

THE FIRM

Most Diverse Partners Placed in Nonequity Tier

by Dylan Jackson

Minority lawyers disproportionately occupy the nonequity partnership tier of the nation's largest-grossing law firms compared to their white colleagues.

An American Lawyer analysis of 148 firms with two-tiered partnership structures, 131 of which ranked in this year's Am Law 200, shows that minority lawyers are not only more likely to have nonequity partnership status, but that they are moving into the nonequity tier at triple the rate of white lawyers. The analysis is based on five years of survey data.

The revelations come at a time when the push for diversity in law firms is placing more emphasis on the partnership level, which historically has meant equity and a seat at the table. But not all law firm partnerships are created equal: Law firms have been rapidly expanding a nonequity partnership tier. And while equity partners are more likely to have an opportunity to influence the direction of a firm and share directly in its profits, nonequity partners are not.

"Equity partners are the ones that have the power at a law firm. Who's being hired, who's getting choice work. They're the ones that control the politics of the firm," said Michelle Fang, chief legal officer at alternative rental car company Turo, who wrote an open letter in January signed by more than 200 general counsel demanding increased diversity in the legal profession.

To be sure, more white lawyers are becoming nonequity partners than are making equity partner, as law firms rapidly increase the nonequity ranks as a way to boost profits per equity partner.

But the number of minority nonequity partners grew by 34% between 2014 and 2018—a rate that was 16 percentage points greater than the growth rate for minority equity partners and more than triple the 10% growth rate of white nonequity partners.

Of the minority lawyers who made partner at one of the 148 firms in 2019, 54% were promoted to or joined as a nonequity partner—a shift of 10% from 2014.

Over that same time, 466 minorities were promoted to nonequity partner—more than double the number of minority equity partners that came into these firms over the same period.

White partners, on the other hand, are still more likely to have equity status than nonequity. More than 58% of white partners were equity partners, and 42% were nonequity in 2018, the most recent year in which data is available.

Several prominent Am Law 100 firms showed notable discrepancies in their minority and white nonequity partner representation, including Proskauer Rose; Latham & Watkins; McDermott Will & Emery; Crowell & Moring; Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw; Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan; and Duane Morris.

No one at Latham, Proskauer, Quinn Emanuel or Pillsbury responded to a request for comment.

But Duane Morris diversity and inclusion officer Joe West did not dispute the



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findings. He attributed the discrepancy at his firm and others in part firms to firms focusing on geographical regions or specific practice areas in their lateral hiring rather than emphasizing diversity. Hiring that way, he said, brings no guarantee of diversity.

"We've grown organically by following the business and by adding groups in subject matter and geographic areas that make sense for our strategy," he said. "You have much less control, and that act alone could skew the numbers."

Crowell & Moring management committee chair Philip Inghima said the difficulty most firms face in closing the gap stems from the fact that generation after generation, attorneys at his firm and others have not been diverse.

Both Duane Morris and Crowell & Moring say they are making systemic changes to try to get more minority lawyers on the equity track—overhauling their assignment systems to reduce bias and working with outside organizations such as Diversity Lab, for example.

"That kind of change is needed to overcome the effects of multiple generations of lawyers at firms like ours which had few diverse partners," he said.

While it is true that minority lawyers have made inroads into the partnerships of Big Law, the pace has been incremental. In 2014, minority partners accounted for 8% of the total partnership at the surveyed firms. Five years later, minorities now account for 10% of the overall partnership.

The analysis looked at more than 32,000 U.S. attorneys within 148 firms that responded to an annual diversity survey conducted by ALM, the parent company of The American Lawyer, every year from FY 2014 through FY 2018. In order to assess shifting demographics within two-tier firms, those firms that did not have a nonequity tier for any year during that period were excluded from the analysis.

Ben Hancock contributed to this report.

Dylan Jackson writes about how national law firms manage their talent and diversity. Contact him at djackson@alm.com. On Twitter: @DylanBJackson.



CITY OF DORAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

All residents, property owners and other interested parties are hereby notified of a **Local Planning Agency (LPA)** meeting on **Wednesday, October 23, 2019 beginning at 5:00 PM**, to consider the following text amendments to the City of Doral Land Development Code. This meeting will be held at the **City of Doral, Government Center, Council Chambers located at 8401 NW 53rd Terrace, Doral, Florida, 33166**.

The City of Doral proposes to adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION No. 19-

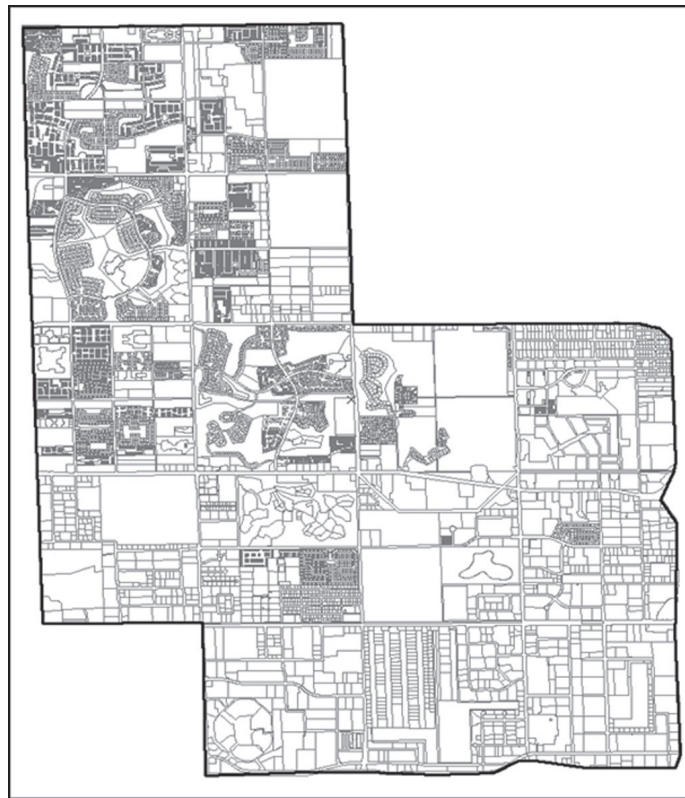
A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DORAL, FLORIDA, SITTING AS THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY, RECOMMENDING APPROVAL / DENIAL OF, OR GOING FORWARD WITHOUT A RECOMMENDATION TO TRANSMIT TO THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY AN AMENDMENT TO THE CITY OF DORAL LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE SECTION 80-211 "SPECIFICATIONS FOR PERMITTED TEMPORARY SIGNS", CREATING NEW SIGN CODE PROVISIONS ALLOWING FOR "TEMPORARY IDENTIFICATION BANNERS ON HIGH RISE BUILDINGS"; PROVIDING FOR DEFINITION; PROVIDING FOR SPECIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

HEARING NO.: 19-10-DOR-02

APPLICANT: City of Doral

REQUEST: Text amendments to the City of Doral Land Development Code, Section 80-211 – "Specifications for Permitted Temporary Signs", to create new sign code provisions allowing for "Temporary Identification Banners on High Rise Buildings".

Location Map



Information relating the subject application is on file and may be examined in the City of Doral, Planning and Zoning Department Located at **8401 NW 53rd Terrace, Doral, FL. 33166**. All persons are invited to appear at this meeting or be represented by an agent, or to express their views in writing addressed to the City Clerk, **8401 NW 53rd Terrace, Doral, FL. 33166**. Maps and other data pertaining to these applications are available for public inspection during normal business hours in City Hall. Any persons wishing to speak at a public hearing should register with the City Clerk prior to that item being heard. Inquiries regarding the item may be directed to the Planning and Zoning Department at 305-59-DORAL.

Pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes If a person decides to appeal any decisions made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. This notice does not constitute consent by the City for introduction or admission of otherwise inadmissible or irrelevant evidence, nor does it authorize challenges or appeals not otherwise allowed by law. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, all persons who are disabled and who need special accommodations to participate in this meeting because of that disability should contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 305-59-DORAL no later than three (3) business days prior to the proceeding.

NOTE: If you are not able to communicate, or are not comfortable expressing yourself, in the English language, it is your responsibility to bring with you an English-speaking interpreter when conducting business at the City of Doral during the zoning application process up to, and including, appearance at a hearing. This person may be a friend, relative or someone else. A minor cannot serve as a valid interpreter. The City of Doral DOES NOT provide interpretation services during the zoning application process or during any quasi-judicial proceeding.

NOTA: Si usted no está en capacidad de comunicarse, o no se siente cómodo al expresarse en inglés, es de su responsabilidad traer un intérprete del idioma inglés cuando trate asuntos públicos o de negocios con la Ciudad de Doral durante el proceso de solicitudes de zonificación, incluyendo su comparecencia a una audiencia. Esta persona puede ser un amigo, familiar o alguien que le haga la traducción durante su comparecencia a la audiencia. Un menor de edad no puede ser intérprete. La Ciudad de Doral NO suministra servicio de traducción durante ningún procedimiento durante el proceso de solicitudes de zonificación.

Connie Diaz, MMC

City Clerk

City of Doral

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