

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The foundation for Lowenstein's culture was laid by firm founder, community leader, and social justice pioneer Alan Lowenstein, who was renowned for recruiting and welcoming colleagues of all backgrounds and experiences. From our roots as members of the Lawyers Commission for Civil Rights to serving as co-founders of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, inclusivity is a part of Lowenstein Sandler's DNA.

Led by our chair, the firm's **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Steering Committee** oversees and connects the collective efforts of so many who are committed to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the firm.

## Employee Resource Groups

- **Diversity Leadership Network (DLN).** The DLN focuses on recruiting, supporting, and promoting attorneys from diverse backgrounds. The group identifies and puts in place additional supports to foster the organic development of relationships and mentorships that are critical to each member's personal brand and professional success. Members also design and participate in events that connect Lowenstein attorneys with DLN allies outside the firm.

### Contacts:

**Reynold Lambert**, Partner

+1 973.597.6340 | [rlambert@lowenstein.com](mailto:rlambert@lowenstein.com)

**David M. Wissert**, Partner and General Counsel

+1 646.414.6912 | [dwissert@lowenstein.com](mailto:dwissert@lowenstein.com)

- **LGBTQ+ Alliance.** Our LGBTQ+ Alliance advocates on behalf of the LGBTQ+ community inside and outside the firm. We host monthly meetings and quarterly, no-agenda lunches that foster understanding; provide firmwide training on LGBTQ+ issues; participate annually in the Lavender Law Conference and Career Fair; and celebrate Pride Month through education, social, and community service events. Reflecting our commitment to LGBTQ+ concerns, Lowenstein is among the first law firms to institute a policy allowing individuals to use the restroom that reflects their gender identity.

### Contact:

**Mark P. Kessler**, Partner

+1 646.414.6793 (NY)/+1 973.597.2330 (NJ) | [mkessler@lowenstein.com](mailto:mkessler@lowenstein.com)

- **Women's Initiative Network (WIN).** WIN is a grassroots program that supports and empowers our women attorneys to achieve professional and personal success. It is comprised of women from a cross section of the firm's practice areas, seniority levels, and offices. The group meets for formal programming, monthly lunches, and intimate discussion groups. WIN events lead to natural and meaningful mentoring relationships that assist our women lawyers in developing their careers and flourishing as leaders.

### Contact:

**Lynda A. Bennett**, Partner

+1 973.597.6338 | [lbennett@lowenstein.com](mailto:lbennett@lowenstein.com)

- **Lowenstein Parent Network (LPN).** LPN is a group of employees who lighten and brighten their respective parenting journeys through mutual sharing and learning. LPN members are LS parents and caregivers of children of all ages, and any employees interested in joining the network. LPN comes together for informal discussions as well as organized trainings on a broad range of topics that are of interest to members. The group also organizes child-friendly social opportunities for employees and their families.

### Contact:

**Allison J. Castro**, CLE Specialist

+1 973.422.6492 | [acastro@lowenstein.com](mailto:acastro@lowenstein.com)

- **Women's Enrichment Initiative.** This group provides a forum for our non-attorney women professionals to network with and mentor one another and to discuss career development strategies.

### Contact:

**Colleen M. Boyle**, Recruiting Manager

+1 973.422.6424 | [cmboyle@lowenstein.com](mailto:cmboyle@lowenstein.com)

## Benefits

- Expansive parental leave for opposite-sex and same-sex couples
- Domestic partner benefits

- On-ramping period following return from parental leave
- Parental Leave Mentoring Network
- Purposeful sponsorship and coaching
- FWAs such as reduced schedules, flextime, and telecommuting

### Pipeline Programs

- We actively recruit, develop, and promote lawyers and professional staff who bring a wide range of perspectives to our practice. We also work closely with the **Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)** to build pipeline programs designed to develop diverse lawyers through training, networking, and access to law firm leaders and in-house counsel executives. Lowenstein selected **Chandra K. Shih**, a Palo Alto-based partner in the firm's **The Tech Group** and a member of the **Seed Stage Investing & Startups** and **Venture Capital & Tech M&A** practices, to represent Lowenstein in the 2021 LCLD **Fellows Program**, a landmark initiative designed for diverse, high-potential, mid-career attorneys at LCLD member organizations. The goal of this program is to provide Fellows with professional and personal development opportunities, leadership training, relationship-building opportunities, and access to LCLD members (including managing partners and general counsel). **Nick Samedi**, New Jersey- and New York-based counsel in the firm's **Mergers & Acquisitions** and **Corporate** groups, is a member of the 2021 LCLD class of **Pathfinders**, a program designed for diverse, high-potential attorneys at LCLD member organizations. This program aims to equip participants with practical tools for developing and leveraging internal professional networks through relationship-building and foundational leadership skills, along with an understanding of career development strategies applicable to both in-house and law firm practice.
- One of the firm's signature initiatives is the **Lowenstein Sandler LS Scholars Program**. For more than 10 years, this program has identified promising, diverse first-year law students, who are offered both a paid summer associate position and a scholarship to be used toward their second year of law school. If a Scholar returns for their 2L summer, they receive a paid summer associate position and an additional scholarship for their third year. More recently, we have partnered with LCLD to enroll our 1L Lowenstein Fellows in the **1L LCLD's Scholars Program**.
- We also participate in **Diversity Lab's Diversity in Law Hackathon** series, which aims to boost diversity and inclusion in the legal profession by teaming experienced law firm and in-house lawyers with law students who work to generate innovative ideas for attracting, retaining, and promoting diverse lawyers.

### Recent Recognition

- Received a perfect (100 percent) score on the Human Rights Campaign Foundation Corporate Equality Index: Best Place to Work for LGBTQ Equality
- Ranked among the 60 best law firms for women by *Working Mother*
- Selected as one of *WomenInc.* magazine's "Top 100 Law Firms for Women"
- Received the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's (LCLD) Compass Award for the firm's full participation in LCLD's programs
- Received the Freddie Mac inaugural Award of Excellence for Enhancing Law Firm Diversity & Inclusion
- Named an *NJBIZ* Best Place to Work in New Jersey
- Named a *Crain's* Best Place to Work in New York City
- Received the National Legal Aid & Defender Association's Beacon of Justice Award for the firm's pro bono efforts in addressing systemic racial disparities and for our efforts in support of immigrants fighting unlawful deportation, family separations, and wrongful denial of Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- Received the Lawyers Alliance for New York's Cornerstone Award for extraordinary contributions through pro bono legal services that help nonprofits to address critical human needs and improve the quality of life for thousands of low-income New Yorkers
- Received New Jersey Institute for Social Justice's Corporate Leadership Award
- Named Pro Bono Partner of the Year by Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund
- Received New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Award for Public Service
- Received National Legal Aid & Defender Association's Beacon of Justice Award for the firm's pro bono efforts in support of immigrants fighting unlawful deportation, family separations, and wrongful denial of Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- Received Pro Bono Partnership's (PBP) Pandemic Response Award for the firm's initiative in developing a program to assist PBP clients with the SBA Paycheck Protection Program
- Received ACLU-NJ's Legal Leadership Award for Advocacy to prevent deportation of Indonesian Christians facing religious persecution
- Received HANDS Community Leadership Award
- Received the USPTO's Law Firm Pro Bono Achievement Certificate for the firm's and our registered patent practitioners' accomplishments in patent pro bono service
- Received California Lawyers for the Arts' Artistic License Award for significant leadership in providing pro bono patent representation for low-income inventors
- Received Community Legal Services in Palo Alto's Firm of the Year award for our efforts to clear low-level criminal records for pro bono clients

### Pro Bono Service

In 2009, Lowenstein Sandler expanded its historic commitment to public and community service by creating the **Lowenstein Center for the Public Interest**. The center maximizes impact by focusing the firm's pro bono efforts and deepening its partnerships with leading nonprofit and community organizations. Now in its tenth year of providing access to justice, the center maintains its robust advocacy on behalf of individuals and communities in need through pro bono representation in a variety of high-stakes matters.

The center's **2020 Pro Bono Report** provides an overview of the firm's most recent efforts. Highlights include:

- Providing guidance to more than 230 microbusinesses and nonprofits in securing assistance from federal and state relief programs, as well as educating the public with regularly updated **FAQs** about how to benefit from the PPP; we also sent **letters to Congress** with recommendations, many of which the government later adopted, for more equitable access to loans for nonprofits and microbusinesses.
- Protecting the rights of tenants by leading an effort to reform proceedings in landlord-tenant court; working to prevent evictions during the pandemic; producing and

continually updating **FAQs** to educate tenants and homeowners on their protections and obligations during the pandemic; and representing a class of tenants seeking safe and decent housing in Newark after leaving New York City homeless shelters.

- Partnering with **Election Protection** to recruit more than 240 legal professionals to answer calls from voters on a hotline in an entirely remote setting due to the pandemic, in the midst of a highly volatile presidential election.
- Protecting the rights of immigrants through both individual representation and efforts to achieve systemic reform through such actions as **filing appellate amicus briefs** to prevent the unlawful removal of children with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

## HONORS & AWARDS

---

### > **Pro Bono Partnership (2021)**

Recipient of the 2020 Pandemic Response Award (bestowed in 2021) for Lowenstein's initiative in developing a program to assist Pro Bono Partnership clients with the SBA Paycheck Protection Program