

## Diversity & Inclusion

At FormanWatkins, our job is to provide clients with the best solutions for sophisticated legal issues. In our experience, the most innovative ideas are created when a divergence of perspectives and backgrounds come together. For this reason, Diversity & Inclusion is critical at FormanWatkins, and we strive continuously to honor individuality and equality. We celebrate the unique experiences of each member of our team and, through dialogue and collaboration, inspire inclusion throughout our entire firm.

"Diversity in the workplace is exemplified by an environment that includes various points of view, cultural backgrounds, and ideals. It is noticeable not only through the socioeconomic demography of an organization but through the robust and effective work product completed for the client." -Malissa Wilson

FormanWatkins' culture of inclusion and commitment to diversity is supported by thoughtful planning and measured through intentional action. Our Diversity & Inclusion Committee was established to facilitate programming that would encourage the representation of diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences at every level of the firm. Since its inception, the Committee has worked with the firm's leadership to incorporate its goals into the management of the firm.

"As a female attorney, I wanted to work at a firm where I would be given equal opportunities and responsibilities. I chose to work at FormanWatkins because I saw firsthand that female attorneys were deeply involved in the decision-making process at the Firm. During my time at FormanWatkins, I have continued to witness that commitment to diversity and equality. Being a member of the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Committee has given me an opportunity to speak on women's issues in the profession not only within the firm but also in the legal community." -Caroline M. Upchurch

We believe that our commitment is best demonstrated through the work of our people. Therefore, in a time where firms choose to simply write a check, FormanWatkins makes it a priority to actively engage in diverse and inclusive endeavors, both internally and in the local communities we serve.

## Internal Firm Development

Our Diversity & Inclusion Committee hosts programming for both staff and attorneys across all of our offices. FormanWatkins has consulted with leading professionals in the areas of inclusion, leadership and diversity to ensure

that each member of our team has the necessary tools and knowledge to further promote FormanWatkins' commitment to Diversity & Inclusion. As a result of these endeavors, we have developed training modules that have been implemented throughout the firm. Our Lunch and Learn series on Diversity & Inclusion is a cultural awareness training tool that encourages discussion among the members of our firm about the ways to recognize and overcome biases that may hinder an inclusive work environment. These sessions provide both attorneys and staff with a greater understanding of the importance of fostering and maintaining a diverse and inclusive work environment.

## Community Partnerships

We are proud of our long-term service to organizations supporting diverse interests as well as our participation in diverse and inclusive initiatives and programming. We are excited about our partnerships with the Mississippi Center for Justice, the Magnolia Bar Association, and the Mississippi Center for Legal Services Corporation. Additionally, our attorneys have taken active roles in Diversity & Inclusion centered events, including activities such as the Magnolia Bar Foundation Girls' and Boys' Law Camp, National Black Law Students' Association's Mid-Atlantic Regional Convention and Southeastern Regional Academic Retreats, multiple events hosted by the Southern University Law Center, and the Louisiana State Bar Association Diversity Conclave.

## Women's Initiative

At FormanWatkins, we strive to provide our female attorneys with the mentoring and support they need to obtain success. We encourage the promotion and retention of women within the firm and provide opportunities for training on the issues facing women lawyers. Our attorneys have participated in panel discussions concerning issues women face in the practice of law, and have sponsored local law students seeking to participate in such events. Additionally, we are proud of our firm's participation in the programmatic efforts of local affinity groups, including the Mississippi Women's Lawyers Association and the Texas Women's Lawyers' Association.