

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

SmithAmundsen is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We support and encourage workforce diversity. We do not discriminate because of an individual's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, citizenship, creed, marital status, veteran status, age, family care giving responsibilities, genetic profile or predisposition, pregnancy or disability with respect to hiring, promotion, firing, compensation, or other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.

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*The group's core mission is the recruitment, retention, development and progression of our diverse lawyers and leaders.*

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## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is a group of partners, associates and administrative professionals that meet regularly to ensure DEI is weaved into the fabric of everything we do as a firm. Each of our offices is represented in membership as well as leadership from the associates group and the women's attorney group. New co-chairs are elected every three years.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

In 2021, the Executive Committee approved the DEI Committee's engagement of Empowered to assist the firm in the assessment phase and to help us develop a strategic plan around DEI initiatives. That work began with designing a survey around employee engagement and culture. In addition, Empowered reviewed all of our HR data regarding hiring practices, compensation, mentoring, promotions, and exits from the firm. The objective of this review was to understand how policy meets discretion with regard to making equitable decisions affecting all of our people.

As a result of this assessment work, Empowered proposed a strategic plan to our committee that included:

- Creation of a talent acquisition strategy that includes the creation of consistent and more exhaustive criteria for potential candidates to the firm that is consistently applied across all practice groups.
- Greater transparency in communications around performance expectations, feedback, path to partnership, and other key factors in an employee's firm experience.

- Creation of a pipeline management strategy that focuses support, advocacy, mentoring, and visibility for minorities in the firm to thrive and ascend to partnership and leadership. This strategy will complement the mentoring program already being launched in early 2022.
- An enhanced professional development program for new hires, associates, practice group leaders, and other partners that will enhance skill set development, leadership, and DEI understanding.
- A system of enhanced and clarified performance management at all levels of the firm that includes how well leaders manage DEI and the development of minorities in the firm.

### Leadership Pipeline

Cultivating a pipeline of exceptional leaders within the firm is the foundation of the firm's ability to achieve growth and inclusion in the years ahead. As such, the firm annually commits significant resources to the development of 10 attorneys; at least 50% of whom are diverse.

### Mentoring

SmithAmundsen's cultural commitment to the personal and professional growth of our attorneys is best evident in the firm's mentorship program. A mentor is defined as an experienced and trusted adviser and that is exactly what the program aims to achieve as a connection between our mentors and mentees. Our mentors provide guidance and encouragement, an ear to listen, a brain to pick and a push in the right direction when needed. The mentorship program happens in three phases to account for where each of our firm members is on their personal journey. Mentors and mentees are matched so that each mentee sees themselves reflected in the journey of the mentor.

Leadership Joe Trevino, co-chair Julie Proscia, co-chair