thing**

Professor Kenji Yoshino joined Debevoise to discuss tools for overcoming the fear of saying the wrong thing, including how allies can support people affected by bias and respond to those who engage in non-inclusive behavior, as well as ways that allyship principles can be applied to the legal profession.

### **Celebrating Black History Month with Antonio Delgado**

In celebration of Black History Month, New York State Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado discussed his journey as an African American man in politics, what inspires his commitment to fight for equality and justice, and the ways that his diverse professional and personal experiences have allowed him to better serve his constituents.

### **Celebrating International Women’s Day with Baroness Chakrabarti**

In celebration of International Women’s Day, Baroness Chakrabarti CBE PC joined Debevoise to discuss her path to leadership, why it is critical to empower women and what the 2023 International Women’s Day theme, “embracing equity,” means to her.

### **Celebrating Women’s History Month with Alexandra Carter: “How to Lead by Amplifying Others”**

Debevoise celebrated Women’s History Month with an empowering keynote by Professor Alexandra Carter about amplification in the workplace—elevating someone together with their ideas, contributions and experiences—and the reasons why the most successful organizations are powered by amplifiers.

### **Celebrating Iftar**

The firm celebrated Iftar with dinner hosted by the Muslim Affinity Group, followed by breakout sessions to talk about Iftar and how one celebrates the tradition.

### **Cooking and Conversations with Christine Hà**

In celebration of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, MasterChef Champion Christine Hà joined Debevoise for a cooking demonstration and discussion about her journey as an Asian American chef and first blind contestant on MasterChef, the inspiration for her cookbook, *Recipes from My Home Kitchen: Asian and American Comfort Food*, and what it means to harness the power of “otherness.”

### **Celebrating Pride**

In celebration of Pride 2023, M. Dru Levasseur, Esq., Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the National LGBTQ+ Bar Association, joined Debevoise for a discussion about trans inclusion, how legal workplaces are evolving to attract and retain trans and nonbinary talent, and concrete actions to be a better ally.

### **International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia with Mohsin Zaidi**

In celebration of International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, Mohsin Zaidi discussed his book, *A Dutiful Boy*, intersectionality and what it means to be an effective ally.

### **Honoring Juneteenth with Professor Melissa Murray**

In honor of Juneteenth, Professor Melissa Murray joined Debevoise to discuss her experience as a Black woman in law, the implications of the Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action and ways that we can all move forward together.

### **Race and the Death Penalty in *Flowers v. Mississippi*: A Conversation with Professor Sheri Lynn Johnson**

Professor Sheri Lynn Johnson discussed her work in *Flowers v. Mississippi* and the interplay between race and capital punishment in the American justice system.



“We are interested in recruiting top talent and investing in their long-term success. We take pride in our homegrown talent. It’s important that all of our lawyers see a place for themselves at Debevoise and that’s why we have made diversity, equity and inclusion a core priority at the firm.”

**Sally Bergmann Hardesty**  
Corporate Partner and Co-Chair of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



### **Celebrating the 33rd ADA Anniversary with Jessica Rafuse**

In honor of the 33rd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Jessica Rafuse, Director of Strategic Partnerships & Policy for Accessibility at Microsoft, discussed her experiences as a lawyer with a disability, her work in accessibility and disability inclusion and the impact of the ADA over the past three decades.

### **Solidarity During Crisis in Post-9/11 America: A Conversation with Deepa Iyer**

Deepa Iyer discussed her experiences building cross-community solidarity in a post-9/11 world, her work in solidarity and social movements, and ways to build more inclusive communities.

### **Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month with Mario Baeza**

In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, Debevoise alumnus Mario Baeza discussed his esteemed and varied career—as a corporate lawyer, investment and merchant banker, entrepreneur, professional musician, producer/composer and philanthropist—as well as the way his Cuban-American identity has influenced his professional trajectory and pursuits.

### **Celebrating Native American Heritage Month with Tara Houska**

In celebration of Native American Heritage Month, Tara Houska shared her experience as a tribal attorney, Indigenous rights advocate and citizen of Couchiching First Nation.

### **Financial Independence: Managing Your Personal Finances with Shahar Ziv**

In the three-part Financial Success series sponsored by the First Generation Professionals Affinity Group, personal finance expert Shahar Ziv joined Debevoise to discuss practical investment tips, actionable strategies to set yourself up on the path to financial wellness and the importance of prioritizing your financial goals.



In 2023, Debevoise hosted its fourth annual retreat for attorneys of color to support the attorneys' connection with peers, mentors, clients and partners, and provide career development expertise. The program featured a host of panelists who discussed topics including building resilience, cross-cultural communications, leading with authenticity and values-based leadership.





“As an Asian woman in the M&A field, where a lot of people often don’t look like me, what has been most meaningful to me is simply that I feel supported in a way that doesn’t have to do with being Asian or being a woman.”

**Jennifer Chu**

Corporate Partner and Co-Sponsor of the Women's Resource Group



## Lawyer, Team and Firm Development

We are working to embed diversity, equity and inclusion within the firm's broader talent development work.

- **Mansfield Certification**

The firm achieved Mansfield certification 6.0 in 2023, which is awarded to firms that have at least 30% women lawyers, lawyers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, lawyers with disabilities and/or LGBTQ+ lawyers in candidate pools for significant leadership roles and opportunities.

- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Leadership Team**

Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Leadership Team (DEILT) is chaired by three partners of the firm, Sally Bergmann Hardesty, Winston Paes, and Natalie Reid, and includes Marc Grainger, our Chief Talent Officer, and Della Sabessar, our Director of Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, to spearhead DEI strategy. The DEILT also collaborates closely with the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee—a committee comprised of partner and associate leader representatives from across the firm's fourteen (14) affinity groups. The Deputy Presiding Partner of the firm, Nicole Mesard, serves as the Management Committee liaison to the DEI Committee.

- **Addressing Implicit Bias**

We have instituted implicit bias training to foster a more inclusive, equitable workplace and promote unbiased behaviors and decision-making.

- **Practice Group Leadership**

Practice group leaders are expected to actively implement practices and procedures to encourage inclusive leadership and reduce unconscious bias. The firm implements training programs designed to educate attorneys on these concepts.

- **Real-Time Informal Feedback Program**

To enhance career development for our lawyers, the firm has implemented our Real-Time Informal Feedback Program. Lawyers are taught a number of simple yet effective feedback techniques, and meet regularly to discuss their experiences in giving more frequent feedback.

- **Centralized Staffing**

We apply a centralized approach to staffing our junior litigators, with the objective of ensuring an equitable distribution of responsibilities and opportunities.



“When I first joined the firm over five years ago as an SEO summer intern, I was apprehensive. I had just graduated from college and didn’t really know anything about law firms—I hadn’t even started law school yet. What I came to learn was that I was quite fortunate to be placed at Debevoise, and that’s why I continued to return each summer and as a full-time associate. Debevoise was an integral part of the early years of my legal career, and I truly view the firm as my Big Law home.”

**Daniel Pedraza**  
Alumnus

## Moving Forward: By the Numbers



38% of our U.S. associates and 15% of our U.S. partners self-identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Middle Eastern/ North African, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races\*



44% of the firm's five most recent U.S. summer associate classes (2019-2023) self-identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Middle Eastern/North African, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races

\* As of January 01, 2024



## Recognition

Ranked in the top 10 of *The American Lawyer's* 2023 A-List and the only law firm to appear on the A-List every year since the list was created

In 2023, Debevoise achieved Mansfield 6.0 Certification

Earned a 100% in Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index for the 13th time, highlighting our commitment to LGBTQ+ workplace equality

Named as one of the "Leading Firms for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion" by *Chambers Associate*

Received the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity 2023 Compass and 2023 Top Performer Awards

Awarded the Asian American Bar Association of New York's 2023 Law Firm Diversity Award





## It Starts With Recruiting

As part of our expansive efforts to recruit a broad range of talent, we sponsor, support and participate in programs that improve the educational outcomes and career paths of students from a wide variety of backgrounds and lived experiences, beginning with high school students and continuing through to new firm hires:

- **MENTOR Program.** Debevoise is a charter member of the Justice Resource Center’s MENTOR program, which provides high school students with exposure to law-related activities.
- **Sponsors for Educational Opportunities (SEO) Law Fellowship Program.** The SEO Law Fellowship Program links talented incoming law students from underserved communities to global law firms. We welcome several SEO Fellows into our summer program each year.
- **Law School Student and Affinity Groups.** We sponsor various law school student groups.
- **Job Fairs.** We recruit for candidates at job fairs such as:
  - › Northeast BLSA Job Fair (NEBLSA)
  - › Hispanic National Bar Association Job Fair (HNBA)
  - › Lavender Law Career Fair (LGBTQ+)
- **Engagement between Debevoise Affinity Groups and Summer Associates.** Our affinity groups host a variety of programs for summer associates. Members also act as informal advisors for summer associates.



“When I arrived at Debevoise, I was relieved to realize that I had found a community that strives to support all of its members. Any concerns I had as a member of the LGBTQ+ community about not fitting the stereotype of a typical ‘Big Law attorney’ quickly subsided.”

**Margo Watson**  
Alumna

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Broader World

The work of creating a more diverse and inclusive firm connects us to clients and communities outside the firm.

- Many of our lawyers—including women and other lawyers of diverse backgrounds—have served in senior leadership positions at prominent bars and other professional organizations, and in a variety of public service roles. Just a few examples include the following:
  - › American Bar Association: Deborah Enix-Ross, Senior Advisor of Global Engagement, served as the immediate past president of the American Bar Association, where she co-founded the ABA’s Women’s Interest Network.
  - › We have eight alumni serving as federal judges, including four from underrepresented groups: Hon. J. Paul Oetken, Hon. Lorna G. Schofield, Hon. Laura Taylor Swain and Hon. Gregory H. Woods.
  - › Senior Government Positions: Mary Jo White (former SEC Chair and U.S. Attorney, S.D.N.Y.), Catherine Amirfar (former Counselor on International Law to the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State) and Jim Johnson (a former U.S. Treasury undersecretary, now Chief Operating Officer of Trinity Church Wall Street).
  - › New York City Bar Association: Retired partner Barbara Paul Robinson was the first woman president of the New York City Bar Association (1994–1996). She joins retired partner John Kiernan and two other Debevoise partners who have led the Bar Association. Debevoise is a signatory of the NYC Bar’s three diversity statements.
- Former Presiding Partner Michael Blair chaired the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity’s (LCLD) Partnership and Teams Committee. Under his leadership, the Partnership and Teams Committee initiated a secondment program. Secondments provide meaningful opportunities for lawyers to establish close relationships with corporate clients. This experience will enhance the skill set and client knowledge of lawyers, which will support career development.
- Our firm is engaged in many pro bono projects that provide underserved communities with access to justice. One initiative that we are especially proud of is the Holloway Project. For the past eight years, Debevoise lawyers have worked to reduce excessive prison sentences that were required by harsh federal sentencing guidelines, which Congress has since corrected. This effort, led by former federal prosecutor and former U.S. District Judge John Gleeson, has already resulted in reduced sentences for 56 federal prisoners, largely men of color, and shaved more than 2200 years off of their sentences. Since 2016, more than 200 lawyers have spent more than 54,000 hours on Holloway representations.



Our lawyers hold leadership positions in a range of organizations dedicated to improving the diversity of the legal profession.

- **Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD).** We take a leading role in LCLD, which offers next-gen leaders access to training and mentoring from more than 300 corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners.
- **Catalyst.** Debevoise is a member of Catalyst CEO Champions for Change, a global nonprofit working with some of the world's most powerful CEOs and leading companies to build workplaces that work for women. Mary Beth Hogan, partner and Co-chair of Debevoise's Litigation Department, serves on the Catalyst Board of Directors.
- **National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) Challenge Club.** Debevoise is a member of the NAWL Challenge Club, and in partnership with the Club, we provide opportunities for women associates to network with in-house counsel, gain pitch experience and participate in mentorship sessions. Retired partner Beth Pagel Serebransky is a Member at Large of NAWL's Board. Debevoise litigation partner Arian June was named co-chair of the 2020 NAWL Spring Conference.
- **DirectWomen.** Debevoise sponsors DirectWomen, a nonprofit that works to increase the representation of women lawyers on corporate boards.



## Alumni Spotlight: Troy McKenzie

Our alumni have made Debevoise the firm it is today, and we are proud to count among that group Troy McKenzie, who was named Dean of New York University School of Law in 2022. Troy was a litigation associate at Debevoise from 2003 to 2007, after having clerked for Justice John Paul Stevens of the U.S. Supreme Court. Following Debevoise, Troy joined the faculty of NYU Law, where he was one of only five professors under the age of 35. Now, Troy is the first Black Dean of NYU Law. Since joining the faculty at the law school, Troy has won multiple teaching awards, most recently in 2020 when he was one of six NYU faculty members from across the university to receive the Distinguished Teaching Award.



“We have seen again and again that the quality of our work product is higher, and the firm and our clients benefit, when the voices of lawyers from diverse backgrounds contribute to solving our clients’ most difficult challenges.”

**Jonathan Lewis**  
Tax Partner



## Our Commitment

We are proud of the considerable success we have had in hiring lawyers and law students from a diverse range of backgrounds. We know that it is the quality of our practice, and the culture and people who form our firm, that attract such great talent.

We also know that the work of building a truly diverse, equitable and inclusive firm cannot be measured just by accolades and that numbers alone do not fully tell the tale. It is our job at Debevoise to create a professional environment in which all our lawyers can thrive and succeed.

We are committed to driving change in our partnership and in the legal profession. That requires not only good intentions but effective initiatives and practices, including those outlined in this brochure. We welcome the opportunity to speak with you in more detail about our plans and practices in the course of our interviews and time with you.



# Contact



**Sally Bergmann Hardesty**  
Partner and Co-Chair of DEI  
+1 212 909 6027  
sbergmann@debevoise.com



**Marc Grainger**  
Chief Talent Officer  
+1 212 909 6559  
mgrainger@debevoise.com



**Winston Paes**  
Partner and Co-Chair of DEI  
+1 212 909 6896  
wmpaes@debevoise.com



**Della Sabessar**  
Director of Global Diversity,  
Equity & Inclusion  
+1 212 909 7391  
dsabessar@debevoise.com



**Natalie Reid**  
Partner and Co-Chair of DEI  
+1 212 909 6154  
nlreid@debevoise.com

To learn more about Debevoise, our people and our culture, follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

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## Our Offices

### New York

66 Hudson Boulevard  
New York, NY 10001  
Tel: +1 212 909 6000  
Fax: +1 212 909 6836

### Washington, D.C.

801 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
Tel: +1 202 383 8000  
Fax: +1 202 383 8118

### San Francisco

650 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
Tel: +1 415 738 5700  
Fax: +1 415 644 5628

### London

65 Gresham Street  
London  
EC2V 7NQ  
Tel: +44 20 7786 9000  
Fax: +44 20 7588 4180

### Paris

103 rue de Grenelle  
75007 Paris  
Tel: +33 1 40 73 12 12  
Fax: +33 1 47 20 50 82

### Frankfurt

Taunustor 1 (TaunusTurm)  
60310 Frankfurt am Main  
Tel: +49 69 2097 5000  
Fax: +49 69 2097 5555

### Luxembourg

4a, rue Albert Borschette  
L-1246 Luxembourg  
Tel: +352 28 5795 33 00

### Hong Kong

21/F AIA Central  
1 Connaught Road Central  
Hong Kong  
Tel: +852 2160 9800  
Fax: +852 2810 9828

### Shanghai

13/F, Tower 1  
Jing'an Kerry Centre  
1515 Nanjing Road West  
Shanghai 200040  
Tel: +86 21 5047 1800  
Fax: +86 21 5047 1600