

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Cozen O'Connor is committed to employing a diverse complement of attorneys and staff, and to fostering greater inclusion in the legal profession. We understand the organizational effectiveness that comes from welcoming and valuing difference within the firm, and we know that assembling a team with a rich diversity of perspectives and experience is necessary to providing the highest quality legal service. As a firm, our goals are to recruit professionals with diverse backgrounds and talents, maximize the unique potential of each employee, and build a more inclusive profession.

Cozen O'Connor Again Achieves Mansfield Certification

The Diversity Lab announced that Cozen O'Connor has achieved Mansfield Certification for the fourth consecutive year.

[Learn more here](#)

To pursue this important mission, Cozen O'Connor has adopted a multilayered approach. Our efforts are led by [Lynne Espy-Williams](#), Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer. [David Shimkin](#) and [Simeon Brier](#) co-chair the firm's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, which was first established in the late 1990s and includes attorneys from various practice areas and offices, as well as staff from the recruiting, marketing, and professional development departments.

The firm offers resource groups tailored to promote the success and inclusion of six self-identifying constituencies: Asian Attorney Resource Group, Black Attorney Resource Group, LGBTQ Attorney Resource Group, Hispanic/Latino Attorney Resource Group, Different Abilities Attorney Resource Group, and Veteran Attorney Resource Group. Cozen O'Connor takes equally seriously its commitment to the advancement of women in the legal profession, and the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) team works in



- [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Diversity Committee](#)
- [Recruitment & Hiring](#)
- [Retention & Promotion](#)
- [Women's Initiative](#)

For more information, contact



Lynette D. Espy-Williams
Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer



LEADERSHIP
COUNCIL
ON LEGAL
DIVERSITY

NEWS & EVENTS

[Leadership's Role in Supporting Belonging Culture](#)

[Cozen O'Connor Achieves Mansfield Certification for Fifth Year](#)

[Lynette Espy-Williams Named to 2024 Most Influential Black Lawyers in Corporate America List by Savoy Magazine](#)

[Innovative Approaches to Inclusive Excellence in Corporate Culture](#)

close partnership with the firm's independent, award-winning Women's Initiative.

The firm became a signatory firm to Mansfield 3.0 in 2019, a pioneering initiative that helps law firms ensure a diverse candidate pool for significant leadership positions and/or appointments. The Mansfield Rule is an award winning idea from the 2016 Women in Law Hackathon hosted by the Diversity Lab in collaboration with Bloomberg Law and Stanford Law School. In 2020, the firm achieved Mansfield status.

Most recently, Cozen O'Connor achieved Mansfield 5.0 Certification status. This is the highest designation that a firm can receive from the Diversity Lab, and very few firms are able to achieve it.

Cozen O'Connor focuses its DEI activities in three key areas: Recruitment & Hiring, Retention & Promotion, and Community Engagement.

Recruitment & Hiring

Cozen O'Connor is — and always has been — an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate based upon race, color, gender, gender identity, national origin or ancestry, religion, age, disability, citizenship, marital status, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other prohibited basis. This policy extends to all aspects of the employment relationship, including hiring and advancement.

The firm seeks to recruit law students with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. We do this, in part, by participating in pipeline programs designed to identify excellent first-year law students from diverse backgrounds, offer summer employment opportunities at prestigious law firms, and provide educational seminars about the business and practice of law. Cozen O'Connor often participates in the interview and selection of program participants, accepts summer associates from these programs, and has hired program participants as full-time associates after graduation.

Cozen O'Connor's own 1L DEI Fellowship — named the Bernard Lee Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scholars Program in honor of our late partner, Bernard Lee, and his passion for mentoring young lawyers and developing a pipeline of talent within the firm and the legal profession — is open to first-year law students who have demonstrated a commitment to

Cozen O'Connor Named Top Workplace by amNew York

Walter Stella and Di Addy Tang Honored by the Justice & Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco with Outstanding Volunteers Crystal Award

Cozen O'Connor Named 2024 Best Law Firm for Women and Diversity

Arbitration Panel

Silvia Chicas and Sidnee McDonald Selected as Class of 2024 NELC Academy Fellows

Optimizing Intergenerational Collaboration: Analyzing Generational Gaps and Empowering Different Generations

WXN honors Lynnette Espy Williams with CEDI Awards

Neurodiversity in the Workplace: Beyond Awareness to Actionable Strategies

Emerging Employment Law Issues – What Keeps You Up at Night?

Cozen O'Connor Names 2024 Firm Representatives for Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

Cozen O'Connor Announces New Group Chairs, Office Managing Partners, Other Promotions

Cozen O'Connor Launches DEI Practice, Names Group Leader

From DEI to I.D.E.A.: Elevating the Concepts of Inclusion and Diversity in DEI Programs

Generating New Clients - Part 2: Building Your Personal Brand - Reputation, Word of Mouth, & Referral Work

Thriving Together: Cultivating Allyship, Safety & Diversity in Law Firm Culture

Simeon Brier Recognized as a

building diversity and inclusion. Through that program, students can work as summer associates at Cozen O'Connor and build connections for future employment.

Our recruitment professionals and hiring partners are also focused on reaching out to law schools with diverse student populations. Cozen O'Connor members travel to minority student job fairs across the country, participate in panel discussions on inclusive recruiting, and engage in other on-campus programs with the goal of increasing our firm's profile among diverse student populations.

Retention & Promotion

We understand that recruitment and hiring is only half of the picture. In order to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive law firm, real attention must also be paid to helping diverse attorneys and staff stay and succeed. Cozen O'Connor has instituted a number of practices and programs intended to dismantle the explicit and implicit barriers to diverse attorney advancement and to promote career-long professional development.

Importantly, Cozen O'Connor looks for opportunities to appoint diverse attorneys to leadership positions within the firm. We know that having diverse members in decision-making roles is a critical way to ensure that those constituencies are heard and represented. In addition, we believe it is vital for newer lawyers to see diverse attorneys as members of the board of directors, Management Committee or Hiring Committee, and as chairs of practice groups or office managing partners because it helps them envision a real pathway toward success.

In terms of direct programming, Cozen O'Connor hosts a biennial multi-day DEI Summit. Self-identified diverse attorneys from offices across the country are invited to gather along with firm managers and key clients. Research shows that the professional success of diverse attorneys is highly dependent on their connecting with available resources, having a strong community, and finding mentors. These summits enable diverse attorneys to develop sustaining peer networks, receive training on topics from client pitches to the promotion process, and allow them to provide direct feedback to firm management about Cozen O'Connor's diversity efforts. By engaging in this dialogue, diverse attorneys can share their wisdom and raise their profile.

All firm attorneys receive mentorship and training, but the firm has

developed a tailored mentoring program whereby diverse associates or members may be paired with members of the DEI Committee or other attorneys who are specifically committed to their success and retention.

Cozen O'Connor hosts speaker series, trainings, and panel discussions throughout the year that focus on raising awareness about DEI issues, including, for instance, discussions of how unconscious and implicit bias influence retention, promotion, and compensation decisions at law firms and analyses of DEI best practices in other peer firms and corporate America.

Finally, Cozen O'Connor tries to foster an internal culture that recognizes DEI as being a mission for **all of us** and not simply an issue for self-identified diverse employees. In our language and in our practices, the firm reinforces the fact that we all benefit from building a more just, diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce.

Community Engagement

Both as a firm and as individuals, we are deeply engaged with the communities where we work and live.

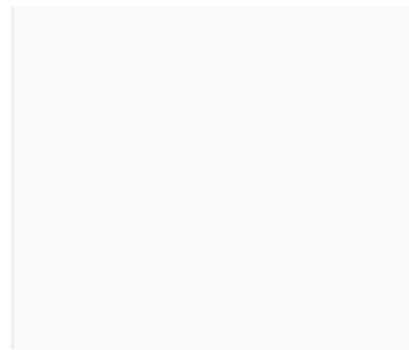
The firm operates a multimillion-dollar grantmaking entity called the Cozen O'Connor Charitable Foundation. Formally incorporated in the early 2000s, the mission of the foundation is to promote charitable giving in seven distinct areas, one of which is DEI. The firm gives substantial annual donations to support organizations working on racial justice, gender equality, LGBTQ rights, and veterans' services. Examples of grantees include the Urban Affairs Coalition, Hispanic Federation of New York, Women's Way, Asian Human Services, Chicago Youth Centers, Human Rights First, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Neighborhood Assistance Program, Center for Victims of Torture, Transgender Legal Defense Fund, The Food Bank, and Human Rights Coalition, among others.

It is important to note that our foundation guidelines require that requests for money come from a Cozen O'Connor lawyer who is "closely" involved with the organization, meaning they serve as a board member, event chair, or longtime adviser. As such, foundation donations reflect not only a firmwide monetary commitment but also a time commitment by individual attorneys.

Indeed, on an individual basis Cozen O'Connor attorneys are active in a range of bar associations and bar programs that are specifically focused on

promoting diverse attorneys, including as leaders in the Gate City Bar Association in Atlanta, the Hispanic Bar Association in Houston, the Hispanic National Bar Association, the National LGBT Bar Association, and diversity officer of the American Bar Association's Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section.

Cozen O'Connor attorneys also provide pro bono services that promote DEI, under the direction of our full-time director of Pro Bono Engagement.



LEARN MORE

[CLE Programs](#)

[Subscribe To Publications](#)

[Contact](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [Attorney Advertising](#)