



# Nixon Peabody Diversity Update

## September 2006

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## Human Rights Campaign rates Nixon Peabody at 100%

Nixon Peabody is listed among a prestigious group of companies receiving a 100% score on this year's Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index (CEI). This is the fifth annual report on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) equality in corporate America, according to the Human Rights Campaign.

"We're very pleased to be included on the HRC's Corporate Equality Index. On top of our Fortune 100 Best Places to Work achievement, this is another over-the-top effort on the firm's part. This recognition comes on the heels of a lot of internal work to measure and evaluate what we do. For example, our healthcare coverage is gender neutral and includes domestic partners. Many companies still do not provide this type of coverage, but we've had it for several years," says Bill Simpson, Nixon Peabody's director of human resources.

Nixon Peabody also recently formed the GLBT affinity group. In addition, during the 2006 National Diversity Conference and related dinner, of which Nixon Peabody was the primary sponsor, there were specific agenda items addressing GLBT issues, Bill says.

The HRC report is the only comprehensive measure of GLBT diversity initiatives, and it is a significant honor to be included among the perfect-score firms. "Your company knows very well that creating an environment where individual differences are respected, not ignored, makes for a better work product because engaged, creative, and productive employees are those who don't have to worry about discrimination," according to the organization's congratulatory announcement.



The list of perfect-score firms will be publicly released on September 19 through a nationwide public relations campaign. Just 135 companies, including 10 law firms and some of the nation's largest and most prestigious corporations, are included on the list.

## GLBT affinity group focuses on October civil rights event

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) affinity group is gearing up for the 10th Annual Human Rights Campaign (HRC) National Dinner on October 7 at the Washington Convention Center, according to Randy Kelly, an associate in the Washington, D.C. office and the co-leader of the group.

"We've reached out to all of the lawyers in the firm to help us identify clients that might appreciate receiving an invitation," says Randy, who is helping organize the dinner. Nixon Peabody, particularly specific practice groups, has participated in past years, but this year the effort is more widespread. "Our intention is to invite interested clients and firm representatives and purchase a couple of tables .... It's a good way to showcase our company," Randy says. Although the initial reservations deadline has passed, those interested in attending are welcome to contact Randy.

According to its Web site, the Human Rights Campaign strives to end discrimination against GLBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.



GLBT hosted 'Pride in My Workplace' event.

This summer, on July 19, Nixon Peabody's GLBT affinity group hosted the Finger Lakes LBG T Workplace Alliance and Empire State Pride Agenda's (ESPA) "Pride in My Workplace" networking and panel discussion.

"The event was a huge success, very client driven," according to Maggie Clemens, a participant and partner in the Rochester office and a member of the firm's Diversity Action Committee (DAC). The discussions focused on how to form affinity groups, what their purpose is in the workplace, and how to keep these groups energized. The venue also offered lots of opportunity for networking with current and prospective clients.

Nixon Peabody invited several clients and attendance was very strong. In addition, the event featured speakers from various organizations, including companies that are Nixon Peabody clients. The panelists included: Desma Holcomb, Empire State Pride Agenda Campaigns director; Emily Jones, retired director of Imaging Materials Research, Eastman Kodak; Clayton Osborne, vice

president, Human Resources and Diversity, Bausch & Lomb; and Steven Salatino, manager of Database Management & Information Services and chairman and founder of GLUE, Unisys's LGBT affinity group.

In addition to strong client attendance, several attorneys from other Nixon Peabody offices also attended the event, including the co-leader of Nixon Peabody's LGBT affinity group, Randy Kelly.

## Diversity initiative shows success

### *Vault/MCCA Law Firm Diversity Survey statistics reveal improvements*

Nixon Peabody's rededication to diversity has been effective—and the proof is in the numbers. “We have increased the number of minority partners 100%, up from 1.8% to 3.5%—raw numbers are from six to 12 minority partners,” says Maggie Clemens, a member of the firm's Diversity Action Committee (DAC). The firm's overall percentage of minority attorneys has also increased, from 9.6% to 10.9%, and the percentage of minority associates and counsel has increased from 18.1% to 19.4%.

This is just a sample of some of the concrete benefits the firm is beginning to see from its extensive diversity efforts. The percent of women partners increased to 15.58%, as compared to last year's 15.3%; and the firm now has 2.9% GLBT partners, a relatively new reporting category.

The new numbers were compiled for this year's Vault/MCCA Law Firm Diversity Survey. See the diversity page on Npower for full details. The Vault survey, which compares Nixon Peabody's percentages against other law firms of similar size, will be released in November.

### *Beyond the numbers*

While numbers are certainly a valuable measure of the success of the firm's diversity initiative, there is ample other evidence that Nixon Peabody's diversity initiative is having an impact at the firm.

Mauricio Velásquez, president of The Diversity Training Group, provided a firm-wide training program, which began with an assessment involving one-on-one talks with a cross section of lawyers and staff and culminated in two half-hour diversity training sessions.

The value of a training program, which is just one part of the larger diversity initiative, is to agree on the definition of diversity, so all of the offices are on the same page.

One of the most significant developments coming out of the diversity initiative is the formation of affinity groups. So far, the firm has affinity groups for women, Asians, African Americans,

Hispanics and gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgendered attorneys. The groups are inclusive and follow guidelines that are designed to help ensure that the groups are focused on productive efforts aimed at building relationships.

In addition to internal efforts, the firm has also been involved in a number of seminars, presentations, and conferences. In some instances, the firm was a major sponsor; in many instances, firm attorneys were asked to be speakers or panelists at major diversity events.

For example, Nixon Peabody was this year's primary sponsor for what is widely considered one of the most significant diversity conferences in the nation, the 2006 National Diversity Conference, which is produced by the Workforce Diversity Network in Rochester. More than 500 people attended the May 2006 conference. Firm attorneys were included among the speakers at the conference as well. In addition, the firm was able to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the gathering of the attendees for the conference and host an inaugural diversity dinner in the Rochester office.

Together, these activities, along with an overall increased awareness of the value of diversity, are working to build and enhance a supportive work environment for everyone at the firm.

## Recruiting efforts

### *Renewed focus on diversity during campus interviews, job fairs*

Nixon Peabody has long been interested in attracting minority lawyers to the firm, but recent efforts have been even more laser focused on diversifying the firm's legal staff.



Christine White

Since the Professional Personnel Department was created in the spring of 2005, with Chris White as the director, Chris, along with Karen Marr and her team of recruiters, has made great strides to ensure the firm has an opportunity to interview the best and brightest talent across a diverse range of individuals. "We've focused our attention on more active outreach in the spring, prior to campus interviewing. At the same time, we looked for additional job fairs and expanded some of our fall interview schedules, so that our attorneys can meet more students face-to-face. Now, since the inception of DAC, the recruiting committees and DAC can work together to raise our profile," Chris says.

This year, the firm distributed a letter signed by Liz Moore and Kendal Tyre, co-chairs of the firm's diversity action committee (DAC), to minority law students. The letter introduced the students to the firm, provided pertinent details about Nixon Peabody and offered to provide additional information, as needed. "The letter was intended to introduce the students to the

firm, advise them of our diversity initiative and invite them to consider interviewing with us this fall,” Karen says.

Chris and Karen have also secured the firm’s participation in a number of diversity job fairs, some are an ongoing effort and some are new events for the firm. The larger diversity job fairs scheduled for Nixon Peabody interviewers include:

- Bay Area Diversity Career Fair, (San Francisco), August 12
- BLSA (Black Law Students Association) Northeastern Fair (New York), August 21
- Hispanic National Bar Conference & Job Fair (San Francisco), September 1
- Boston Lawyers Group Job Fair, September 7
- Lavender<sup>®</sup> Law Career Fair (Washington, D.C.), September 7
- BLSA (Black Law Students Association) Mid-Atlantic Fair (Washington, D.C.), September 9

To help attorney interviewers at the job fairs, other events, or in one-on-one situations, Chris created an interviewer training program last year and is repeating this popular program again this summer. The purpose is to improve interviewing skills, such as developing questions that focus on NP’s success factors, looking for candidates with unique perspectives who would add extra dimensions to the firm’s practice, and presenting interview techniques that effectively “recruit” law students.

“We did really well as a result of campus interviews last year, and we increased our minority presence in our 2006 summer program,” Karen says.

## Mentoring programs help increase minority recruiting efforts

This year the firm, for the first time, participated in a mentoring program through the New York City Bar Association. The program helps minority first year law students, who submit resumes and writing samples to a panel that matches them up with interested legal employers. Nixon Peabody agreed to hire one candidate through this program this past summer.

The Rochester office also participated in a mentoring program for first-year minority students, the Minority Clerkship Program, which received publicity in August in *The Daily Record*. According to the article, all 12 students enjoyed their experience. Some said they would definitely consider returning to Rochester to work, and others said the experience helped them focus on specific legal specialties. The students worked at a variety of locations, including corporations, the Legal Aid Society, and various law firms. Nixon Peabody participated in the program for the second year. This year, the firm hosted Janelle Whitaker, who is currently attending the University of Buffalo School of Law.

“The entire group was terrific; they were all very bright and intelligent and seemed delighted to spend their summers in downtown Rochester,” according to Jill Schultz, a partner in Nixon Peabody’s Rochester office and president of the Monroe County Bar Association. The internship program is designed to attract minority law students to the city, so the bar association makes certain that the students are exposed to the city’s cultural and other activities, in addition to their work experience. “We’re really trying to show off our city, so we host several events throughout the summer,” Jill says.

Nixon Peabody was definitely happy with the work Janelle performed during her summer. “She did a very good job. We were very pleased and we’ve extended her an offer,” Jill says. Janelle has accepted the offer to be a 2007 summer associate, so she’ll be back next year.

## Increased attendance at recruiting events

This year, because of the firm’s recent increase in recruiting-team staff, Nixon Peabody was also able to increase participation in diversity-oriented conferences, seminars, and receptions, including the first national Diversity Summit in Chicago, hosted by the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) and attended by more than 300 law schools and major legal employers. Attending these events helps establish Nixon Peabody’s commitment to diversity in the minds of law school placement officers, which is an important step in reaching a diverse job candidate pool.

Recruiting a highly diversified workforce is not an easy task. The firm needs the assistance of all attorneys to network and actively recruit qualified minority students. This is an ongoing effort by everyone. This includes the receptionist who first greets potential candidates; the secretaries who support the summer associates; and all the attorneys who interview on campus, do callbacks, and meet the summer associates during the summer program.

# Women's affinity groups build participation

The women's affinity groups in several of Nixon Peabody's offices are focused on building participation and have held some well-received events that give women added tools to help build their careers. Here is a summary of some of the events:

## *New York City women's group hosts well-known author*

Communication and presentation dominated the recent women's affinity group meetings in New York City. Kate Cassidy and Jill Cohen, both associates in the New York City office, organized two meetings with interesting twists for their group, the Women's Professional Development Group.

Kate and Jill invited Suzanne Bates, author of "Speak like a CEO," to address their group. Other offices also attended via teleconference. "Bates is renowned for her uncanny ability to transform even the shyest oratorical mouse into a public-speaking lion," according to her biography on Amazon.com.

In total, about 50 women participated in the workshop, Jill says. The author, an award-winning former news anchor, focused on common mistakes women make when communicating, such as not speaking up in a meeting, sounding unsure, stating positions as a question and generally avoiding the spotlight. The workshop included exercises to help overcome these common pitfalls.

In July, Alison Cohen and Natalie Dennery invited a Nordstrom wardrobe consultant to their meeting, Jill says. The consultant provided information about dressing for success. The event served to kickoff the office's Dress for Success charity clothing drive, she says. The Dress for Success charity accepts donated professional clothing, which is provided to underprivileged women who are entering the workforce or going on job interviews.

The group is planning two upcoming events, Developing International Business, scheduled for September, and The Art of Networking, scheduled for October.

## *Boston office connects with women summer associates*

In Boston, the women's affinity group participated in a women's leadership conference with the New York City office, and focused on building their relationships and connecting with women summer associates.

The group held luncheons, which provided an open forum for the discussion of issues, such as mentoring, retention, and compensation and offered an opportunity to socialize and build strong relationships among participants. The group made an effort to invite all of the women summer associates to the meetings, so they would be aware of the group as a resource and could expand their relationship circle at the firm, according to Leigh-Ann Patterson Durant, a partner in Boston.

In addition to the firm-sponsored meetings, women summer associates were invited to the Women's Bar Association Annual Summer Associate Reception on July 19. "We took a number of women summer associates to this and introduced them to several Superior Court judges who attended the event. Everyone had a great time," Leigh-Ann says. The keynote speaker for the event was Massachusetts Superior Court Associate Justice Nonnie Burnes.

Leigh-Ann invited all of women in the Boston office to attend an event on September 15, sponsored by the National Association of Women Lawyers and co-sponsored by a number of other legal associations. Leigh-Ann helped plan the event and was one of the speakers. "Taking Charge of Your Career®: Best Practices for Women Lawyers & Their Firms," 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., provides women with the tools they need for career success and leadership roles. The event was held at the Colonnade Hotel in Boston. This seminar has been presented in several other cities and is well acclaimed.

### *Rochester office kicks off women's affinity group in June*

Marisa Miller and Anita Pelletier, both associates in the Rochester office, are helping organize events for the women's affinity group in Rochester. The first event, a cocktail party, provided the group's participants with an opportunity to get to know each other in a relaxed, social setting. The group also has lunch together every third Friday of the month, Marisa says. "We're just getting started, so we are offering a casual, informal opportunity to meet," she says.

The Rochester office also participated, via telephone, in the "Speak like a CEO" event organized by the New York City office.

## Liz Moore tapped to speak at ABA Annual Meeting in Hawaii

Liz Moore, a partner in Nixon Peabody's New York City office, was off to Hawaii the beginning of August to speak at the 2006 ABA Annual Meeting. Her August 7 presentation focused on Nixon Peabody's diversity initiative, including the creation of affinity groups and diversity training and assessment.

Liz, who speaks regularly on diversity issues, was asked to speak at the annual meeting after she gave presentations to smaller ABA groups in San Diego and San Francisco. "I'm describing the firm's practices, which others have deemed to be best practices and state-of-the-art initiatives. It's a testament to the firm's commitment to diversity," Liz says.

The ABA meets annually in different cities to share ideas and goals for the legal profession.

# William McKnight scholarship winner spends summer at Nixon Peabody

Lamar Crawford has yet to cross a law school's doorstep, but he didn't let that stop him from spending the summer as a Nixon Peabody employee. Lamar started June 5 in the firm's information technology department in the Rochester office. His last day was August 25, when he returned to Cornell for his sophomore year.

Lamar is majoring in industrial and labor relations at Cornell and he would like to attend law school upon graduation. "I definitely enjoyed working at Nixon Peabody. The people are friendly and helpful, and I enjoyed what I did," says Lamar, whose duties included switching out older computers, helping hook up peripherals and assisting with data management.



Lamar Crawford

Lamar also appreciated the opportunity to gain an insider's view of the law firm. "It was a good learning experience because I was able to see a lot that I wouldn't necessarily have been able to see otherwise. My experiences definitely strengthen my desire to go to law school," he says.

Lamar is the 2005 winner of the William McKnight Scholarship Fund. The fund awards an African-American student an annual scholarship, which is presented at the Urban League's Salute to Black Scholars dinner. Recipients receive a \$2,000 scholarship, which is renewable each of their four years of college.

In addition to his scholarship, Lamar took the initiative to network with his new contacts at Nixon Peabody when he was looking for a summer job. Lamar first approached John Witmeyer, whom he met through the scholarship award. John directed him to Bill Simpson, who did have an opening that fit Lamar's skill set.

Lamar graduated from Webster Thomas High School in Monroe County before attending Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Bill McKnight also attended Cornell, graduating from the university's law school after completing his undergraduate studies at Merrimack College.

# Spencer Phillips works with deaf community

*Rochester associate calls 'awareness' biggest barrier*

When a Slip 'N Slide accident left Spencer Phillips deaf at seven years old, he suddenly faced a whole new set of challenges. Today, he works to help others who are deaf overcome their challenges.

Spencer recently joined Nixon Peabody's Rochester office as an associate in the Labor and Employment group, after finishing a Hanna S. Cohn Equal Justice Fellowship at the Empire Justice Center in Rochester. Spencer began his fellowship at the Empire Justice Center immediately after completing his law degree in 2003 at Brigham Young University in Utah.



Spencer Phillips

The two-year fellowship allowed Spencer to focus on providing legal assistance to the deaf and hard-of-hearing in the Rochester area. "The fellowship was open ended. I didn't do any criminal or family law, but I did just about everything else, including lots of training and presentations to doctor's offices and bar associations," he says. Spencer also taught a civil rights course as an adjunct faculty member at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and he has served on boards and committees for a variety of organizations for the disabled and hard-of-hearing, including Advocacy Services for Abused Deaf Victims.

"One major barrier is the communication gap," he says. Most of the hearing disabled use American Sign Language, which is not uniform, as many people believe. Even with sign language skills, however, members

of the deaf community often cannot reach out to private attorneys or doctors because many professional offices are unfamiliar with the idiosyncrasies of TTY phones, which emit beeps that can be mistaken for a standard telemarketing call. Professionals often misunderstand lip reading, as well. For instance, many doctors believe they can communicate with their deaf patients by writing back and forth or through lip reading, but lip reading is an inexact art that is not at all suitable for delivering important information. "Less than 30% of sounds are visible from the shape of the mouth .... Most deaf people would need an interpreter to understand complicated questions from an attorney or doctor," Spencer says.

One of Spencer's most noteworthy accomplishments is working, in conjunction with Nixon Peabody partner Jill Schultz, as president of the Monroe County Bar Association, to establish the DEAFund. The fund provides money for an interpreter for deaf and hard-of-hearing clients seeking assistance from a private attorney. "A solo practitioner can be hesitant to invite a deaf client in for an interview because they would have to pay an interpreter, which can cost \$100 to \$200 an hour for a two-hour minimum. We set up the fund so private attorneys can call the bar association

and get an interpreter,” Spencer explains. The fund pays for the entire cost of the first visit and half of the cost for some subsequent visits. “The fund was the first of its kind, but word has spread around the country and other bar associations are setting up their own funds,” he says.

The growth of the DEAFund concept fits well with Spencer’s desire to increase awareness of the communication obstacles faced by the deaf community. He has given numerous presentations, including some that demonstrate how TTY phones work and some that help those with normal hearing understand the difficulty of reading lips. In one bar association example, he has local judges use familiar phrases on a video. Then he turns off the volume, so those in attendance must try to figure out what the judges are saying based solely on lip reading.

Spencer, who uses a strong hearing aid in his right ear to help him hear, learned about Nixon Peabody through his work in the Rochester community, where the firm has an established presence as an excellent law firm that is actively involved in community issues. The ability to practice labor and employment law while also remaining committed to volunteer efforts was appealing to Spencer, who contributes greatly to the deaf community because of his special circumstances.

Since Spencer was seven when his accident occurred, he could already speak. This gives him the opportunity to play an intermediary role between members of the deaf community and various professionals, such as doctors and lawyers. “It’s a unique situation, sort of as a facilitator between the two communities to help them communicate more effectively,” he says.

## Asian affinity group kicks off

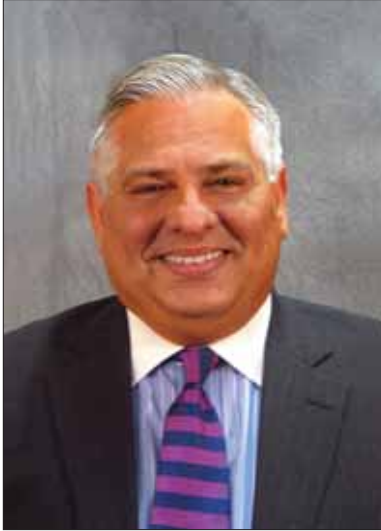
Grace Wu and Les Machado, co-chairs for the Asian affinity group, are in the start-up phase. Grace and Les, both in the Washington, D.C. office, held their first meeting, via teleconference, in early September. First on the agenda is a mentoring program for the fall associates. The group also plans to become involved in various Asian-American attorney events and build their networking efforts.

## Laz Mur to become Hispanic CREO board member

### *Congratulations on this prestigious appointment*

Congratulations to Laz Mur, Nixon Peabody’s newest attorney in the firm’s Palm Beach office. Laz was asked to join the board of the Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Options (CREO). The group is the nation’s largest Hispanic single-issue organization. “It receives all of its funding from private foundations, and the founders of Wal-Mart are one of its strongest supporters,” Laz says. The Gates Foundation and several other significant foundations are also major contributors.

Hispanic CREO's goal is to support educational opportunities for Hispanic children. "We believe that all children are entitled to education no matter their legal status. A quality K-12 education is a legal and fundamental right of every child in this country. It is for that reason Hispanic CREO serves and empowers all parents of children in the K-12 system," according to the organization's Web site.



Laz Mur

Laz was asked to join the group by Julio Fuentes, president and CEO of the Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Laz is a current member of the board of trustees for that organization and has long been active with the group.

His appointment to the Hispanic CREO board is an honor that will help Laz continue to develop his contacts within the Hispanic business community. "Because of the size and significance of the organization, I will be in direct contact with the chairman for each and every major Hispanic or Hispanic-controlled or influenced organization in the nation, such as Coca-Cola," Laz explains.

Laz began working at Nixon Peabody on June 19. He is a retired certified public accountant and a practicing international tax attorney with emphasis on asset protection strategies.