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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2025

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NALP’s Latest Report Highlights Unprecedented Diversity in Law, But Summer Associate Data Shows Challenges Could Hinder Representation of Black Lawyers

NALP released its annual *Report on Diversity in U.S. Law Firms* today, available at www.nalp.org/reportondiversity. The report, based on information from the 2024 *NALP Directory of Legal Employers*, shows record levels of representation for women, people of color, and LGBTQ lawyers. However, the summer associate data signals this growth could be sluggish in coming years, particularly for Black or African American individuals, who experienced the second consecutive year of declining representation within the summer associate ranks.

“It is important to recognize that associates of color still convert to partners at much lower rates than White associates, resulting in a nearly 20 percentage point disparity between this cohort’s representation at the partnership level compared to that at the associate level. To put that disparity into context, at the current rate of growth, it will take nearly 27 years for the representation of partners of color to reach parity with that of associates of color today – in other words, much too long,” said NALP Executive Director Nikia Gray.

She added, “Most of the growth summer associates of color experienced, however, can be attributed to a significant increase in Asian summer associates.”

2024 Highlights

- After declining in 2023, the percentage of summer associates of color improved by 0.8 percentage point in 2024, reaching a new high of 43.07%. However, much of this growth can be attributed to an increase in Asian (+1.8 percentage points) and multiracial summer associates (+0.5 percentage points), while the percentage of Black or African American summer associates fell sharply (-1.5 percentage points).

- The representation of women summer associates declined for the first time since 2013, falling by 0.7 percentage point, to 55.44%. Despite this drop, the 2024 figure is the second highest percentage on record for women summer associates.
- After comprising the majority of associates for the first time in 2023, women continue to make gains, growing to 51.62% of all associates in 2024 (a +1.3-percentage point increase).
- The percentage of associates of color also increased by 1.3 percentage points to 31.46%, a new record high. This increase can be attributed to growth in the percentage of women associates of color, which rose by 1.2 points to 18.76%.
- In 2024, the percentage of women partners grew by 1.1 percentage points to 28.83% and the percentage of partners of color improved by 0.7 percentage point to 12.73%. However, both women and people of color remain significantly underrepresented within the partnership ranks.
- Women of color comprised more than 5% of all partners for the first time in 2024.
- Within multi-tier law firms, White men remain disproportionately represented within the equity partner ranks. In 2024, just 24.8% of equity partners were women and only 10.2% were people of color.
- By geography, Silicon Valley and Miami were the locations with the highest percentage of lawyers of color, at 41.86% and 37.29%, respectively. San Francisco and Silicon Valley had the largest share of women lawyers at 49.05% and 46.08%.
- The proportion of LGBTQ summer associates continues to grow at a faster rate compared to lawyers overall. Nearly 13% (12.92%) of summer associates identify as LGBTQ, whereas the percentage among all lawyers is 5.13%.
- Although reporting of gender non-binary lawyers remains limited since NALP first began collecting data in 2020, the figure has grown each year. In 2024, 108 non-binary lawyers and 32 non-binary summer associates were reported by law firms, compared to 79 non-binary lawyers and 27 non-binary summer associates in 2023.
- Overall, 2.54% of lawyers identified as having a disability. This percentage was higher for associates (3.20%) as compared to partners (1.78%).

The [NALP Directory of Legal Employers](#) has been a trusted resource for legal job seekers for over 40 years. NALP's comprehensive employer profiles give students detailed information to make educated decisions about their future careers, with employers controlling the content of their profiles. NALP recently launched an updated version of the Directory that includes data on small and mid-sized law firms with 25-150 lawyers, licensed from Leopard Solutions, to provide students with even more information.

Read the entire *Report on Diversity at U.S. Law Firms* at www.nalp.org/reportondiversity. To request an interview, contact media@nalp.org.

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About NALP

NALP is an association of more than 3,000 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. What brings NALP members together is a common belief in three fundamental things. First, all law students and lawyers should benefit from a fair and ethical hiring process. Second, law students and lawyers are more successful when supported by professional development and legal career professionals. Third, a diverse and inclusive legal profession best serves clients and our communities. That's why NALP members work together every day to collect and publish accurate legal employment data and information, and champion education and ethical principles for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than 50 years, NALP has played an essential role in the success of our members and the lawyers and law students they serve. NALP maintains an online archive of press releases at www.nalp.org/pressreleases. For additional information, contact NALP at info@nalp.org or call (202) 835-1001.