

## McFarland Writes Article for DRI Voices

Jackson Partner Vernon McFarland recently had an article published in *DRI Voices* (November 4, 2020). Read it below, or click the image to open it in a new browser.

### DRI Voices

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## Systemic Racism Exists; Ad

**By Vernon M. McFarland**



Many have the mindset that they are personally above racism or over racism. They say things like, “I don’t see color,” “I don’t have a racist bone in my body,” or my personal favorite, “I have a black friend.”

## DRI Voices

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After earning a degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering, I attended law school at the University of Mississippi. I am currently a partner at Forman Krutz LLP. I'm a married father of four children; involved in my church; and I'm a proud American. When I walk outside my law firm, my house, or anywhere else, I'm seen as a Black male and perceived negatively for no other reason than the color of my skin. Unlike my white counterparts, I spend a significant amount of time combating microaggressions while dispelling people's negative perceptions of me to make them feel comfortable in my presence. Personally, it's exhausting; professionally, it's disappointing; spiritually, it's

These negative perceptions follow me inside the courtroom. Justice should be blind, but it is not. Tell me, when walking into a courthouse named after a segregationist with Confederate statues out front that his plea