

# Gibson Dunn Chief Diversity Officer Zakiyyah Salim-Williams Promoted to Partnership

Firm News | August 8, 2022

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP announced today that Zakiyyah Salim-Williams, Chief Diversity Officer, has been elected as a partner. Salim-Williams' promotion to the partnership underscores the firm's continued commitment to being a market leader in DEI efforts and initiatives. "Zakiyyah's leadership in driving the firm's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts have been nothing short of exceptional, and I'm so pleased to announce her well-deserved elevation," said Barbara L. Becker, Chair and Managing Partner of Gibson Dunn. "In my prior role as the chair of the Global Diversity Committee, I witnessed firsthand the impact of Zakiyyah's tireless efforts. Her vision and dedication have been instrumental in the significant strides the firm has made." "I am overjoyed to join the partnership at Gibson Dunn," said Salim-Williams. "It is remarkable to compare today's legal landscape to when I began my career as a lawyer – the progress pushes me and my colleagues to keep moving the needle. I am grateful to partner with firm leaders, clients, and the broader legal community to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive profession." Among other achievements, Salim-Williams launched the firm's successful Women of Gibson Dunn and Black Advancement Initiatives, which have resulted in growing the number of women partners to over 120 and increasing the number of Black attorneys at the firm by 80 percent. She also actively engages in pro bono matters, most recently working with the Board of The Alliance for Asian American Justice, a non-profit organization that was created in response to the surge in anti-Asian violence across the United States. Gibson Dunn is proud of the incredible milestones we have achieved in our diversity journey, including Salim-Williams' elevation which makes her one of the first Chief Diversity Officers promoted to partner at a major law firm who is dedicated exclusively to diversity and inclusion. Gibson Dunn is also committed to ensuring that diversity is reflected in firm leadership. Diverse attorneys now represent more than 50 percent of local office leaders and 40 percent of practice group leaders at Gibson Dunn, resulting in 75 percent of the firm's practice groups having a diverse leader. Additionally, diverse attorneys make up 50 percent of firmwide committee chairs and 41% of the firm's Executive Committee. The firm has 17 active affinity groups, including our Asian-American, Black, Hispanic/Latino, First Generation Professionals, LGBTQ+, Veterans, Muslim and Sabbath-Observant attorneys, who host hundreds of programs annually that advance our diversity and inclusion efforts. Additionally, the firm regularly partners with local diverse bar associations and community partners to advance diversity and inclusion in the respective communities. Finally, Gibson Dunn is actively seeking the MLT Black Equity at Work Certification, a first-of-its-kind roadmap for companies that are committed to achieving Black equity, and attained certification of the plans earlier this year. **About Zakiyyah Salim-Williams** Salim-Williams joined Gibson Dunn as Chief Diversity Officer in 2011, where she has led various diversity and inclusion efforts, including launching Women at Gibson Dunn and the Black Advancement Initiative, among others. Prior to joining the firm, Salim-Williams served as Diversity Director at the New York City Bar Association, clerked on the District Court for the Eastern District of New York and on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and was an associate at two global law firms. She also worked as an intern for the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and for the White House Office of Counsel to the President. She is also a Director on the New York Junior Tennis & Learning Board, and a founding member and advisor of the National Business Coalition for Child Care. She serves in an advisory and administrative

## Related People

[Zakiyyah T. Salim-Williams](#)

# GIBSON DUNN

role to the Board of the Alliance for Asian American Justice, a national pro bono initiative committed to standing up for victims, and preventing future acts, of anti-Asian hate. Additionally, Salim-Williams played a leading role as a member of the Planning Committee for the George Floyd Global Memorial's 2nd Annual Rise and Remember Celebration in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She graduated in 2001 from Columbia Law School, where she was a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and in 1998 from Howard University, *summa cum laude* with a degree in Political Science.