

THE BLACK ATTORNEY AFFINITY GROUP

WEIL
GOTSHAL

The Black Attorney Affinity Group Mission Statement

The Black Attorney Affinity Group embodies the talents and strengths of Black attorneys across the Firm, focusing on educating, mentoring and networking, recruiting and retention, pro bono initiatives, business development and client outreach. The Black Attorney Affinity Group is a result of the Firm's recognition of the importance and contributions of Blacks in every aspect of Firm life and is dedicated to the advancement of Black attorneys at the Firm.

Event Highlights

- Organized and held the 2007 Weil Gotshal Black Attorney Affinity Group Retreat, a two-day program held in New York City, which was attended by members of the Black Attorney Affinity Group from all domestic offices. The retreat focused on fostering communication among members of the Black Attorney Affinity Group, as well as identifying issues and planning for events aimed at enhancing the Firm's overall commitment to diversity.
- As part of the retreat, the Black Attorney Affinity Group organized a client panel on diversity discussing new challenges, as well as current practices and initiatives throughout various industries. The panel included client representatives from Coca-Cola, Johnson & Johnson, Lehman Brothers, Ovations and Wal-Mart and was open to all employees of the Firm.
- Hosted a luncheon and book-signing for Judge Robert L. Carter, the attorney who argued *Brown v. Board of Education* before the Supreme Court of the United States and who published a memoir entitled, "A Matter of Law: A Memoir of Struggle in the Cause of Equal Rights."
- Sponsored a panel and reception for Black Judges with George Washington University Black Law Student Association, which was moderated by Weil Gotshal Antitrust partner Laura Wilkinson.

- Conducted the annual Howard Law School Mock Interview program for first year law students to enable the students to practice and further refine their interviewing and resumé-writing skills.
- Sponsored the 2007 Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Ceremony at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston.
- The Firm's various offices are host to several Black History Month activities, including distributing fact sheets showcasing artists of color whose work is exhibited as part of the Firm's collection and sponsoring relevant documentary screenings.
- Joined with the Anti-Defamation League to sponsor the "No Place for Hate" Program at Noyes Elementary School.
- Sponsored a Juneteenth luncheon held at Weil Gotshal's Dallas office, featuring Negro League Baseball legend William "Bill" Blair.
- Hosted or sponsored a variety of events for summer associates, including: a panel discussion on "How to Be a Successful Summer Associate;" a wine tasting led by Harlem-based and minority-owned wine shop, Harlem Vintage; an affinity group outing for members based in Washington, DC; a summer barbecue held for members based in Dallas; and an Affinity Group breakfast at the Weil Gotshal Regional Weekend.

Sponsorships

The Firm regularly sponsors law school hosted dinners and conferences including the University of Pennsylvania BLSA's annual Sadie T.M. Alexander Conference to support the funding of a Civil Rights Chair at the University of Pennsylvania law school and the George Washington University BLSA's annual Patricia Roberts Harris Dinner for graduating BLSA members.

The Firm regularly contributes to a number of conferences and dinners, including: Corporate Counsel Women of Color Annual Conference, Charting Your Own Course Annual Conference, Metropolitan Black Bar Dinner, and NAACP National Equal Justice Award Dinner. Weil Gotshal will also be sponsoring the National Bar Association's Congressional Black Caucus reception on September 26, 2007 which will be attended by over 20 members of Congress.



Affinity group outing to Annapolis, Summer 2007.

Programs

Weil Gotshal is an enthusiastic participant in and sponsor of many programs that are geared primarily toward members of the Black community. In further support of the Firm's efforts, Black Attorney Affinity Group members actively participate and assist with a number of these Firm-wide initiatives by serving as mentors for:

- the Practicing Attorneys for Law Students Program, Inc. (PALS),
- the Workplace Mentoring Program of Big Brothers/Big Sisters,
- the Hunter College Pre-Law Mentoring Program,
- the St. John's Ronald H. Brown Summer Prep Program,
- the Girls, Inc. program held annually in the Dallas office,
- the New York City Bar Fellowship Program,
- the Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO) program in New York (which will be expanded to the Firm's Washington, DC and London offices).

In addition, in 2007:

- the Firm employed an African American scholar from Bucknell University in Weil Gotshal's Washington, DC office, through the Posse Foundation's summer intern program,
- the Firm employed an African American high school student in Weil Gotshal's Dallas office, through a Dallas Independent School District (DISD) summer internship program,
- The Black Attorney Affinity Group is currently in the process of forging a partnership with Boys' Harbor High School in New York through which members will serve as mentors to high school students in New York City.

Pro Bono

The Firm's attorneys actively work on numerous legal issues related to and benefiting the African-American community in pro bono matters referred by a wide range of civil rights and community development organizations, including:

- The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
- The Clinton Foundation Small Business Initiative
- The St. Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corporation
- East Harlem Business Capital Corporation

The Firm has also represented plaintiffs in fair housing matters involving racial discrimination in Westchester County and is counsel to the Women's Alliance of Harlem, the Boys Choir of Harlem and Black United Fund of New York.

The Firm's largest pro bono matter, in terms of hours, is an ongoing class action, in conjunction with the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, against the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD) and the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore. Filed in federal district court in Baltimore, the case alleges racial discrimination in violation of Title VII on behalf of a class of current and former members of the BPD who have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of color and/or race through the intra-departmental disciplinary process. Class discovery, which has been protracted due to numerous disputes caused by defendants' delays, remains ongoing. Next steps include a motion for class certification to be followed by merits discovery and, if necessary, a trial.



No Place for Hate Program at Noyes Elementary in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League, Washington, DC.

Firm Leadership

Firmwide there are six black partners. Holly Loiseau, a Black Affinity Group member in Weil Gotshal's Washington, DC office, was promoted to partner in the Complex Commercial Litigation practice group on January 1, 2007.

Associate member, Aaron Ford was recognized as the 2006 Pro Bono Attorney of the Year in Dallas and is President-elect of the J. L. Turner Legal Association, the African-American Bar Association in Dallas, Texas.

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