

The Best Law Firms For Women And Minority Attorneys

By **Jacqueline Bell**

Law360 (July 11, 2019, 8:04 PM EDT) -- Few U.S. law firms have made much headway when it comes to creating a truly diverse workforce. These 25 firms made Law360's list by outranking their peers on their representation both of women and attorneys of color.

As a whole, the attorney population at U.S. law firms remains largely white and male.

Law360's Diversity Snapshot reveals that just over 16% of attorneys and just over 8% of equity partners at surveyed law firms are attorneys of color. Women still represent just over one-third of all attorneys, and slightly more than 20% of equity partners. These numbers have remained consistent over the five years Law360 has conducted the survey.

At individual law firms, however, the demographics can vary dramatically.

Some firms have significant levels of minority representation among nonpartners, but diversity drops off at the partner level. Others have created opportunities for women at all levels of the firm, but the representation of attorneys of color remains lacking.

Law360's results continue to stand in contrast to the makeup of the student body at U.S. law schools, which have long been far more diverse than the ranks of U.S. law firms, suggesting that lawyers from diverse backgrounds still face significant barriers at all levels of private practice.

Law firms also say they struggle with attrition, particularly among women and attorneys of color, suggesting that existing structural hurdles end up encouraging these attorneys to find better opportunities elsewhere.

Still, the legal industry is working to turn the ship, building out programs to improve diversity in hiring, team staffing, mentoring and promotion.

U.S. corporations are also pushing for more diverse teams to handle their legal questions, making diversity and inclusion efforts a business imperative and an increasingly vital part of many law firms' game plan.

The 25 firms on Law360's list for 2019 have reported above-average representation of both women and minorities at every tier, from nonpartners to equity partners, compared with firms of similar size.

Here are the firms showing some measurable results as law firms work to build a more diverse and inclusive legal profession.

Pulling Ahead On Diversity

These firms have above-average representation of both women and minorities at every level.

Firms with 600+ lawyers

- Akerman
- Jackson Lewis
- Littler
- Morgan Lewis
- Average of firms (600+)

Female Attorneys	Female Nonpartners	Female Partners	Female Equity Partners
37.6%	46.3%	24.1%	20.6%
Minority Attorneys	Minority Nonpartners	Minority Partners	Minority Equity Partners
18.3%	22.9%	10.7%	9.3%

Firms with 300-599 lawyers

- Davis Wright Tremaine
- Fragomen
- Average of firms (300-599)

Female Attorneys	Female Nonpartners	Female Partners	Female Equity Partners
34.7%	44.4%	24.4%	20.4%
Minority Attorneys	Minority Nonpartners	Minority Partners	Minority Equity Partners
14.6%	19.6%	8.7%	7.3%

Firms with 150-299 lawyers

- Atkinson Andelson
- Best Best & Krieger
- Chapman and Cutler
- Constangy Brooks
- Hanson Bridgett
- Nossaman
- Thompson Coe
- Wiley Rein
- Average of firms (150-299)

Female Attorneys	Female Nonpartners	Female Partners	Female Equity Partners
33.8%	44.1%	24.7%	20.6%
Minority Attorneys	Minority Nonpartners	Minority Partners	Minority Equity Partners
12.6%	17.6%	8.2%	7.2%

Firms with 50-149 lawyers

- Berry Appleman
- FordHarrison
- Liebert Cassidy
- MG&M Law
- Riley Safer
- Roig Lawyers
- Tyson & Mendes
- Van Ness Feldman
- Walsworth
- Average of firms (50-149)

Female Attorneys	Female Nonpartners	Female Partners	Female Equity Partners
35.3%	43.3%	27.6%	22.8%
Minority Attorneys	Minority Nonpartners	Minority Partners	Minority Equity Partners
13.0%	16.7%	9.5%	8.5%

Firms with 20-49 lawyers

- Carothers DiSante
- Wong Fleming
- Average of firms (20-49)

Female Attorneys	Female Nonpartners	Female Partners	Female Equity Partners
53.1%	63.2%	38.5%	36.4%
Minority Attorneys	Minority Nonpartners	Minority Partners	Minority Equity Partners
43.8%	52.6%	30.8%	36.4%

Wong Fleming shined in the category of firms with 20-49 lawyers and was one of only two that met the Law360 metrics. [Highlighted and added]

Wong Fleming Statistics from Law360

Firms with 20-49 lawyers	Female Attorneys	Female Nonpartners	Female Partners	Female Equity Partners
Wong Fleming	53.1%	63.2%	38.5%	36.4%
	Minority Attorneys	Minority Nonpartners	Minority Partners	Minority Equity Partners
	43.8%	52.6%	30.8%	36.4%

--Editing by Jocelyn Allison, Pamela Wilkinson and John Campbell.

Methodology: Law360 collected demographic data from more than 300 U.S. firms, or vereins with a U.S. component, on their attorneys by head count as of Dec. 31, 2018. Only U.S.-based attorneys were included in the survey, and firms had to have at least 20 U.S.-based attorneys to participate.

Law360 collects data from law firms using the race, gender and ethnicity categories used by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in its annual Employer Information EEO-1 survey.

For the list, firms were first grouped according to size: 20-49 attorneys, 50-149 attorneys, 150-299 attorneys, 300-599 attorneys and 600-plus attorneys. Then, firms that fell below the average in their group in any of the following categories were deemed ineligible for the list: (1) percentage of female attorneys; (2) percentage of female nonpartners; (3) percentage of female partners, both equity and nonequity; (4) percentage of female equity partners; (5) percentage of minority attorneys; (6) percentage of minority nonpartners; (7) percentage of minority partners, both equity and nonequity; and (8) percentage of minority equity partners.

Firms that did not provide equity partnership data were ineligible for the ranking.

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