Action Guide

Stand up for inclusion in the workplace, the community, and at home.
Upstanders are allies, supporters, and advocates for people and communities that share a different background or identity than their own.

listenup

Learn, read, ask questions, and discuss to step into the shoes of someone of a different background or demographic group.

- Read at least 3 articles related to diversity (or a specific demographic group) in the workplace or the legal profession.
- Expose yourself to in-depth experiences of different groups, by watching a documentary, visiting a historical museum, reading a memoir.
- Practice discussing and engaging in active listening about diversity issues in a safer environment with your peers, close friends, and/or family members.
- Allow colleagues to share or define their own demographic groups rather than labeling someone based on your assumptions.
- Ask colleagues how they prefer to have their names pronounced and confirm you are pronouncing their names correctly.
- Clarify with LGBTQ+ colleagues how and with whom they would like their sexual orientation shared.
- Use inclusive, gender-neutral language when inviting guests to events or referring to someone’s ‘significant other.’
- Ask colleagues who are military veterans to share how their service impacts their work experience.
- Learn about the concept of ‘privilege’ and reflect on the ways you have benefited from privilege and how you can leverage your privilege to benefit others.
- When discussing diversity in a recruiting interview or client meeting, invite the individual to share what they are most interested in learning about, rather than making an assumption based on a visible form(s) of diversity.
- Reach out to colleagues who are different from you to understand their experiences over lunch, coffee, etc.
- Ask colleagues at other firms, “what are you doing in regards to diversity?” Share results with the Diversity Committee.
- Seek to understand the cultural and religious backgrounds of your colleagues as it pertains to workplace-related situations, such as major holidays for scheduling and dietary restrictions.

showup

Attend, actively participate, and contribute to diversity programs and initiatives

- Attend at least 3 diversity education programs/events internally or externally throughout the year.
- Encourage/bring colleagues with you to diversity programs/events.
- Attend an event (e.g., Minority Bar Association) where you will be in the demographic minority.
- Participate (ask questions, respond to questions, provide a comment) at a diversity training or program.
- Assist in planning a diversity program or event.
- Add clients to diversity client event lists, follow up to ensure their attendance, offer to attend as well and introduce to diverse attorneys at the Firm.
- Join a nonprofit board or get involved with an organization for which you will be a minority.
- Consider using a woman/minority/LGBTQ+ vendor when using an outside firm or other resource.
- Add your pronouns to your email signature (such as she/her/ hers, he/him/his or they/them/their).
Advocate, open doors, make connections, and find opportunities for colleagues of different backgrounds and demographic groups.

Read articles/books about sponsorship, such as “Forget a Mentor. Find a Sponsor.”

Provide visibility to colleagues’ accomplishments, e.g., circulate an email regarding a colleague’s recent win on a legal matter to your practice group or email your colleague’s supervisor to provide positive feedback on their accomplishment.

Actively develop and mentor individuals of diverse backgrounds and demographic groups at the Firm.

Act as a mentor to a student (from elementary through law school) from a different background than yourself.

Discuss career goals with a more junior colleague from a different background or demographic group than yourself.

When giving an assignment, look beyond the usual suspects to consider others who could benefit from the opportunity.

Partner with a colleague to provide visibility on each other’s behalf.

Share your personal experiences with the Firm’s diversity efforts to potential new hires.

Ensure you greet people equally and be sensitive to how you address those you are closest to.

Give credit for ideas by name, and be sure that others are not overlooking the original source of the idea.

Give balanced introductions when you are describing your colleagues’ responsibilities and accomplishments.

Ask for a diverse slate when hiring (staff or lateral attorney candidates.)

Consider the diversity of the team for pitches, client meetings, and other high visibility opportunities.

Integrate diversity topics into your internal and external presentations.

Provide candid, developmental feedback to a wide range of colleagues of all backgrounds.

Actively sponsor individuals of diverse backgrounds and demographic groups.

Identify and interrupt bias and stereotyping, whether conscious or unconscious, subtle or overt.

Review the Firm’s Workplace and Diversity Policy and know the resources available at the Firm to seek guidance.

Reach out to a Firm resource (e.g., Diversity Director, Diversity Committee member) for advice when you witness inappropriate comments or behaviors.

Share additional ideas for the Upstander checklist with a member of the Diversity Committee.

Share ideas for diversity programs and training with the Diversity Committee.

Partner with a colleague to speak up for each other when an idea is co-opted or to back each other up when interrupting bias.

Say something soon after the fact when you witness inappropriate comments or behaviors.

Notice who isn’t at the table and include them at meetings, calls, etc.

Say something when unconscious bias/stereotyping may be affecting how a colleague’s performance is evaluated.

Say something when you think someone might not be getting an opportunity due to unconscious bias.

Say something when you think certain administrative tasks/nonbillable work isn’t being equitably distributed due to potential unconscious bias.

Suggest office housework/administrative tasks are rotated among team members or delegated to ensure equitable opportunities for all.

Actively intervene in the moment when you witness inappropriate comments or behaviors.
Upstanding:  
\ˈəp-stən-dən, ˈəp-
-honest and respectable  
-marked by integrity  
An upstanding member of the community