

## Diversity Outreach Plan

Zelle recently launched a new Diversity Outreach Plan to guide the firm's participation in diversity scholarship, pipeline and affinity group initiatives and programs. Each element of this plan is intended either to encourage and facilitate diverse students in choosing law as a profession or to support and recognize the contributions and interests of the diverse professionals among us. This plan testifies to the firm's meaningful, ongoing support of efforts to increase diversity in the practice of law.

The overall plan is designed to embrace both national and local initiatives and to include specific, focused initiatives, while also establishing discretionary funds that permit flexibility and allow each of the firm's offices to tailor its diversity outreach to the interests and involvement of its individual attorneys and the needs of each office's local community.

Below is a summary of Zelle's Diversity Outreach Plan. If you have additional questions related to the firm's diversity efforts, please feel free to contact the firm's Diversity Coordinator, Kristin Suga Heres at [kheres@zellelaw.com](mailto:kheres@zellelaw.com).

### I. THE ZELLE DIVERSITY IN LAW SCHOLARSHIP

#### **Applications Submissions for the 2021 Diversity in Law Scholarship Closed on March 29, 2021.**

The keystone of the Diversity Outreach Plan is a new scholarship fund for law students who either (1) are a member of a population or group whose background and perspectives are historically underrepresented in the private practice of law; or (2) demonstrate a long-standing commitment to diversity that will be furthered by award of the scholarship. Depending upon the firm's current needs, the Scholarship recipient may be offered, but is under no obligation to accept, a paid summer clerkship at one of the firm's offices for the summer following the student's first year of law school. The specific location of the potential clerkship will be decided by the firm in consultation with the student and will be based upon both the student's interest and the firm's need. Finally, in order to help ensure the recipient's successful entry into the legal profession, the firm will assign an attorney to mentor the recipient for the

student's remaining law school career.

## II. THE MINORITY CORPORATE COUNSEL ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

In addition to the Zelle Diversity In Law Scholarship, the firm will continue (and increase) its involvement with the MCCA's Lloyd M. Johnson, Jr. Scholarship. The Minority Corporate Counsel Association was founded in 1997 to advocate for the expanded hiring, retention, and promotion of minority attorneys in corporate law departments and the law firms that serve them. The MCCA scholarship program helps law students meet financial needs associated with law school and also exposes them to a group of leaders who can help to mentor and guide their early entry into the profession. The scholarships are provided to students either as a one-time award or as fellowships consisting of three annual awards, one for each year of law school.

## III. SPONSORSHIP OF THE JUST THE BEGINNING FOUNDATION PIPELINE PROGRAM

In addition to the two scholarship programs, the firm will be serving as a national and program sponsor for the Just The Beginning Foundation, a pipeline program designed to reach out to students at various points along the educational spectrum and give them academic support, life experiences, tools and motivation to keep them in school and help them to see that the legal profession is open and welcoming to individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The JTBF Summer Legal Institute, which takes place in five different cities around the country, is the center piece of JTBF's programming. It is designed to expose targeted incoming high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors to the law and its related professions. The Institute provides a seven-day program that consists of classroom lectures on substantive legal subjects; logic and critical thinking exercises; written advocacy; oral advocacy in mock trials; panel discussions of judges and attorneys; and field trips to law firms, government agencies, and state and federal courthouses. Additionally, students are provided with information about preparing for college admissions, securing financial aid, networking, and succeeding in higher education. The students' parents attend the final closing ceremony and also receive



information from financial aid and admissions representatives regarding law school admissions.

To support the important mission of JTBF, the firm will serve as a Bronze-level sponsor of the Foundation at the national level and as a Platinum-level sponsor for the Twin Cities Summer Legal Institute.

#### IV. LOCAL AFFINITY GROUPS AND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

In addition to the firm-wide diversity initiatives discussed above, the firm has established a fund for each office for membership in, and support of, local and regional affinity bar associations, local bar association diversity initiatives, local diversity conferences and events, local pipeline programs, and other similar organizations. The firm's San Francisco office recently agreed to support Upwardly Global, an award-winning nonprofit organization that helps foreign-born professionals re-enter their careers in the U.S., and the Women In Law Empowerment Forum, a national organization aimed at educating women in law firms on how to become leaders in the workplace and in the community by building, exercising and implementing a strong sense of empowerment.