



# BEST PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PATHS OF OUR UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

1

## Presenters

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2

## Our path today

- The Challenge
- Best Practices



3

## Why are we here – what's the current landscape in the legal market?

- The total percentage of law students of color:
  - 1987 - 11.23%
  - 2000 - 20.57%
  - 2019 - 31.01%.
- Students from historically underrepresented backgrounds leave law school for reasons other than transferring at disproportionately higher rates.

4

## Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE)- 2020

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- 31% of white law students strongly agreed when asked whether they felt "part of the community at this institution," while only 21% of Native American and Black law students strongly agreed.
- White students were more likely than those from other backgrounds to be comfortable being themselves on campus, with 12% noting they were not, while 21% of Native American, Black, or Latinx students stated they were not.

5

## NALP 2020 Report on Law Firm Diversity Key Findings

- The percentage of Black associates surpassed 5% for the first time since NALP began collecting this data and the share of associates who are Black women (3.04%) finally exceeded the 2009 figure of 2.93%, but over the last eleven years, the representation of Black women associates has increased by just one-tenth of a percentage point.
- Despite modest growth in 2020, Black women and Latinx women each continued to represent less than 1% of all partners in U.S. law firms. The percentage of Black partners overall finally surpassed 2% for the first time since NALP began collecting data.
- After experiencing more than two decades of continuous growth, the percentage of Asian associate plateaued in 2020 at 12.12%, just below the 2019 figure of 12.17%.
- The percentage of summer associates who are people of color increased by 1.2 percentage points, growing from 35.26% in 2019 to 36.48% in 2020.
- Women accounted for over half of all summer associates (53.62%) for the third year in a row.
- The growth in the percentage of LGBTQ summer associates continued to outpace that of LGBTQ lawyers overall, climbing from 6.86% of all summer associates in 2019 to 7.68% in 2020.

 We advance law careers

Chart 7: Percentage of Women and People of Color at Law Firms - 2020

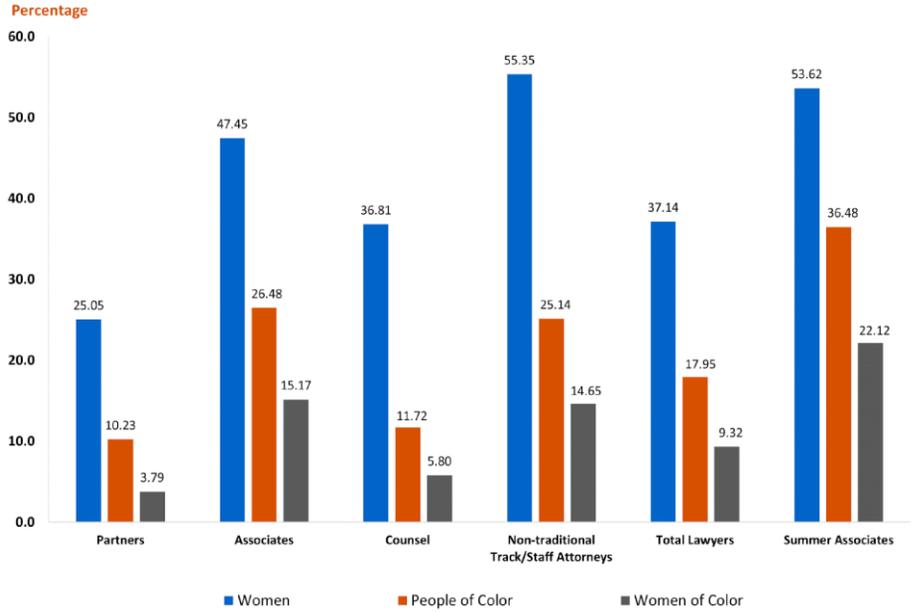
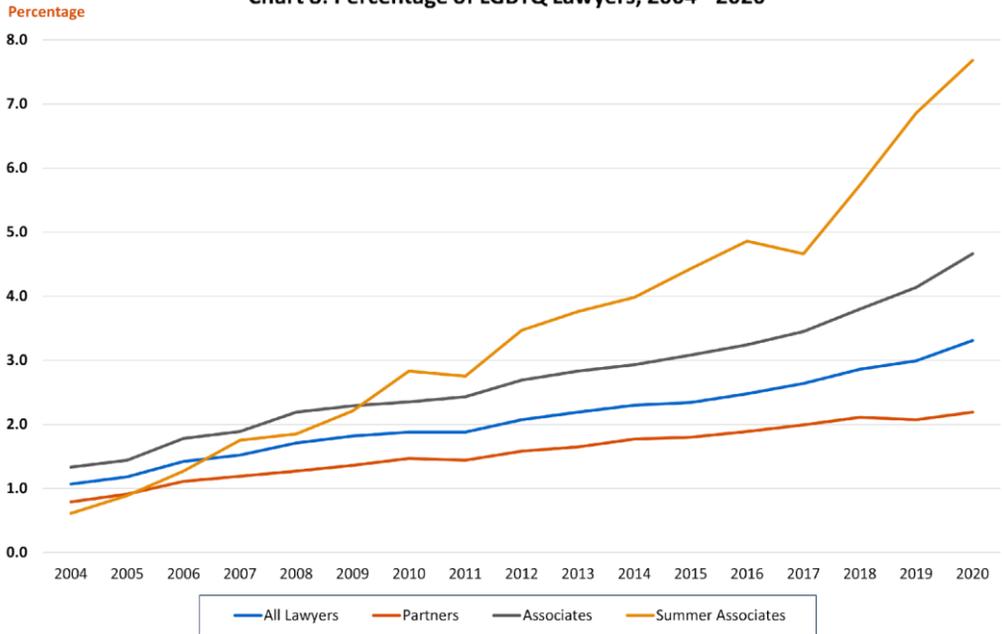


Chart 8: Percentage of LGBTQ Lawyers, 2004 - 2020



## Getting Started: Taking Stock of What You Offer and Identifying Gaps



9

## Areas Where You May Find Gaps

1. **Student Connection:** How are we connecting with our students to know what they need and want?
2. **Communication of Diversity Opportunities:** How are we sharing diversity opportunities with students?
3. **Holistic Approach to Advising:** How much do we know about our students and their law school experiences?
4. **Employer Engagement:** How are we connecting with our employers on diversity, equity, and inclusion?
5. **Meaningful Mentoring:** Are we offering or supporting mentoring opportunities in a meaningful way?



10

## What Our Experiences Have Shown Us



11

## Best Practices for Engaging Students

### Student Connection

- Collaborate with affinity group leadership
- Attend affinity group meetings
- Conduct targeted outreach to underrepresented students



12

## Best Practices for Communication

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### Communication of Diversity Opportunities

- Be sensitive to reluctance to participate in targeted events or groups
- Make targeted effort to get to know underrepresented students
- Conduct targeted outreach



13

## Best Practices for Advising Diverse Students

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### Holistic Approach to Advising

- Identify and collaborate with others who are focused on DE&I work, formally and informally, within the school
- Institutionalizing these efforts at the law school so the work is shared and, more importantly, supported and recognized



14

# Best Practices for Working With Employers to Support DEI Efforts

## Employer Engagement

- Collaborate with DE&I and recruiting
- Use a more objective process
- Advocate for underrepresented students



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# Best Practices for Meaningful Mentoring

## Meaningful Mentoring

- Alumni mentor connections
- Mentoring resources



## Final Resources and Takeaways

- [NALP Report on Diversity](#)
- [NALP Diversity Best Practices Guide](#) (2020)
- [Diversity in the US Population and the Pipeline to Legal Careers](#) (2020)
- Thomas, Kylie; Cochran, Tiffane (2018). [ABA Data Reveals Minority Students Are Disproportionately Represented in Attrition Figures](#)
- [Law School Survey of Student Engagement](#) (2020)
- [Sample Employer Resource Page](#)



Please feel free to contact us with any follow-up questions!

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Also, please join us at the roundtable discussion at 4:00 EST.