

Diversity

2024 Diversity in Law Scholarship & Paid 1L summer clerkship application

Our Commitment Zelle serves global and increasingly diverse clients, who gain from the varied perspectives, creativity, innovation and energy created by a diverse and inclusive workforce. The firm is committed to maintaining an environment in which its lawyers and staff are valued for their unique backgrounds, personal characteristics, and thinking and working styles. We are committed to achieving diversity through recruiting, nurturing trust and open discussions that promote inclusiveness, and experimenting with ways to enable our attorneys to achieve work/life balance while fully contributing to serving our clients. Zelle's Diversity Committee includes attorneys from each of the firm's offices. The Committee strives to provide top-level accountability for the results of the firm's diversity efforts. Kristin Suga Heres, a Partner in the Firm's Boston office, leads the Committee as the firm's Diversity Coordinator. The Committee has implemented many important and creative programs, and adopted a broad and flexible alternative work policy.

Awareness Breeds Action

We recognize that nurturing a culture of diversity in our firm is more than policy statements and written goals. It requires continuous effort, focus and action to build awareness of the value that diversity brings to our firm and our clients.

Zelle has been a strong supporter of the Minority Corporate Counsel Association and has given generous donations to its scholarship program, which helps law students meet financial needs and exposes them to a group of leaders in the profession who can help to mentor and guide their early entry into the profession. In addition, Zelle has made a substantial financial commitment to pipeline programs and affinity bars. The firm's *cy pres* awards will benefit the Urban League and United Negro College Fund.

The firm encourages its attorneys to participate in community events and locally and nationally based professional organizations. Our partners and associates are active in the Chinese Bar Association, Dallas Women's Lawyers Association, Minnesota Women Lawyers, Women in Law

Empowerment Forum, China International Economic Law Society, Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Women Antitrust Plaintiffs' Attorneys, South Asian Bar Association, Minnesota State Bar Association's Diversity Committee, Federal Bar Association Minnesota Chapter's Diversity Committee, Twin Cities Diversity in Practice, Minnesota Lavender Bar Association, LGBT Litigator Committee of the ABA Section of Litigation, and ABA-TIPS Diversity Section.

Zelle also works with its clients to encourage diversity when practical. As an example, the firm successfully petitioned a San Francisco Superior Court administering a class action antitrust settlement to authorize the distribution of \$40 million to more than 100 non-profit organizations in California, including the California Women's Law Center, Asian Law Caucus, Inc., and several California-based United Way organizations. This distribution was part of a \$96 million settlement that was approved by the state court in San Francisco, California in 2008, and became final earlier this year.

Zelle's Diversity Outreach Plan

Zelle has a Diversity Outreach Plan to guide the firm's participation in diversity scholarship, pipeline and affinity group initiatives and programs. Each element of this plan is intended either to encourage and facilitate diverse students in choosing law as a profession or to support and recognize the contributions and interests of the diverse professionals among us. This plan testifies to the firm's meaningful, ongoing support of efforts to increase diversity in the practice of law.

Supporting Other Diverse Businesses

Consistent with our Diversity Commitment, the firm is active in identifying and expanding opportunities for businesses owned by minorities. The firm maintains a list of highly qualified minority owned and operated vendors (consultants, accountants, court reporters, etc.) to utilize on its cases.

If you have additional questions related to Zelle's diversity efforts, please feel free to contact our Diversity Coordinator, Kristin Suga Heres at kheres@zellelaw.com.