

bodman

ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS

Committed to a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace - at All Levels

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AND SOCIAL ACTION:

In the News

FROM THE EDITOR

By Maya K. Watson



Welcome to the inaugural issue of Bodman PLC's Diversity and Inclusion and Social Action: In the News!

In 2015, Bodman's Diversity and Inclusion and Social Action Committee adopted an updated Strategic Plan. The Plan underscores Bodman's commitment toward a more diverse and inclusive firm - at all levels.

We are pleased by the progress made in the areas of diversity and inclusion. Bodman's partnerships with the Wolverine Bar Association

the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity and the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation provide support to the next generation of diverse attorneys. Likewise, our work with organizations like VIP Mentoring, Matrix Human Services and Gleaners Community Food Bank assist those who are most vulnerable in our Detroit community.

We recognize that much work remains to be done, so we continue to seek ways to improve our diversity and inclusion efforts.

Please enjoy this issue and feel free to contact us with any questions.

BODMAN COMMEMORATES THE 2017 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE

On January 16, 2017, once again, Bodman closed its offices to observe the national holiday honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The day, however, was "A Day On, Not a Day Off!" As part of the State Bar of Michigan's acknowledgment and celebration of the holiday, Bodman staff, attorneys and management arrived at the Capuchin Services Center in Detroit to assist those in need by sorting clothes and inventory and assisting in the kitchen.



Jerrold Bigelman and Chairman Ralph McDowell of Bodman and Dana McDowell sort clothes at the Capuchin Center.

Spring 2017 Issue

"Our mission is to create a diverse firm with a culture of inclusion that values the differences and perspectives of everyone. By creating a culture of inclusion, we also create a strategic advantage for not only ourselves, but also our clients. We end up with broader points of view, a myriad of skill sets and talents, and a global perspective."

Table of Contents

From the Editor	1
Bodman Commemorates 2017 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service	1
Bringing Holiday Cheer	2
Did You Know	2
Business Case for Diversity	3
Bodman Hosts WLAMF Networking Reception	3
WBA Interview Workshop	3
Very Important Mentorships	4
Bodman In the News	5
Bodman Serving the Detroit Community	6

Diversity and Inclusion and Social Action Committee Members

Robert J. Diehl, Jr., Co-Chair
Kathleen O'Callaghan Hickey, Co-Chair
Damali A. Sahu, Co-Chair
Jaimee L. Witten, Co-Chair
Celeste E. Arduino
John C. Cashen
Jason R. Gourley
Melissa A. Lewis
Jasmine D. Rippey
William P. Scarborough
Ameena R. Sheikh
Carl F. Stafford
Maya K. Watson

Did You Know?

➤ *The Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion was organized in 1941 to foster religious and racial unity. Bodman is a founding member of the Michigan Roundtable's Law Honor Roll. Robert J. Diehl, Jr. and Kathleen O'Callaghan Hickey serve as current Board Members of the Michigan Roundtable, with Robert J. Diehl, Jr. as its past Chairman.*

➤ *Attorney Jasmine D. Rippe is a Co-Chair of the Community Outreach Committee for the Wolverine Bar Association.*

➤ *Among her numerous honors, Susan M. Kornfield received the 2014 State Bar of Michigan John W. Cummiskey Pro Bono Award and she was named one of the "Top 250 Women in IP" by Managing Intellectual Property.*

➤ *Approximately 10% of all Bodman attorneys participate in weekly mentoring sessions at Spain Elementary and Middle School in Detroit.*



Wearing Bodman smiles while wrapping gifts were: (from left to right) Harvey Berman, Alexandra Dieck, Mary Ruvo, Erin Mendez, Kenneth Powell, Sarah Williams, Megan Fink, Mary Poupard and Azra Zejnilovic.

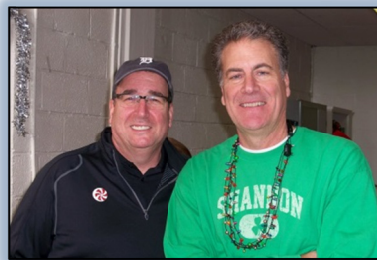
A team of Bodman volunteers and donors helped make the 2016 holidays brighter for families in need through the Angel Tree "Adopt-A-Family" program at Matrix Human Services in Detroit. Bodman participants "adopted" several families - providing them with gifts for the holidays.

In fact, just one floor in the Detroit office contributed an estimated \$800 in monetary donations and gifts!

Bodman volunteers also helped organize and coordinate a luncheon held on December 10, 2016 at Matrix's center on the east side of Detroit. Bodman volunteers and sponsors at the luncheon included: the Curoe family, the McDowell family, the Jameson family, the Dalziel family, Joseph Shannon, Maria Martinez, Erica Shell, Annalise Lekas, Kathy Murphy and daughter Ashley, Patti DeFauw, her friend, Dan Lester, Dawn Bean and Tony Allegrina.

Many others donated gifts for the adopted families and participated in gift wrapping parties held in the Ann Arbor and Detroit offices.

Thank you to all for contributing to the success of this event!



Ralph McDowell and Joseph Shannon



Erica Shell

BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY



Skot Welch

Principal of Global Bridgebuilders[®], brought his in-depth knowledge of diversity, inclusion and workforce development. He weaved in memorable examples to underscore the benefits of inclusion in all areas of Bodman.

Bodman's **Joseph Shannon** provided the following takeaways from the presentation: (i) Bodman's commitment to diversity should be intentional, aggressive and relentless; (ii) the firm's diversity success requires "a different perspective" on management; and (iii) promoting diversity requires creativity instead of comfort. Ultimately, we need to become a "firm of belonging" where people feel valued rather than tolerated.

WBA INTERVIEW WORKSHOP



Jasmine Rippy

For several years, Bodman has hosted the Wolverine Bar Association's Annual Interview Workshop at its Ford Field office. The 2017 Workshop featured a distinguished panel of legal practitioners who provided interview tips to participating law students. Following the panel, the students engaged in mock interviews, received helpful feedback and enjoyed a delicious lunch. Bodman's **Jasmine Rippy** masterfully coordinated the event and **Carl Stafford**, **Celeste Arduino**, **Maya Watson**, **Michael Serra**, **Nicholas McElhinny** and **Donovan Asmar** also participated.

BODMAN HOSTS WLAMF NETWORKING RECEPTION



Bodman's Sandy Sorini-Elser, Celeste Arduino and Alexandra Dieck hosted WLAMF Board and UM Law Students

Bodman's Ann Arbor office hosted a networking reception on October 5, 2016 for members of the University of Michigan Women Law Students Association of Michigan on behalf of the Women Lawyers Association Foundation (WLAMF). The event offered law students the opportunity to meet the WLAM-Washtenaw Region officers and to obtain information on the WLAMF's 2017 Outstanding Women Law Student Scholarships. Bodman's **Sandra Sorini-Elser**, **Celeste Arduino** and **Alexandra Dieck** were critical to the Reception's success.

Sorini-Elser is a long time member of the WLAMF Board of Trustees and serves as its Secretary. Bodman's **Maya Watson** is also a WLAMF Board Trustee.

Upcoming Events

March 10 – Bodman's Enterprise Procurement Group Volunteers at Capuchin Soup Kitchen

March 16 – University of Michigan Asian Pacific American Law Students Association's Annual Origins Banquet

March 23 – Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation's Annual Reception at The Rust Belt Market

March 25 – University of Michigan Law School's Butch Carpenter Memorial Scholarship Banquet

April 8 – United Way of Southeastern Michigan's Day of Service at Gleaners Community Food Bank

April 8 – Wolverine Bar Association's 56th Annual Barrister's Ball

April 9 – State Bar of Michigan's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee and Equal Access Initiative host 3rd Annual Brunch for Bars

August 5 – Bodman joins Life Remodeled to remove blight on 300 city blocks and board up 300 vacant houses in Detroit

VERY IMPORTANT MENTORSHIPS



In 2010, Bodman began its partnership with VIP Mentoring, a Detroit nonprofit organization that creates sustainable and meaningful mentoring relationships for children in the tri-county area, especially in the City of Detroit.

In March of 2015, a number of the firm's attorneys became mentors and began meeting with students at Spain Elementary and Middle School on a weekly basis. Bodman has continued its commitment to the program. As a result, the number of Bodman mentor volunteers has grown and significant mentor relationships have developed.

Bodman attorneys have also spent valuable time with their mentees outside of the weekly meetings at Spain School. Namely, Bodman mentors have enjoyed taking students to Detroit Pistons games, to the movies and on trips to shopping malls and concerts. Bodman mentors also attend the annual VIP Mentoring Holiday Party to celebrate with the mentees and their families.

Robert J. Diehl, Jr. serves on the VIP Mentoring Board of Trustees. Current Bodman VIP Mentors are:

- **Ralph E. McDowell,**
- **Robert J. Diehl, Jr.;**
- **Kathleen O'Callaghan Hickey;**
- **Bonnie S. Sherr;**
- **Dennis J. Levasseur;**
- **Jeffrey G. Raphelson;**
- **Damali A. Sahu;**
- **Jason R. Gourley;**
- **Maya K. Watson;**
- **Michael P. Vukich;**
- **Maria L. Martinez;**
- **Donovan S. Asmar;**
- **Ameena R. Sheikh;** and
- **Erica J. Shell.**

Additional information about VIP Mentoring can be found at its web site <http://www.vipmentoring.org>.

*Would you
like to
submit an
article or
provide
event
information
for an
upcoming
issue?*

*If so, please email
all submissions to
[mwatson@
bodmanlaw.com](mailto:mwatson@bodmanlaw.com).*

Thank you!



BODMAN IN THE NEWS

Attorney Danielle Lester Joins Bodman



Danielle C. Lester has joined Bodman PLC as a senior associate in the firm's Workplace Law Practice Group in the Troy office. She concentrates her practice in labor and employment law, exclusively representing management in the private and public sectors.

Lester has extensive experience with representing employers in unfair labor practice charges before the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), negotiating union contracts, advocating for employers in arbitration, and advising them on many day-to-day labor issues. She also has substantial experience representing employers in employment litigation and counseling employers on various employment matters including compliance, investigations, and training. Prior to joining Bodman, Lester worked on the labor relations staff of a large automotive company where some of her responsibilities included NLRB matters, arbitrations, and contract negotiations.

Lester is a 2008 graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law. While in law school, she held the position of editor at the *University of Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender and Class* and was a chair of the Moot Court Board. In 2014, Lester earned her Masters of Business Administration at Michigan State University Eli Broad Graduate School of Management, giving her greater insight into the workings of the business world.

Before moving to an in-house counsel position, Lester was selected twice for inclusion in the *Michigan Super Lawyers* "Rising Stars" list.



Attorney Donovan Asmar Receives the Detroit Bar Association's Barristers Pro Bono Award

Donovan Asmar, a senior associate attorney in Bodman's Troy office, has received the Detroit Bar Association's Barristers Pro Bono Award. The award is given annually to an attorney who has practiced for fewer than 10 years with an extraordinary dedication to pro bono work.

Donovan's nomination, submitted by Bodman attorney **Michael Serra**, focused on his pro bono work with a family of Iraqi asylees. The family of five faced years of persecution, imprisonment and even torture in Iraq. With Donovan's help, the family has secured permanent US residency.

Congratulations, Donovan!

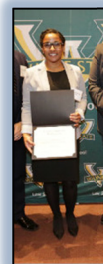
Welcome Megan Fink and Sophie Zhang!



Megan Fink joined Bodman as a senior attorney in the Intellectual Property Group. Megan is a graduate of the Loyola University Chicago School of Law. She received a B.S. in Economics and a B.A. in Spanish from the University of Illinois.

Sophie Zhang joined Bodman as a staff attorney in the Enterprise Procurement Group. Sophie is a graduate of Wayne State University Law School. She received her B.A. from the China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing, China.

Megan Baxter-Labut Wins Transactional Competition



Congratulations to 2016 Summer Associate and future Bodman associate Megan Baxter-Labut, a winner of Wayne State Law School's 3rd Annual Transactional Law Competition.

Megan prevailed in the category "Negotiations (buyer's counsel)." Winners of the competition will represent Wayne Law at the regional LawMeets competitions in the Spring.

BODMAN SERVING THE DETROIT COMMUNITY



Banking Group Members Damali Sahu and Bonnie Sherr sort apples at Detroit's Gleaners Community Food Bank in 2015.



Bodman's Pro Bono Committee and the 2016 summer associates tour Detroit's Capuchin Soup Kitchen facilities, where Bodman attorneys help serve the legal needs of Metro Detroit's 35,000 homeless.



Enterprise Procurement Group Members Jonathan Berg and Jonathan Burleigh volunteer at Capuchin Center in 2017.

Bodman's VIP Mentors host 2016 Financial Literacy Workshop for Spain Elementary and Middle School Students.

