

# GIBSON DUNN

## Celebrates Black History Month

As we take the time to reflect and celebrate the rich history of Black American culture, we want to share some of the amazing efforts of our Black attorneys at Gibson Dunn, and provide an update on the firm's Black Advancement Initiative.

Earlier this month, our Diversity Book Clubs across the firm had the opportunity to hear Los Angeles associate **Megan Lawson** and Washington, DC Of Counsel **Chris Wilson** interview **Ambassador Ron Kirk**, Special Of Counsel in our Dallas office. Ambassador Kirk shared his reflections on having grown up during the period of Jim Crow segregation and being a first generation beneficiary of the civil rights movement. He reminded us that we each bear the responsibility to stand up, speak out, and fight for those least able to do so for themselves. He further reminded us that we have an obligation to create a more just and fair world for all. In essence, we are all uniquely suited to be Trustees of our country's Freedom.

In that spirit, we encourage each of you to remain steadfast in your advocacy of racial justice and equity in all aspects of your life – at work, in your communities and within your homes. We appreciate your continued support through this tumultuous time and look forward to building a brighter future together.



## Roscoe Jones

Washington, DC  
Counsel

### A Reflection on Black History Month

#### *Public Service Means to “Go Where the Problems Are”*

My passion for social justice began with my family history. My father marched at Selma with John Lewis. He participated in “Freedom Summer” in Mississippi to register Black voters and build freedom schools. He desegregated his community college. His father—my grandfather—was a Montford Point Marine, one of the first Blacks to serve in the Marine Corps. My mother counseled students in public schools for three decades. Her mother—my grandmother—worked as domestic help for white families during the Jim Crow era.

My family routinely discussed what citizenship meant to us. It is about active service. The idea that we should do something greater than ourselves and make the world reflect not what it is, but what it ought to be...

... I became a lawyer because I was moved by the actions of civil rights lawyers before me. I admired people like Charles Hamilton Houston who created the legal strategy to end legalized segregation to Thurgood Marshall and Constance Baker Motley who fought to end America’s Jim Crow legacy to A. Leon Higginbotham whose seminal book *Shades of Freedom* described both the potential of the law to either eliminate or perpetuate racial injustice. I recall Mr. Houston’s profound statement that a “lawyer is either a social engineer or a parasite to society,” and I desired to use my legal career to become an agent of social change.

*We encourage you to read Roscoe’s full reflection by clicking [here](#). The above excerpt is from a post recently published on the American Constitution Society’s (ACS) Law & Policy Expert Forum. Roscoe serves on the ACS Board of Directors.*

## Black Advancement Initiative

As you may know, the firm launched our Black Advancement Initiative in 2019 with a renewed focus on the recruitment, retention and advancement of Black talent. We have made tremendous strides in the past 18 months, and while we are proud of the results yielded thus far, we are committed to building upon these successes and elevating our efforts in the years to come.

Firm leadership, in collaboration with our Black partners, strategized and implemented a number of measures to achieve the Initiative’s goals. Our efforts have ranged from facilitating additional internal resources such as peer-to-peer mentoring; engagement with external stakeholders, including clients and community pipeline programs; and increased communication and engagement among our Black lawyers.

In addition to building our diverse talent pipeline, the Black Advancement Initiative is also focused on external efforts to combat systemic injustice and address other issues impacting the Black community, including civil rights work and criminal justice reform.

## Over the past 18 months, we have witnessed record growth in our community.

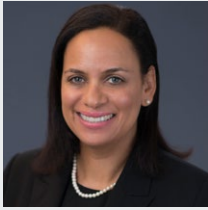
**66% increase**  
in number of  
Black lawyers

**2% increase**  
in Black  
attorneys overall

**Hired 4.5X**  
**the number**  
of Black summer  
associates

**Hired 4.5X**  
**the number**  
of Black lateral  
associates

**30+**  
virtual  
gatherings



## Mylan L. Denerstein

New York  
Partner

Mylan Denerstein was honored as a **2020 New York City Bar Association Diversity & Inclusion Champion**. This prestigious award is bestowed upon individuals whose actions and activities within New York City's legal community embody and are critical for creating lasting change in organizations and establishing an inclusive work environment.

Mylan is a true champion of diversity and inclusion – not only at Gibson Dunn, but also in the legal profession and the broader community. She is a force of nature and uses her powerful voice to motivate others to join in the important responsibility of ensuring that underrepresented minorities are adequately represented at the Firm and in the legal community.

With a legal career spanning nearly three decades, her tireless dedication to elevating diverse talent and cultivating inclusive spaces is unparalleled – from her time as the highest ranking African American in Governor Cuomo's administration where she was the chief architect of the Women's Equality Act, to her leadership in spearheading the fight for marriage equality in New York State, to her current leadership efforts at Gibson Dunn.

## MLT Black Equity at Work Certification

### *In Support of our Racial Justice & Equity Initiative*



We are pleased to announce the firm's newly launched effort in pursuit of the MLT Black Equity at Work Certification. This certification is an innovative roadmap for employers to achieve Black equity in the workplace, and will serve as an additional platform for the firm to further advance racial justice and equity. As noted in *The American Lawyer's* article on Gibson Dunn's participation, the certification is "... just taking our efforts to the next level." The full article can be accessed [here](#).

*"We, at Gibson Dunn, have had a longstanding commitment to championing diversity and inclusion as core values of our business. Through the firm's Racial Justice and Equity Initiative, we seek opportunities to positively impact the communities in which we work and reside. In addition to our external efforts and advocacy in defending the rule of law, civil liberties and equal justice for all, we are likewise committed to advancing racial justice and equity internally at the firm. In pursuing this certification, we are proud to stand alongside leaders across all industries in taking meaningful action to ensure Black equity within our respective institutions."*

— Ken Doran, Chairman and Managing Partner

*"The MLT Black Equity at Work Certification provides a concrete platform for organizations to make significant strides in advancing equity and to create lasting impact. As part of the certification process, we will continue our focused efforts on making quantifiable, sustained progress in advancing Black equity across all principal areas, including representation, compensation, inclusivity, business practices, and racial justice contributions and investments. We view these measures as supplemental components to our comprehensive diversity efforts aimed at dismantling systemic barriers to opportunity and in maintaining an inclusive and equitable workplace."*

— Zakiyyah Salim-Williams, Chief Diversity Officer

Gibson Dunn's full press release can be accessed [here](#). You can learn more about the certification by clicking [here](#).

## Community Spotlight

### *The Brotherhood/Sister Sol*



Founded in 1995, The Brotherhood/Sister Sol (Bro/Sis) provides comprehensive, holistic and long-term support services to youth who range in age from eight to twenty-two.

The organization focuses

on issues such as leadership development and educational achievement, political education and social justice, Pan-African and Latinx history, and global awareness. Bro/Sis provides rites of passage programming, thorough daily after school care, school and home counseling, summer camps, job training and employment, college preparation, community organizing training, and international study programs to Africa, the Caribbean and South America.

Bro/Sis currently provides direct services to 1000 young people — 350 youth at its Harlem site, and another 700 youth via its work in schools in Brooklyn, Harlem and Queens, and provides healthy food to thousands of community residents via its farmers market. In order to meet the growing demand for Bro/Sis' services locally and nationally, the organization broke ground in 2018 on their 20,000 square foot capital project, which will provide critical support to the local community as well as allowing for the creation of the necessary physical site for an organization that is being modeled across the country. The project is expected to be completed this spring.

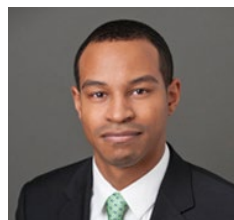
The firm's partnership with Bro/Sis dates back to former Gibson Dunn partner Rashida La Lande's service on the organization's Board of Directors. Over the years, we have engaged in a number of efforts to support Bro/Sis, including but not limited to pro bono assistance on a variety of matters and engagement with community members (including an annual site visit and panel discussion with New York summer associates). We are currently helping Bro/Sis with their significant facility expansion and look forward to supporting the organization in the years to come.

*"Among the many pro bono clients I've worked with over the years, one of the most meaningful clients I've been privileged to support is Bro/Sis. As someone who proudly grew up in Harlem, I know how imperative and meaningful their work is to the local community. While the organization has been operating out of a single townhouse for the past 25 years, they launched a capital campaign a few years ago to respond to the growing needs of the community. Through the firm's pro bono efforts, New York partner **Andy Lance** and I have provided counsel to the organization for all real estate matters related to the expansion. Bro/Sis' new 20,000-square-foot facility will more than double the number of youth directly impacted, and allow the org to exponentially grow its outreach efforts.*

*In addition to my representation of the org in its real estate matters, I am thrilled that the firm has expanded our partnership with Bro/Sis to advance racial justice and equity in the community. Given the shifting social landscape, I was grateful to work alongside **Katie Marquart**, Partner and Pro Bono Chair, to coordinate representation of Bro/Sis staff members and youth who were arrested in connection with peaceful protests following the murder of George Floyd. Khary Lazzarre-White, the Executive Director of Bro/Sis, noted that this was monumental for the organization because he was previously unsuccessful in obtaining such support from law firms of our caliber, and this support provided much needed comfort to the Bro/Sis community who continue to be on the front lines of the fight for racial justice.*

*This example simply scratches the surface of the incredible work that Bro/Sis is doing – I encourage you to view this video to learn more about their extraordinary efforts ["Brotherhood/Sister Sol's Legacy: 25 years of Social Justice Work."](#)*

*Our tireless dedication to advocating for racial justice and equity beyond the walls of our firm is what sets Gibson Dunn apart as a leader in this space. I am beyond proud of our work supporting Bro/Sis, and am grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in our community and for future generations."*



— Matt Gibbons  
New York Real Estate Associate



## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR BLACK PARTNERS AND SENIOR ATTORNEYS

Our Black partners and senior attorneys play a critical role in helping to strengthen and expand our close-knit Black community at the firm. They have spearheaded efforts in growing Gibson Dunn's Black Advancement Initiative, a dedicated effort to recruit, retain and advance Black talent. We are proud of our senior Black lawyers for their countless contributions.



**MYLAN DENERSTEIN**  
Partner  
Litigation  
New York



**MATTHEW GIBBONS**  
Senior Associate  
Real Estate  
New York



**TIAUNIA HENRY**  
Senior Associate  
Litigation  
Los Angeles



**ROSCOE JONES**  
Of Counsel  
Litigation  
Washington, DC



**AMBASSADOR RONALD KIRK**  
Senior Of Counsel  
International Trade  
Dallas



**ANDREW LEGRAND**  
Partner  
Litigation  
Dallas



**MARCELLUS MCRAE**  
Partner  
Litigation  
Los Angeles



**VERONICA MOYÉ**  
Partner  
Litigation  
Dallas



**KARIN PORTLOCK**  
Of Counsel  
Litigation  
New York



**NATALIE SCOTT**  
Of Counsel  
Corporate  
New York



**CHRIS WILSON**  
Of Counsel  
Litigation  
Washington, DC



**KAHLIL YEARWOOD**  
Partner  
Real Estate  
San Francisco

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## Programming Spotlight

### *Diverse Perspectives in the Law Speaker Series*

As part of Gibson Dunn's Racial Justice & Equity Initiative, we launched a firmwide program in Fall 2020 with the aim of exploring our diverse attorneys' experiences in navigating issues around race and inclusion throughout their lives, and how it has shaped their careers in the legal profession. We are thrilled by the fantastic reception of this program and look forward to hosting these sessions on a quarterly basis.

This program was the brainchild of LA senior associate **Tiaunia Henry**, who was inspired to speak up about her experiences as a Black female lawyer, and she strongly believed it would be invaluable for colleagues to hear from diverse peers on their personal and professional experiences. We are grateful to Tiaunia for amplifying these voices!

The inaugural program in our U.S. offices featured partners **Mylan Denerstein** (NY), **Ernie Hsin** (SF) and **Marcellus McRae** (LA) and was moderated by **Tiaunia Henry**. Our EMEA inaugural program was moderated by London senior associate **Amar Madhani**, and featured partners **Osma Hudda** (LE) and **Oliver Welch** (HK), and Of Counsel **Claibourne Harrison** (LE). Our most recent session featured partners **Saeed Muzumdar** (NY), and **Kahlil Yearwood** (SF), moderated by Washington, DC Counsel **Roscoe Jones**.

## Racial Justice & Equity Initiative

Gibson Dunn is proud to support numerous organizations across the country that champion racial justice and equity. Beyond contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars to these various causes, we also engage through our community outreach and pro bono efforts. Between June and December of this past year, over 400 Gibson Dunn lawyers spent over 16,000 hours on at least 50 new pro bono matters focused on racial justice.

We want to especially thank our Black partners, Counsel **Roscoe Jones**, Of Counsel **Karin Portlock**, and associates **Leni Ackerman**, **Matthew Aiken**, **Wevine Fidelis**, **Tiaunia Henry**, **Tafari Lumumba**, **Mackenzie McCullough**, **Steven Spriggs** and **Duncan Taylor** for their tremendous contributions to the firm's racial justice pro bono efforts.

We are grateful to the hundreds of attorneys working to advance racial justice and equity in our communities, and look forward to building upon these efforts. In the meantime, we encourage you to learn more about some of our community partners who are doing this important work on the frontlines.



### Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture (NMAAHC)

The NMAAHC website has a great collection of resources, including [virtual exhibitions](#), [online collections](#), and [digital resources](#).



### Equal Justice Initiative

The Equal Justice Initiative is committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society.



### NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund (LDF)

LDF is America's premier legal organization fighting for racial justice. Through litigation, advocacy, and public education, LDF seeks structural changes to expand democracy, eliminate disparities, and achieve racial justice in a society that fulfills the promise of equality for all Americans.



### Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

The principal mission of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law is to secure equal justice for all through the rule of law, targeting in particular the inequities confronting African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities.

## ABA's 21-Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge

Many thanks to those of you who have joined in our ABA 21-Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge. The 21-Day Challenge consists of a collection of thought-provoking articles and videos for participants to review each day, which are designed to promote awareness, empathy, compassion, and understanding around issues relating to race, power, privilege, and oppression in America.

A special thank you to LA senior associate **Tiaunia Henry** for spearheading this effort. While the challenge has already started, it is not too late to join! Please [click here](#) to be added to the distribution list.

Please join us this Wednesday as Dallas partner Veronica Moyé interviews Darren Walker on his inspiring life journey.

## GIBSON DUNN CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH



A CONVERSATION WITH

**Darren Walker**  
President of the Ford Foundation

Wednesday, February 24, 2021  
11 a.m. PST / 2 p.m. EST

*See calendar invite for additional details*

Darren Walker is president of the Ford Foundation, a \$13 billion international social justice philanthropy. He is co-founder and chair of the Presidents' Council on Disability Inclusion in Philanthropy.

Before joining Ford, Darren was vice president at The Rockefeller Foundation, overseeing global and domestic programs. In the 1990s, he was COO of the Abyssinian Development Corporation, Harlem's largest community development organization. Earlier, he had a decade-long career in international law and finance at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton and UBS.

Darren co-chairs New York City's Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers, the New York City Census Task Force, and the Governor's Commission and serves on The Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform and UN International Labour Organization Global Commission on the Future of Work. He serves on many boards, including Carnegie Hall, the High Line, VOW to End Child Marriage, the Committee to Protect Journalists, the National Gallery of Art, and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the recipient of 16 honorary degrees and university awards, including Harvard University's W.E.B. Du Bois Medal.

Educated exclusively in public schools, Darren was a member of the first Head Start class in 1965 and graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a BA, BS and JD. He has been included on *Time's* annual 100 Most Influential People in the World, *Rolling Stone's* 25 People Shaping the Future, *Fast Company's* Most Creative People in Business, and *OUT Magazine's* Power 50.



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