

Our Commitment

OUR COMMITMENT

Diversity and inclusion at Smith Anderson means celebrating the variety of experiences and backgrounds that strengthen our firm culture, while reflecting the communities and clients we collaborate with. As a law firm with a significant public profile, we recognize that we play a pivotal role as a voice of change and influence, and work with intention to ensure that we are making consistent, action-oriented contributions that advance D&I within our firm, the legal profession and the business and local communities that we are so proud to serve.

Awards and Recognition

We are honored that Smith Anderson's commitments to D&I have been publicly acknowledged with several awards and recognitions. *Triangle Business Journal* named our firm one of its **2022 Leaders in Diversity** award winners and named Management Committee Chair Amy Batten and Diversity & Inclusion Committee co-chair Sharita Whitaker to its 2022 and 2023 classes of Women in Business list, respectively. Consulting firm The Diversity Movement honored Smith Anderson as **one of five East Coast law firms** that "do it right" in leading and advancing diversity and inclusion, not just in the legal profession, but throughout the community. Smith Anderson also **received** the Wake County Bar Association's inaugural Equity Champion award and the Diversity & Inclusion award from *North Carolina and South Carolina Lawyers Weekly*.

Actionable Commitments

We challenge ourselves to not only "talk the talk," but to demonstrate actionable commitments to D&I as a pillar of our strategic plan and through firm policies. A few key highlights of these efforts include:

- Maintaining a Diversity and Inclusion Committee, consisting of both partners and associates that is co-chaired by diverse lawyers, both women, one Black and the other part of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Retaining a **Chief Diversity Officer** to help create and implement the firm's D&I programs, policies and strategic plans.
- Offering an **Excellence in Diversity 1L Fellowship program** for first-year law school students who have demonstrated their commitment to make a positive contribution toward diversity and inclusion.
- Partnering with the corporate legal departments of businesses in Raleigh, Durham and Research Triangle Park to provide mentoring and networking opportunities for our diverse lawyers.
- Maintaining affinity groups for women and diverse lawyers, with a focus on mentoring and networking.
- Supporting, recruiting and hiring from minority job fairs.
- Creating a Diversity Mentor Program that pairs associates of diverse backgrounds with partner mentors to foster a sense of belonging and assist associates navigating the path to firm partnership.

- Serving on the Minorities in the Profession Committee of the North Carolina Bar Association, the Young Lawyers Division Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Adelante! Moving Forward Program.
- Sponsoring diversity and inclusion conferences, including the North Carolina Chamber's *Women: A Force in Business* conference, the Chamber's *Diversity & Inclusion* conference, and NC Tech's *Diversity + Inclusion Summit*.
- Hosting women and diverse in-house counsel events to connect, support and facilitate the growth of women and diverse lawyers.
- Supporting NFP organizations whose missions are rooted in D&I principles.

There is much more work that needs to be done on this front by the business community at large, and, for our part, we continuously work to be intentional in all of the decisions we make to ensure that D&I is considered at every turn.

Mansfield Certification Plus

Smith Anderson has **achieved** Mansfield Certified Plus status for our actions to diversify leadership, recruit, hire and retain attorneys from underrepresented groups in the legal profession and for ensuring diverse lawyers are considered for new business efforts. The firm not only met 100% of the applicable categories for base Mansfield certification, but also met and surpassed 60% of the Mansfield Rule's "Diversity Milestones," achieving Mansfield Certified Plus status. We are one of two North Carolina law firms that achieved the 2023 Midsize Mansfield Certification and the only firm in the state to receive 2023 Midsize Mansfield Certified Plus status. We are extremely proud of this milestone and will continue to work to meet and exceed the expectations and requirements of this certification.

Hear from our people in the video below on their perspectives on diversity at Smith Anderson and our commitment to cultivating a workplace where everyone is respected and valued.

