



# Igniting Change



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2018

# Our Commitment to **Diversity & Inclusion**

We believe diversity and inclusion make us better.

By actively recruiting, retaining, and advancing a diverse team, we are better equipped to serve our sophisticated, global clients and contribute to making our communities better places.

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# Igniting Change

Last year, we shared a snapshot of what Jackson Walker represents—community, inclusion, leadership—intangibles that can't be summed up with dollars and dimes.

This year, we reflect on a year of growth and advancement in how we recruit talent, diversify our team, and develop our future leaders. This report details how Jackson Walker is igniting change through our efforts to recruit, develop, retain, promote, and celebrate a more diverse and inclusive team.



# Message From Our Chairs



At Jackson Walker, we take pride in providing a supportive, inclusive environment for our attorneys and staff.

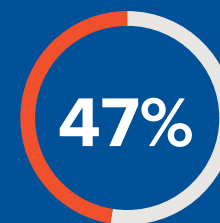
Our Diversity Committee sets the tone for our efforts and works to hold us all accountable to our goals of proactively recruiting, retaining, and advancing a diverse team while expanding our inclusive environment. We also support pipeline programs that provide diverse students with opportunities to explore the possibilities of careers in law. And through programs like Jackson Walker Women (JW<sup>2</sup>), we continue to create opportunities for our women attorneys to grow in their leadership and build strong networks extending beyond the Firm.

As we demonstrate in this report, we are continuing to make progress in the Firm's diversity. In short, we're working together to ignite change within the Firm and across the legal profession.

**Bruce Ruzinsky** | Diversity Committee Chair

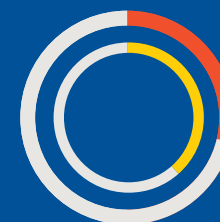
**Michelle Moore Smith** | JW<sup>2</sup> Committee Chair

## 2018: Fueling Our Progress



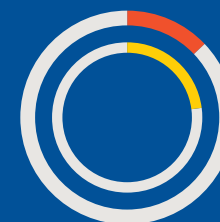
### Laterals & New Hires

Of all **Laterals & New Hires** are Women or Minorities



### Gender Diversity

30% All Attorneys  
43% Associates



### Ethnic Diversity

14% All Attorneys  
24% Associates



### Summer Associate Diversity

56% Ethnicity  
63% Gender



# Message From Our Managing Partner

**What sets Jackson Walker apart from other firms?** When I ask our clients and our people that question, their answer inevitably includes our culture. That culture is strengthened and enhanced by the unique backgrounds and perspectives each of our colleagues bring to the Firm.

Having a team as diverse as our clients and our communities makes us a better, more innovative law firm. We consistently rank among the top Texas firms in the Diversity Scorecard from *The American Lawyer* and are a multi-year top performer in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's rankings.

Yet, numbers don't tell the full story, and inclusion doesn't happen just by assembling a diverse team. While we're proud of the progress detailed in this report, we know there's more work to be done, and we will continue to strive to reflect the communities we serve as we seek to provide ever more innovative service to our clients.

This report details our work in 2018 to recruit, retain and promote, and train an increasingly diverse team. I'm also pleased to report that many of our diverse attorneys are leading committees within the Firm, and they're serving outside organizations that are making our communities and the world a better place.

Through our efforts as a law firm, through our financial contributions, and through the work and leadership of our attorneys, we're igniting positive change—at Jackson Walker, in the legal industry, and in our communities. The spark that began our firm more than 130 years ago continues to light the way every day to help us become more inclusive, caring, and supportive.



**Wade Cooper**

*Managing Partner*



# Recruitment

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## Preeminence requires diversity.

We believe the diversity of our unique backgrounds and perspectives make us a better, more vibrant law firm. That is why we continue to leverage our differences to provide even more innovative service to our clients—by recruiting and developing exceptional attorneys who are as diverse as our clients and have demonstrated the ability to lead, a commitment to excellence, and a desire to help the communities we serve.

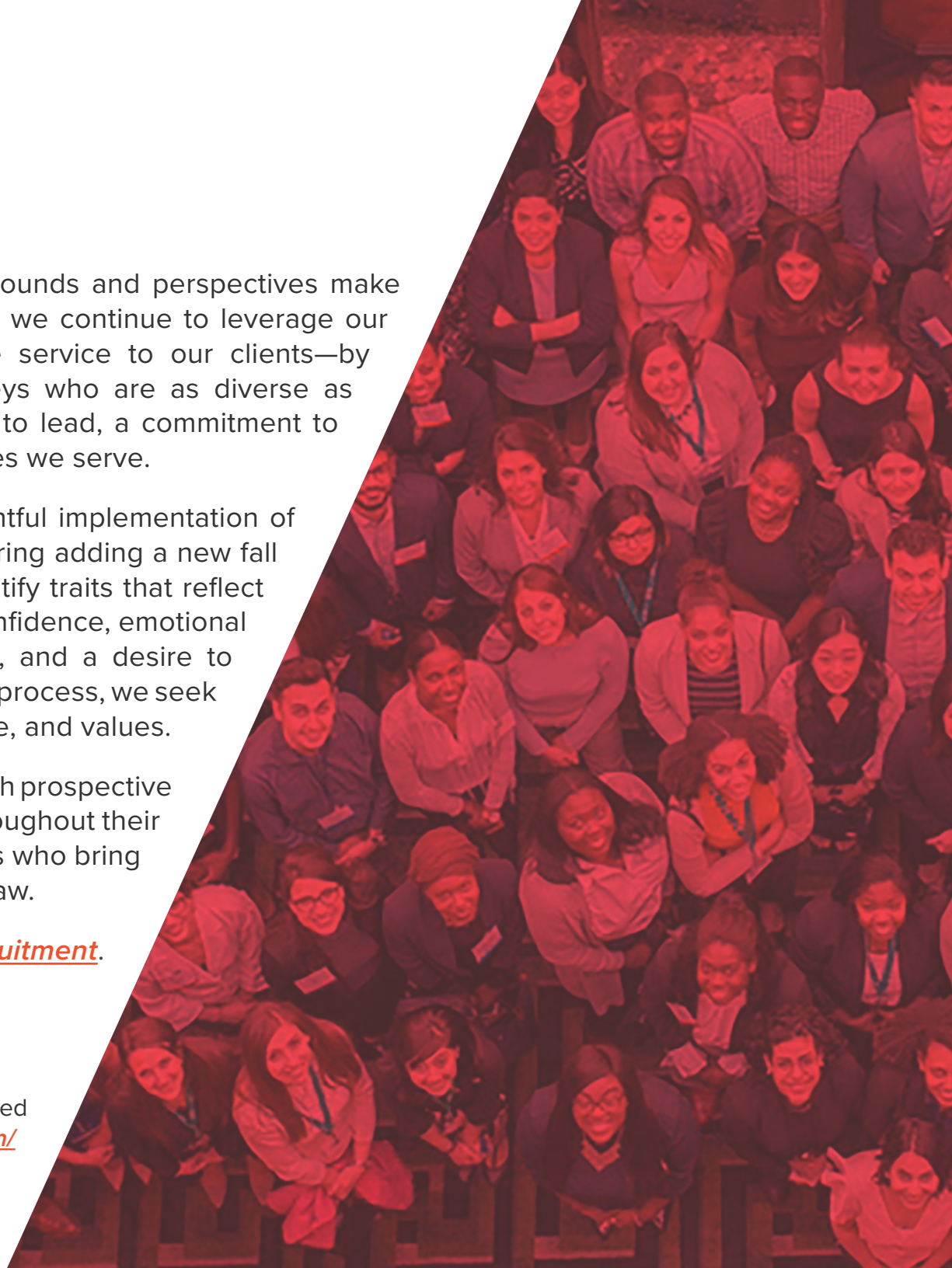
Our success ultimately depends on the thoughtful implementation of a distinct hiring strategy. When we are considering adding a new fall associate or lateral candidate, we work to identify traits that reflect those of our most successful attorneys—self-confidence, emotional intelligence, ambition, community-mindedness, and a desire to carve out their own career path. Throughout the process, we seek individuals who enhance our personality, culture, and values.

We invite you to explore our efforts to connect with prospective attorneys and provide hands-on experience throughout their career development, as well as to hire attorneys who bring established practices in virtually every area of law.

For the full Recruitment impact, visit [JW.com/Recruitment](https://www.jwalkers.com/Recruitment).

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Follow Jackson Walker's journey around the United States as we meet and greet with law students: [JW.com/Recruitment](https://www.jwalkers.com/Recruitment).







## Meet Jorge

*"In everything we do at Jackson Walker, we strive to leave a positive impact."*

*It's critical to reach tomorrow's leaders at a time when they're learning who they are and what they want to do. Whether it's mentoring students or participating in community organizations to benefit children, the responsibility falls on all of us to guide them in their journey."*

**Jorge Padilla** | Partner, Austin  
Diversity Committee Member  
LCLD Fellowship Representative 2018



# Supporting **Young, Diverse Talent**

From high school leading up to State Bar admission, we are involved at nearly every stage of a prospective attorney's development. Through mentorship programs, networking events, and law school affinity groups, we connect with students from a variety of backgrounds and help guide them in their pursuit of a legal career.

## Pre-Law Mentorship

The **University of Houston Law Center Pre-Law Pipeline Program** provides first-generation, low-income, and minority students with law school preparatory resources, including LSAT training, introductory classes, internships, and professional development workshops.

Since the program's inception, **Jamila Brinson** has taken an active role in mentoring student participants. This year, Jamila mentored a Dillard University student and spearheaded our involvement in the PreLaw Undergraduate Student (PLUS) Scholars Program.



## Thurgood Marshall School of Law

For over 70 years, Texas Southern University's **Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL)** has accelerated equality, diversity, and opportunity to reflect the values of Justice Thurgood Marshall. As part of its efforts to enhance diversity by expanding the pool of law schools from which Jackson Walker recruits, Jackson Walker partners with TMSL to provide programming for students and alumni alike. **Chevaaz Brown, Earl Latchley, and Monica Lopez** – all graduates of TMSL – are active in these efforts, and Chevaaz has recently been selected to chair the school's first ever fundraising gala. He also co-chairs its annual corporate counsel reception.

"Candidates from Thurgood Marshall School of Law are smart, resilient, and community-minded. They are devoted to the practice of law and are focused on obtaining exceptional results for our clients," partner Bruce Ruzinsky said.

## Our Recruitment Statistics



10

Campuses Visited

2

Job Fairs Attended

10

Law School Interview Programs in Texas



1L Events Hosted & Attended



In his role as a Cristo Rey Dallas Director, Dallas Managing Partner **David Moran** spearheads Jackson Walker's involvement as a founding partner of the school's Corporate Work Study Program. Learn more: [JW.com/Cristo-Rey-Dallas](https://www.jw.com/Cristo-Rey-Dallas).



# Meet Bruce

In **Bruce Ruzinsky's** eyes, nothing is more valuable than integrity. In addition to his multifaceted role at Jackson Walker, Bruce imparts the value of integrity to law school students through his involvement on the Advisory Board of PracticePro, the UNCF South Texas Leadership Council, and Houston Bar Association's Minority Opportunities in the Legal Profession Committee. In sharing advice to new attorneys, Bruce says:

*"There are many opportunities to be involved in your community outside of work. Lawyers have a responsibility to help the communities in which they live."*

Get to know Bruce:  
[JW.com/Bruce-Ruzinsky](http://JW.com/Bruce-Ruzinsky).



## Summer Associate Program

We take a personal approach when recruiting top law school talent. Every summer, we open up our offices to JD students. Our strategy is to recruit a relatively small number of highly qualified summer associates who are interested in private practice over the long term. When we hire a new associate, it is with the expectation that he or she can become a partner.

### Mentors

Summer associates are assigned Responsible Attorneys, who keep in touch throughout the program and who help with integration into the Firm. Responsible Attorneys truly get to know the summer associates they mentor.



### Work

Many summer associates arrive with a strong preference for a given area of law. However, it is not uncommon for those preferences to change as students discover new practice areas. Over the course of the program, students work on projects within their preferred practice areas and attend client meetings, closings, negotiations, depositions, trials, and courtroom hearings.

In one of the program's most rewarding experiences, our summer associates participate in a mock trial before a jury of non-lawyers. For this exercise, our attorneys act as presiding judges and trim down actual cases that have been or will be tried. In other cases, summer associates may participate in a mediation seminar, where they receive practical instruction designed to help them become better advocates for their clients in mediation.

### Social Events

Each city has a full social calendar for the summer. We also host a statewide summer associate event that brings all our Summer Associates together in one office for a special presentation by Managing Partner Wade Cooper and our other department heads.

# Expanding Our Pipeline

As part of our continued effort to develop a pipeline of diverse legal talent, we partner with several initiatives across the nation to reach students at each level of education and help grow their knowledge of the law. We also work to help women attorneys re-enter the legal profession after a hiatus. By participating in diversity job fairs and clerkships, our Firm proudly contributes to the nationwide effort to educate and impact prospective attorneys.

## Austin Bar Association Diversity Fellowship Program

Every summer, we welcome first-year minority law students from the Austin Bar Association's Diversity Fellowship Program to participate in our Summer Associates Program. Through this 10-week fellowship, University of Texas students gain hands-on experience working with a public sector employer for the first half of the summer and a mid- to large-sized firm during the second half.

## HBA 1L Minority Summer Clerkship & Mentoring Program

For over two decades, the Houston Bar Association's **Minority Opportunities in the Legal Profession (MOILP)** Committee has offered a summer clerkship program to create new employment and mentoring opportunities for first-year minority law students from three area schools—University of Houston Law Center, South Texas College of Law Houston, and Thurgood Marshall School of Law. We are proud that we met our partners **Chevazz Brown** through this program, and we look forward to meeting future 1L clerks.



## Partnering With Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) comprises over 275 corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners dedicated to creating a truly diverse legal profession. Its action programs, which begin with law school and carry through partnership, are designed to help a new, more diverse generation of attorneys rise to positions of leadership. Our participation spans most aspects of the organization, including the **1L LCLD Scholars Program and Summit**.

During this year's summer internship, Jackson Walker welcomed 10 diverse 1L scholars and sent them to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to attend the 1L LCLD Scholars Summit. Held from May 22-24, the scholars participated in breakout sessions, mock interviews, and networking exercises.

For more information about our partnership with LCLD, visit [JW.com/Diversity-LCLD](https://www.jw.com/Diversity-LCLD).



## PracticePro 1L Diversity Scholar Program

Launched in 2013, PracticePro is a legal education startup committed to improving the legal profession by training attorneys who are better prepared for law practice. Through the **PracticePro 1L Diversity Scholar Program**, we hosted a minority first-year law student from Texas Southern University, equipping the student with practice skills and a foundation for a valuable network. Also, as part of the program, **Chevazz Brown** and **Monica Lopez** participated at the Texas Career Conference & Reception held in March, during which Monica served as a panelist.

### Determination, Perseverance, and Resilience

As the youngest child of farm labor contractors, **Monica Lopez** spent her summers working in the fields of Oregon, and her school years in Mission, Texas. Though her parents, who emigrated from Mexico as young children, dropped out of middle school to help their families work in the fields, they always stressed the value of education. That motivation drove her to graduate at the top of her high school class and receive the Gates Millennium Scholarship to attend the University of Texas at Austin, and ultimately graduate as the valedictorian of her class at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law.



*"It is through my parents' life, lessons and leadership that I truly learned the meaning of my Hispanic heritage. It is family, sacrifice, humility, respect and appreciation. It encompasses everything about determination, perseverance, and resilience."*

Monica's story continues at [JW.com/Meet-Monica-Lopez](https://jw.com/Meet-Monica-Lopez).



### OnRamp Fellowship

In April, **Carolyn Mitchell** joined Jackson Walker through the OnRamp Fellowship, which matches women attorneys with yearlong paid fellowships. The Firm has partnered with OnRamp since 2016.

"Our partnership with the OnRamp Fellowship enables us to become even more diverse and inclusive while also providing women lawyers returning to the workforce a chance to demonstrate their potential as leaders," Managing Partner Wade Cooper said.

For the full story, visit [JW.com/OnRamp-Fellowship](https://jw.com/OnRamp-Fellowship).

## Meet Wasif

Houston partner and Diversity Committee member **Wasif Qureshi** has been involved with the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) since 2014, when he was named an LCLD Fellow. He serves as the Houston City Chair for the LCLD Law School Mentoring Program, which helps ensure that talented law students from diverse backgrounds receive the mentoring they need to be successful, during law school and afterwards.

*"Having great mentors has made a huge impact on my career, so I want to help ensure that the next wave of future attorneys gets the kind of advice and guidance that has helped me be successful."*

Get to know Wasif:  
[JW.com/Wasif-Qureshi](https://jw.com/Wasif-Qureshi).



# Welcoming **Diverse New Attorneys**

Personality, culture, and human values are cornerstones of our identity. The Firm is strengthened by hiring and training attorneys who have excellent academic records, demonstrated leadership ability, strong work ethic, and diverse backgrounds and experience that reflect our clients and the communities we serve. As we continue to explore new ways to increase the diversity of our applicants and intensify our efforts to recruit diverse partners and associates, we are proud to have welcomed the following women and diverse attorneys over the past year:



**Vienna Anaya**  
*Associate, Dallas  
Bankruptcy*



**Lara Assaf**  
*Associate, Austin  
Corporate & Securities*



**Carolyn Campion**  
*Associate, Houston  
Environmental  
Regulatory & Legislative*



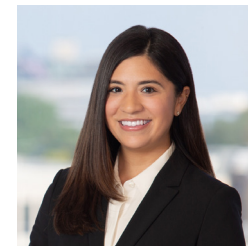
**Kathleen Cullen**  
*Associate, Austin  
Corporate & Securities*



**Jennifer Ferri**  
*Senior Counsel, Austin  
Environmental Regulatory  
& Legislative*



**Liz Freeman**  
*Partner, Houston  
Bankruptcy*



**Larissa Garcia**  
*Associate, Dallas  
Litigation*



**Kati Orso**  
*Senior Counsel, Austin  
Real Estate*



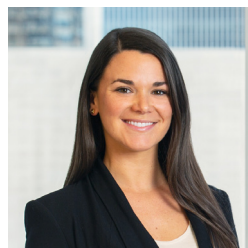
**Tony Ortega**  
*Associate, San Antonio  
Real Estate*



**Kristhy Peguero**  
*Senior Counsel, Houston  
Bankruptcy*



**Jean Phillips**  
*Associate, Austin  
Litigation*



**Gaby Rawlings**  
*Associate, Dallas  
Real Estate*



**Matthew Rodriguez**  
*Associate, Houston  
Wealth Planning*



**Michelle Rosenblatt**  
*Partner, Austin  
Wealth Planning*



## Meet Dawn

In addition to her litigation practice, **Dawn Holiday** volunteers her time as a women's ministry leader, author, and teacher at Crossover Bible Fellowship and currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Northland Christian School in Houston.

"Having worked with Dawn on the Houston Bar Association's Minority Opportunities in the Legal Profession Committee (MOILP), I have seen first-hand her strong work ethic and dedication to making a difference in the community," partner Bruce Ruzinsky said. Read more: [JW.com/Meet-Dawn-Holiday](https://www.jw.com/Meet-Dawn-Holiday).





**Dawn Holiday**  
Partner, Houston  
Litigation



**Brooke Leondar**  
Associate, Houston  
Litigation



**Pam Madere**  
Partner, Austin  
Real Estate



**Charles Mao**  
Associate, Houston  
Real Estate



**Cody Martinez**  
Associate, Dallas  
Litigation



**Cindy Nelson**  
Partner, Dallas  
Real Estate



**Caroline Shivers**  
Associate, Fort Worth  
Wealth Planning



**Austin Thomas**  
Associate, Houston  
Wealth Planning



**Ruth Thomson**  
Associate, San Antonio  
Corporate & Securities



**Catharine Yen**  
Senior Counsel, Houston  
Real Estate

*"Partner lateral hiring is one of the key points in our strategic growth plan. We must look outside the Firm and hire brilliant attorneys and staff who reflect our values and bring entirely different perspectives to the table. Challenging ourselves to think beyond what we already know is what makes Jackson Walker a valuable place to work."*

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**Bridgette Stahlman** | Chief Recruiting Officer & Diversity Committee Member



# Retention & Promotion

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We know the future of the Firm is a direct result of how well we **integrate, retain, and promote our talented professionals.**

Through the focused efforts of our Attorney Development team, we are able to connect with our attorneys right from the start and foster a supportive environment where they can learn from established leaders within the Firm.

In the following pages, we share how Jackson Walker provides each attorney with opportunities to achieve their maximum potential through thoughtfully planned training, mentorship, and leadership development.

To learn more about our commitment to integrating, retaining, and promoting our diverse talent, visit [JW.com/Diversity-Retention](https://www.jw.com/Diversity-Retention).





## Meet Melissa

*"It's my goal to offer every Jackson Walker attorney a platform for success."*

*I believe that by promoting a culture of inclusion, we can ensure that we are meeting individual development needs, and providing the tools and resources that will allow every attorney to be fully engaged and advancing toward their career goals."*

**Melissa Bates** | Attorney Development Coordinator  
Diversity Committee Member



# Developing Our Future Leaders

Beginning with law school and carrying through to partnership and beyond, Jackson Walker develops and promotes exceptional individuals from all walks of life. Our commitment to the personal and professional growth of our attorneys starts on day one.

A career at Jackson Walker means learning never stops. Our attorneys are committed to improving not only themselves, but also their communities and those around them. For our talented attorneys at all levels, we select candidates who show high potential to become firmwide and community leaders to participate in leadership development programs.

## NFA Orientation Program

We prepare incoming associates for the challenging work required by our sophisticated clients through our intensive two-week **New Fall Associate (NFA) Orientation Program**. Throughout the first year we provide continued training that focuses on various professional and personal topics, including legal ethics and managing time and stress.

In 2018, we welcomed a group of associates who graduated from the University of Chicago, the University of Texas, Southern Methodist University, St. Mary's University, South Texas College of Law Houston, and New York University.

For more information about our program, visit [JW.com/Recruitment-NFA](https://www.jw.com/Recruitment-NFA).



## Associate Mentor Program

Beyond integrating incoming attorneys, we provide access to hands-on training, mentoring, and leadership development inside and outside the Firm. Through our **Associate Mentor Program**, we build meaningful relationships between our associates and experienced attorneys. This program facilitates our associates' progress by focusing on achieving benchmarks, developing skills, establishing connections with clients and partners, and growing both personally and professionally.

For second-year associate **Monica Lopez** being mentored is a rewarding experience.

"The difference that my mentor's guidance has made for me over the past two years has been tremendous. Her mentorship has told me to trust what I do know and be more vocal about it. She's made me a better attorney."





## Facilitating Career Advancement



In April, **Judy Bennett Garner** was selected as a Fellow of the 2018 National Employment Law Council (NELC) Academy. As a Fellow, Judy joins a group of minority attorneys with less than four years' experience in management-side labor and employment law as they network with and learn from established trial attorneys and in-house counsel. Launched in 2011, the NELC Academy facilitates the success of young minority labor and employment attorneys. Judy also participated as one of Jackson Walker's two 2018 representatives to the LCLD Pathfinder program.

## Promoting a Diverse Workforce

The **Pathway to Partnership Program** provides senior associates with information to help them advance into roles as partners. This retreat-style meeting offers candid discussions about the Firm's business, personal practice presentations, and networking opportunities with colleagues.

In 2018, six associates were elected to partnership – four of whom started their careers at Jackson Walker, including Houston attorney **Jamila Brinson**.

"The Pathway to Partnership Program provided great info and perspectives that are helping me take the next step in my practice," Jamila said. "One of the reasons I've stayed at Jackson Walker is the support the Firm provides in my career development."



## Providing Alternatives

We recognize that life doesn't stop when you enter the office. Jackson Walker provides an option for attorneys to work on a reduced-hours program. The goal is to provide an **alternative work schedule** compatible with personal and family responsibilities and with the needs of the Firm, while maintaining the opportunity for professional growth, experience, and career advancement. The program is intended to help retain high-caliber associates and partners and not lose qualified attorneys simply due to their need for flexibility in their work schedule.

## Meet Chevazz

Beyond his participation on the Diversity Committee, **Chevazz Brown** also serves as Co-Chair of the Mentorship Committee, which guides the Associate Mentor Program.

*"Mentorship at Jackson Walker has always been an important part of our culture. I've been fortunate to have great mentors in my career, and it's been rewarding to help pay it forward by co-chairing the Mentorship Committee."*

Chevazz helped found and lead The Coalition of Houston Diverse Bar Associations. In 2018, he was a finalist for the TMCP's Outside Counsel Trailblazer of the Year Award. In addition, Chevazz volunteers his time to the American Bar Association's Forum on Communications Law and Commission on Racial & Ethnic Diversity in the Profession.

Get to know Chevazz:  
[JW.com/Chevazz-Brown](http://JW.com/Chevazz-Brown)



# Women's Initiative

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Jackson Walker has long prioritized the recruitment, retention, and development of our women attorneys.

Over a decade ago, we launched the Jackson Walker Women (JW<sup>2</sup>) initiative to **attract, retain, and promote women professionals**. Through its programs, JW<sup>2</sup> creates opportunities for women attorneys to develop their professional skills while supporting women in their efforts to balance work and family responsibilities. The initiative also provides a platform for women attorneys to generate business and pursue positions in leadership.

In the pages that follow, we present our efforts to participate in events geared toward women in business, to facilitate business opportunities for women attorneys, and to support mothers throughout their pregnancy and continuing through their return to the Firm.

To find out more about how JW<sup>2</sup> empowers women attorneys to build strong networks and sustain successful legal careers, go to [JW.com/JW-Women](https://www.jw.com/JW-Women).

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Check out **Retta Miller's** involvement as a speaker for the 22nd Annual Women's Business Conference for Dallas Regional Chamber: [JW.com/JW-Women-WBC](https://www.jw.com/JW-Women-WBC).







## Meet Michelle

*“My vision for JW<sup>2</sup> is to help the women attorneys of Jackson Walker achieve their potential, whatever that may be.*

*We want to support our women in any way we can – through internal programming, mentorship, business development training, and building connections in our communities.*

*It’s my goal for JW<sup>2</sup> to empower the women of Jackson Walker to succeed in their professional and personal endeavors.”*

**Michelle Moore Smith** | Partner, Austin  
JW<sup>2</sup> Committee Chair



# Advancing and Supporting **Jackson Walker Women (JW<sup>2</sup>)**

We are dedicated to contributing resources to maximize the opportunities for women to succeed. Through sponsoring community programs, speaking engagements, and networking events, Jackson Walker encourages women attorneys to better their communities and close the gender gap within the legal industry and the business world as a whole.

## Women in the Know

Poverty is a complex problem. Nevertheless, the solution may lie with children. Inspired by a coalition of community partners dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty, **Mary Emma Karam** co-founded Women in the Know in 2016. Championed by the Dallas members of JW<sup>2</sup>, the initiative assembles a network of women who are passionate about ending intergenerational poverty and provides a forum where they can exchange ideas and solutions.

In August, Women in the Know hosted a Community Collaboration Luncheon, during which four leaders in the nonprofit sector came together and shared how they work collectively with community organizations to provide access to resources. From providing social services in healthcare to designating community leaders, linking organizations through technology, and encouraging girls to seek opportunities, collaboration was at the heart of the conversation.



*From left: **Laura Estrada**, Young Women's Preparatory Network; **Regina Nippert**, The Budd Center at SMU; **Julia Dodd**, Lockton Dunning; **Cheryl McCarver**, Community Council of Greater Dallas; **Frederick P. Cerise**, Parkland Health & Hospital System; and **Mary Emma Karam**, Jackson Walker.*

To view the full story involving Mary Emma's participation in Women in the Know, visit [JW.com/WITK](https://www.jw.com/WITK).



## Championing Our Maternity Leave Program

Jackson Walker's generous **Maternity Leave Program** supports expectant mothers from pregnancy through their return to practice. Female partner mentors work with attorneys, practice group leaders, and practice mentors to ensure smooth transitions, whether utilizing traditional or alternative work schedules. Taking maternity leave doesn't delay the partnership track.

"I was a working mother with young children, and I was the first attorney to make partner while on the alternative work schedule program." – **Ginger Webber** | *Partner, Fort Worth*



# JW<sup>2</sup> Lunches & Happy Hours

In 2018, the JW<sup>2</sup> program facilitated almost 20 happy hours and events throughout the year to connect women with colleagues, mentors, clients, and the community.



"With JW<sup>2</sup>, it's nice to know that we're able to get together and just enjoy community and friendship." – **Suzan Kedron** | *Partner, Dallas*

## Featured JW<sup>2</sup> Client Events



## Meet April & Joan

Houston partner **April Vasquez Leibman** and Dallas of counsel **Joan Sostek** serve on Jackson Walker's Diversity Committee, and they're both involved in CREW, the network for Commercial Real Estate Women.

CREW brings together women involved in commercial real estate to help them succeed professionally. Joan has been involved in CREW Dallas and has served as co-chair of the Texas Regional CREW Conference. April is a member of CREW Houston, which is the leading organization for women real estate executives in Houston.

Get to know April & Joan:

[JW.com/Joan-Sostek](http://JW.com/Joan-Sostek)

[JW.com/April-Vasquez-Leibman](http://JW.com/April-Vasquez-Leibman)



# Community Leadership

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Our values stem from our goal to create a positive impact in all that we do.

A deep-rooted commitment to the community is an important part of our culture, as we strive each day to promote altruism and leadership within the Firm and extend those values to communities where we live and work.

Many of our attorneys engage in community service and offer pro bono representation on a regular basis.

From advocating for children and serving at-risk communities to eliminating barriers and promoting inclusion for all, our attorneys and staff are proud to play a key role in helping more than 500 local, regional, and national organizations.

Discover our commitment to the community at [JW.com/Community](https://www.jw.com/Community).







## Meet Joel

*"Ronald McDonald House Fort Worth is a supportive home-away-from-home for families of children receiving medical treatment.*

*The service they provide the community is truly one of the most important and compassionate endeavors I've ever been a part of."*

**Joel Heydenburk** | Partner, Fort Worth  
Diversity Committee Member  
2017-18 Ronald McDonald House  
Fort Worth Board President



# Advocating for the **Underrepresented**



## When the Courts Step In

**Kathleen LaValle**, Executive Director & President—  
Dallas CASA

Nearly 700,000 children endure abuse or neglect each year. To give a voice to America's most vulnerable children, a Seattle judge founded the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (CASA) in 1977. Since then, the organization has expanded to 49 states and the District of Columbia with over 85,000 volunteers who advocate for children until they find safe, permanent homes.

For 15 years, **Kathleen LaValle** has dedicated herself to Dallas CASA, one of the largest in the country. In honor of her commitment to Dallas CASA, SMU Dedman School of Law presented Kathleen with the Distinguished Alumni Award for Public Service.

Learn more about Kathleen's award on [page 28](#).

## Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas

**Denise Rose**, Board of Directors & Women of  
Courage Committee Member

In 2018, more than 58,000 children received services from the 71 children's advocacy centers (CAC) across the state of Texas. Founded in 1994, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas (CACTX) provides a statewide platform for public-private partnerships within communities, fueling the success of the CAC approach by uniting advocates and giving local CAC communities a statewide voice.

Since joining CACTX in 2015, **Denise Rose** has grown her involvement in the organization to serve on the Board of Directors and the Women of Courage Committee.

## DAYL – Equal Access to Justice

**Devanshi Somaya**, Committee Co-Chair

The Dallas Association of Young Lawyers' (DAYL) Equal Access to Justice Committee focuses on providing increased access to the Dallas Courts for traditionally disadvantaged segments of the community. In addition to its own projects, the committee aids the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program and the Dallas Bar Association.

As a Co-Chair, **Devanshi Somaya** helped to organize a wine tasting held in June to raise over \$15,000 to benefit the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program, which provides free legal services to impoverished citizens in Dallas.



*"Taking the time to invest in the growth and development of our associate attorneys helps everyone. I believe that serving as mentors can make a big impact on the next generation of JW attorneys."*

**Robert Soza, Jr.** | Partner, San Antonio & Diversity Committee Member



## Community Partners of Dallas

*David Schlottman, Board of Directors*

For nearly 30 years, Community Partners of Dallas has supported Child Protective Services in its mission to ensure the safety of abused and neglected children in Dallas County. As a Director, **David Schlottman** helps carry out this mission by encouraging fellow attorneys and staff to support the annual Back-to-School Drive. In partnership with the ORIX Foundation, the Firm collected school supplies, including backpacks, calculators, and notebooks, and gathered on July 27 to fulfill 800 orders to benefit more than 3,500 children living in foster care in Dallas.



## Covenant House Texas

*Kurt Nondorf, Director*

Over 35 years ago, Covenant House Texas opened its doors to provide shelter for homeless, abused, and abandoned youth between the ages of 18 and 24. Through a comprehensive model that includes counseling, training, and living programs, CHT helps young men and women transform their lives and get on a path to independence. **Kurt Nondorf** served as Chairman of the Board of Directors through May and continues to serve Covenant House as a member of the Board.

## Houston Volunteer Lawyers

*James Richardson, Hurricane Harvey Legal Relief Project Volunteer*

For some residents of Harris County, the devastation that Hurricane Harvey wreaked on their homes seemed nearly impossible to repair. A year after the Category 4 storm swept through the Upper Gulf Coast, one woman lost all hope of fixing her house after several failed attempts to receive aid from FEMA. That was when **James Richardson** stepped in to offer his assistance—free of charge—through Houston Volunteer Lawyers, the service arm of the Houston Bar Association.

As part of the organization's Hurricane Harvey Legal Relief Project, low-income residents of Harris County are connected with volunteer lawyers like James who handle matters pro bono. Get the full story: [JW.com/Harvey-Relief](https://www.jw.com/harvey-relief).

Check out **Marilyn Montaño Brown**'s dedication to ensuring equal access to justice through her involvement with the Volunteer Legal Services of Central Texas: [JW.com/Community-Marilyn-Brown](https://www.jw.com/community-marilyn-brown).

# Meet Josh & Patty

Austin partner **Josh Romero** is a Diversity Committee member and a Board Member of Open Door Preschools, an organization that operates three schools in central Austin serving more than 210 children. Open Door serves children of varied races, nationalities, socioeconomic groups, and developmental abilities.

For over 10 years, Houston partner and former Austin resident **Patty Tomasco** has volunteered with Caritas of Austin, where she has also served as a Community Action Board Member since 2014. Caritas of Austin is dedicated to ending homelessness and hunger.



# Breaking the Glass Ceiling



## Girlstart

*Alisha Mehta, Alumna*

Entering the male-dominated STEM field can be intimidating for females. Recognizing this, the Texas-based nonprofit Girlstart launched in 1997 and has since expanded to offer six year-round STEM programs across Houston, North Texas, and Rio Grande Valley.

Having attended Girlstart as a camper for five years and having interned there prior to attending law school, **Alisha Mehta** gained the confidence early on to thrive in every stage of her life.

Find out how Girlstart honored Alisha on [page 29](#).



## Taking the Bench

*Carmen Symes Dusek, 51st District Court Judge*

Ten years and eight months after delivering the opening statement in what became the largest child custody case in U.S. history, **Carmen Symes Dusek** stood before a packed Tom Green County courtroom and took her oath of office from longtime Judge Barbara Walther to become judge of the very court that heard the case.

Learn more about Carmen's appointment to the 51st Judicial District Court by visiting [JW.com/Carmen-Symes-Dusek-Investiture](http://JW.com/Carmen-Symes-Dusek-Investiture).



## Leadership San Antonio

*Shari Mao, Class of 2018*

Organized jointly by the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Leadership San Antonio (LSA) has long been recognized as the city's premier leadership development program. In December, **Shari Mao** joined the 44th class, which saw the largest number of nominations in LSA history.

As a member of LSA 44, Shari and her fellow class members will focus on equality and diversity entering the new year. In the following months, Shari will confront an array of challenges that affect San Antonio and discover tools that create positive influence toward their resolution.

Get the details: [JW.com/Shari-Mao-LSA-44](http://JW.com/Shari-Mao-LSA-44).



*"For me and so many other attorneys at Jackson Walker, community involvement is about making our cities better places to live. It's good to be part of a culture where that is encouraged."*

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**Suzan Kedron** | Partner, Dallas & Diversity Committee Member



# Promoting Inclusion



## Lambda Legal

*Kathy Silver, Houston Leadership Committee*

Lambda Legal works for civil rights for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and those living with HIV, through litigation, education, and public policy efforts.

Jackson Walker supports Lambda Legal through its Dallas Metro Landmark Dinner, and as a sponsor for the signature Houston event, Equality's Night Out.

**Kathy Silver** serves on the Houston Leadership Committee, and in 2018 more than 30 Jackson Walker attorneys participated in Lambda Legal programs across the state.



## Equality Texas Foundation

*Sam Hildebrand, Director*

Founded in 1990, Equality Texas Foundation educates and engages the public about policies and their effect on Texans of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.

As a member of the Board of Directors, **Sam Hildebrand** supports Equality Texas in its work to fight on the frontlines to protect and advance the rights of LGBTQ Texans.



## Texas Minority Counsel Program

*Chris Mugica, Steering Committee*

To increase opportunities for minority, women, and LGBT attorneys, the State Bar of Texas Diversity in the Profession Committee established the Texas Minority Council Program (TMCP), a client development, networking, and CLE organization. Each year, the TMCP welcomes more than 500 in-house and outside counsel to attend its annual networking and CLE conference.

In his role on the Steering Committee, **Chris Mugica** hosted a Save-the-Date reception held in the months leading up to the annual conference.

Explore Jackson Walker's participation in this program: [JW.com/Diversity-TMCP](http://JW.com/Diversity-TMCP).

*"It's important that our makeup as a firm, including its leadership, reflect the diversity in the communities we serve. I'm proud that Jackson Walker embraces this value by supporting efforts necessary to make this a part of our firm culture, but also by supporting organizations like Waller Creek Conservancy that make community inclusion a priority."*

**Jerry Webberman** | Partner, Austin & Diversity Committee Member



# Recognition

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As Jackson Walker strives to become more diverse and inclusive, organizations throughout Texas and the nation have recognized the efforts of both the Firm and our attorneys.

From increasing the number of minority attorneys to participating in efforts to promote inclusion throughout the Firm and beyond, **we are proud of the work we have done and the recognition we have received for our efforts.**

More information about our honors and accolades can be found at [JW.com/Recognition](http://JW.com/Recognition).





## Meet Alicia & Scott

As attorneys who have focused their practices on employment law matters, Austin partner **Alicia Duleba** and Dallas partner **Scott McElhaney** bring unique perspectives to their work on the Diversity Committee that enable them to push toward future advances for Jackson Walker.

*"We continue to make progress in our diversity and inclusion efforts, but there is more to be done. I'm proud to be a part of a Committee that is always looking forward to our next goals." – Alicia*

*"The recognition we've received as a Firm is well-deserved, but we want to continue to set the standard for law firms in Texas and beyond. We can't let up in our efforts." – Scott*

**Alicia Duleba** | Partner, Austin  
Diversity Committee Member

**Scott McElhaney** | Partner, Dallas  
Diversity Committee Member



# Reviewing Our Accomplishments

February 22, 2018



**Chip Babcock**

ADL Southwest Region  
*Karen H. Susman*  
*Jurisprudence Award*

March 2, 2018



**Mike Laussade**

Parkland Foundation  
*Community First Award*

April 11, 2018



**Kathleen LaValle**

SMU Dedman School of Law  
*Distinguished Alumni Award*  
*for Public Service*

May 17, 2018



**Jamila Brinson**

Houston Bar Association  
*President's Award*

## Austin 'A' Grade in Diversity

For the sixth year in a row, our Austin office was honored with an 'A' grade in the **Law Firm Diversity Report Card**, which aggregates data on the hire, retention, and promotion of racial and ethnic minorities and women at the 29 largest firms in the city.

Grades are determined by the Diversity Report Card Committee, comprising the Hispanic Bar Association of Austin, the Austin Black Lawyers Association, the Austin Asian American Bar Association, the South Asian Bar Association of Austin, the Austin LGBT Bar Association, and the Travis County Women Lawyers' Association.

## Top 25 in Corporate Equality Index

In the Human Rights Campaign's **2018 Corporate Equality Index**, Jackson Walker scored among Dallas-Fort Worth's top 25 employers in terms of hiring a diverse workforce and including specific nondiscrimination provisions for LGBTQ employees in HR policies. Our firm also ranked among the top seven law firms with headquarters in Texas.

## Meet Chris

With support from Jackson Walker, Diveristy Committee member and Austin partner **Chris Mugica** volunteers his time to help provide opportunities for others. In addition to his role mentoring young attorneys at the Firm, Chris holds leadership positions with the Boy Scouts of America Capitol Area Council, the Texas Minority Counsel Program of the State Bar of Texas, the Do the Write Thing Texas Challenge, the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, and the Young Men's Business League.



May 25, 2018



**Chris Mugica**

Austin Young Lawyers Association  
*Mentor Award*

June 28, 2018



**Stephanie Chandler**

American City Business Journals  
*"Influencers: Law" List*

October 23, 2018



**Alisha Mehta**

Girlstart  
*Alumna Honoree*

November 2, 2018



**Willie Hornberger**

AEM Dallas  
*Amigo de México Award*



**Jamila Brinson** was presented with the President's Award for her work as co-chair of the AIDS Outreach Committee. The committee provides holiday gifts for families affected by HIV/AIDS by matching donor firms and corporations with families. During the HBA AIDS Outreach Holiday Adopt-a-Family Project, the committee secured 86 adopters to donate gifts to more than 300 recipients.

[JW.com/Jamila-Brinson-HBA-Award](http://JW.com/Jamila-Brinson-HBA-Award)



During a special celebration honoring women role models in STEM, **Alisha Mehta** was honored as an alumna of Girlstart. On receiving the award, Alisha said: *"The work that they do is so instrumental for young girls and has such a long-lasting impact. Getting this award today means the world to me because Girlstart means the world to me."*

[JW.com/Alisha-Mehta-Girlstart](http://JW.com/Alisha-Mehta-Girlstart)



In recognition of his dedication to AVANCE-Dallas, AEM Dallas presented **Willie Hornberger** with the 2018 Amigo de México Award, which honors advocates who have strengthened bridges to support business initiatives between Mexico and the United States.

[JW.com/Willie-Hornberger-AEM-Award](http://JW.com/Willie-Hornberger-AEM-Award)

## Meet Brad

Dallas partner and Diversity Committee member **Brad Nitschke** views the practice of law as a service profession, and he continues his service and advocacy outside the Firm through leadership in several community organizations. Brad is on the Board of Presbyterian Communities and Services, the Dallas Housing Finance Corporation, and has served on the Board of the Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce, for which he chaired its Dallas Domestic Violence Legal Help Center.



# Diversity Committee

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Diversity and inclusion present excellent opportunities to create an environment for growth and prosperity.

From the top down, we express how significant diversity and inclusion are for the Firm through communication and action. We recognize that our work to promote a culture in which all individuals can excel is never complete, nor should it ever be. To ensure our entire practice promotes equality for all, our Diversity Committee, comprising both attorneys and staff, directs our diversity-related goals and collaborates on best practices for implementing initiatives.

For more than 20 years, we have contributed to the global effort to foster and promote awareness. We're committed to igniting change within the Firm, the legal profession, and our communities.

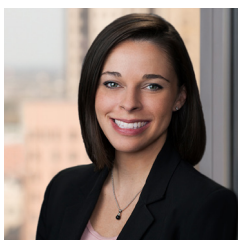


# Introducing Our Diversity Committee

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Chair | **Bruce Ruzinsky**  
*Partner*



**Melissa Bates**  
*Attorney Development  
Coordinator*



**Chevazz Brown**  
*Partner*



**Alicia Duleba**  
*Partner*



**Alex Frutos**  
*Partner*



**Joel Heydenburk**  
*Partner*



**Suzan Kedron**  
*Partner*



**Scott McElhaney**  
*Partner*



**Alisha Mehta**  
*Associate*



**Meghan Pier**  
*Recruiting Manager*



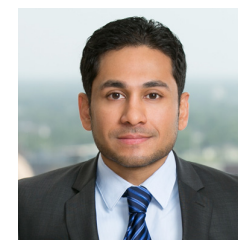
**Chris Mugica**  
*Partner*



**Brad Nitschke**  
*Partner*



**Jorge Padilla**  
*Partner*



**Wasif Qureshi**  
*Partner*



**Josh Romero**  
*Partner*



**Michelle Moore Smith**  
*Partner*



**Joan Sostek**  
*Of Counsel*



**Robert Soza, Jr.**  
*Partner*



**Bridgette Stahlman**  
*Chief Recruiting Officer*



**Jerry Webberman**  
*Partner*

# Contributing to **Our Communities**

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Within the communities where we live and work, Jackson Walker partners with more than 150 local, regional, and national civic, charitable, and professional organizations that advocate for diversity and inclusion among residents.

The Firm has a longstanding and ongoing commitment to elevating our neighbors, advocating for gender, ethnic, and racial equality across the legal profession, and serving vulnerable children who will one day become leaders. We are proud of the work we have done and continue to do **to ensure everyone is afforded equal opportunities.**

Below, we invite you to explore the various organizations we support. More information about our commitment to the community can be found at [JW.com/Community](https://www.jw.com/Community).

ABA Forum on Communications Law  
Agape Development  
The Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council  
Anti-Defamation League  
Asian American Bar Association of Houston  
Asian Pacific Interest Section, State Bar of Texas  
Association of Women Attorneys Foundation  
Attorneys Serving the Community  
Austin Asian American Bar Association  
Austin LGBT Bar Association  
Austin Library Friends Foundation  
Austin Young Lawyers Association  
AVANCE  
Avondale House  
AYLA Foundation  
Barbier-Mueller Fund for Vulnerable Children  
and People with Special Needs  
Bexar County Women's Bar Association  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas  
Black Tie Dinner, Inc.  
Bobby Bragan Youth Foundation  
Boy Scouts of America  
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area  
Camp Gladiator  
Caring for Cambodia

Catholic Charities  
Catholic Diocese of Dallas  
The Catholic Foundation  
CenterForce USA, Inc.'s The Women in Law &  
Leadership Summit  
Central Texas Food Bank  
Child Advocates  
Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas  
Commemorative Air Force Wings Over Dallas  
Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW)  
Community Council of Greater Dallas  
Corporate Counsel Women of Color  
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)  
Covenant House Texas  
Cristo Rey Dallas  
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation  
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation  
Dallas 24 Hour Club  
Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity  
Dallas Asian American Bar Association  
Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce  
Dallas Children's Theater  
Dallas Hispanic Bar Association  
Dallas Hispanic Law Foundation  
Dallas Holocaust Museum

Dallas Jewish Community Foundation  
Dallas Theater Center  
Dallas Women Lawyers Association  
Dallas Women's Foundation  
Dallas Association of Young Lawyers Foundation  
Diverse Attorney Pipeline Program NFP (DAPP)  
DivInc  
Do the Write Thing Texas Challenge  
The Downtown Group's Trailblazers &  
Trendsetters Luncheon  
Equality Texas Foundation  
Family Compass  
Family Service Association  
Family Services of Greater Houston  
Family Services of San Antonio  
First Command Educational Foundation  
Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance  
Abuse, Inc.  
Foster Angels of Central Texas  
Girl Scouts of Central Texas  
Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce  
Green Corn Project  
Gulf Coast Power Association's emPOWERing  
HBAA Charitable Foundation  
Women Conference



Healing Hands Ministries  
 Helping Hand Home  
 Hispanic Bar Association of Houston  
 Holocaust Museum Houston  
 Hope Fest  
 HBA Minority Opportunities in the Legal Profession  
 Houston Minority Bar Coalition  
 Houston Urban Debate League  
 Houston Young Lawyers Association  
 Interface Children & Family Services  
 International Aviation Womens Association  
 Jewish Community Center of Houston  
 Jewish Family Service  
 J.L. Turner Legal Association Foundation  
 Junior Achievement  
 Lambda Legal  
 Latino Center for Leadership Development  
 Leadership Council on Legal Diversity  
 Leadership Dallas  
 Leadership San Antonio  
 LeadershipSBOT  
 Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas  
 Literacy Instruction for Texas (LIFT)  
 The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
 Meat Fight, Inc.  
 Minority Affairs, State Bar of Texas –  
     Texas Minority Counsel Program (TMCP)  
 Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association  
 National Association of Women Lawyers  
 National Center for Missing & Exploited Children  
 National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)  
     Greater Dallas  
 National MS Society  
 North Texas Food Bank  
 Open Door Preschools  
 ORIX Foundation  
 Powerful Purses  
 Project MEND  
 Rainbow Days, Inc. Recovery Resource Council  
 The Refuge for DMST  
 Ronald McDonald House Charities

The Salvation Army  
 San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
 San Antonio LGBT Bar Association  
 San Antonio Public Library Foundation  
 San Antonio Symphony Youth Orchestra  
 San Antonio Young Lawyers Association  
 The Seton Fund  
 Small Steps Nurturing Center  
 SMU Women in Law Society  
 Soldiers' Angels  
 St. Thomas More Society of the Diocese of Dallas  
 Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure  
 Tahirih Justice Center  
 Teach For America DFW  
 Texans Care for Children  
 Texas Access to Justice Foundation  
 Texas Advocacy Project  
 Texas Women Lawyers  
 Travis County Women Lawyers Association  
     (TCWLA)  
 UH Law Foundation's Black Law  
     Students Association  
 UNCF  
 United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County  
 United Way of Metropolitan Dallas  
 University of Texas School of Law / Center for  
     Women in Law  
 Vita Living  
 Volunteer Legal Services of Central Texas  
 Women's Business Council – Southwest  
 Women's Energy Network  
 The Women's Resource of Greater Houston  
 Women Texas Film Festival  
 YMCA  
 Young Men's Business League  
 Young Professionals in Energy  
 Youth Orchestra of San Antonio (YOSA)

## North Texas Food Bank

In its 19th year, North Texas Food Bank's Empty Bowls fundraiser features soup and bowl-friendly fare from over 20 North Texas restaurants. All proceeds benefit the hunger-relief organization's programs. Dallas partner **Retta Miller** has led the Firm's involvement in Empty Bowls for the past four years.



## Texas Access to Justice

A critical part of Jackson Walker's commitment to igniting change in the legal profession is a dedication to the advancement of justice for all, including particularly those who are unable to afford legal services. Once again, the Texas Access to Justice Commission has honored Jackson Walker as a **Champion of Justice Law Firm**. This honor was presented in conjunction with National Pro Bono Week at an October ceremony acknowledging law firms with the highest contributions and firms with the highest percentage of attorneys contributing to the Justice for All Campaign. Jackson Walker ranked on both lists.

Learn more: [JW.com/TexasATJ](https://www.jw.com/TexasATJ).



## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2018

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