



News & Trending

NEWS

WHEN IT COMES TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, SMITH ANDERSON IS “DOING IT RIGHT”

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The Diversity Movement

Smith Anderson and one of its longest-serving attorneys, Kerry Shad, were featured in the article “**Five Eastern U.S. Law Firms That Do DEI Right**,” from The Diversity Movement about law firms that are leading the diversity, equity and inclusion charge and taking all of the right steps to “do it right” to better serve clients.

The article highlights Smith Anderson and four other law firms that embrace DEI as a pillar of their respective firms’ values and lead in advancing diversity and inclusion efforts, not just in the legal industry – which remains one of the least diverse professions in the United States – but throughout the community.

“I’m a gay woman, so I think it says a lot about Smith Anderson that I’ve been an elected member of firm leadership since 1999,” said Kerry, who serves on the firm’s Management Committee, co-chairs Smith Anderson’s D&I Committee and was elected partner in 1999. “That’s a long time.”

The article notes that in 2021, Smith Anderson received a Diversity and Inclusion award from *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly* and *South Carolina Lawyers Weekly*. The Wake County Bar Association’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee also honored Smith Anderson last year with its inaugural Equity Champion Award. Smith Anderson also joined the 2021-2023 Midsize Law Firm class of the Mansfield Rule. To become Mansfield Certified, a firm must consider at least 30 percent underrepresented lawyers for at least 60 percent of its leadership roles, among other things.

Other recent D&I initiatives include naming Taylor Dewberry as the firm’s first Chief Diversity Officer and launching the Excellence in Diversity Fellowship for first-year law school students.

Smith Anderson’s D&I efforts have helped the firm attract new clients and retain existing ones: clients know that varied perspectives make legal teams more effective.

“The teams that we put together for different types of clients, different types of work, different projects – these folks are all very different from each other,” she said. “If you get all those different ways of looking at a problem or tackling an issue, the end result is just going to be better. That’s a huge plus, a huge plus.”

Read the full article [here](#).

The Diversity Movement (TDM) started in 2019 with five innovators who are passionate about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). With their combined DEI experience and extensive backgrounds in business, journalism, human rights, and data analytics. What started as a trial for one eLearning course — focused on inclusion and

bottom-line results —became a full-service DEI consultancy. By 2021, TDM employed 15 full-time staff members and had a portfolio of over 50 clients.

PROFESSIONALS

Kerry A. Shad

