

2023

Awards

- Recipient of Dr. Martin Luther King Distinguished Service Award from USC School of Law.

2022

Awards

- Cal Watson received the 2022 Project Award for his work on the International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC) Diversity Roadmap.

Publications & Presentations

- Ashley Lamb attended Building OneSouthCarolina Forum hosted by The Riley Institute
- Ashley Lamb attended the Diversity Pipeline Summit, an event focused on increasing the diversity of the legal profession in South Carolina, co-sponsored by the South Carolina Bar, Charleston School of Law, and the University of South Carolina School of Law.

Community Events & Sponsorships

- Columbia City of Women

Training

- Ashley Lamb completed The Riley Institute

2021

Publications & Presentations

- Ashley Lamb attended the inaugural Diversity Pipeline Summit, an event focused on increasing the diversity of the legal profession in South Carolina, co-sponsored by the South Carolina Bar, Charleston School of Law, and the University of South Carolina School of Law.
- Beth Richardson served as a panelist on Thomas Reuters' virtual Diversity and Inclusion Roundtable entitled "Build a Culture of Inclusion to Retain High Potential Diverse Talent at Midsize Law Firms" that examined steps midsize law firms can take to create a culture of inclusion and increase representation of executives from underrepresented groups
- La'Jessica Stringfellow moderated the fourth installment of the South Carolina Bar Virtual Fireside Chat Series: Beyond the Robe with retired Circuit Court Judge Richard E. Fields and Judge Deadra L. Jefferson.

Community Events & Sponsorships

- Gently used clothing drive for UofSC School of Law students
- Columbia City of Women

Firm Policies

- Family Leave Policy Updated
- Employee Handbooks updated (exempt and non-exempt)
- Vision & Mission Statements approved, emailed to firm and added to website
 - Vision: From its inception, Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte has embraced diversity, inclusion, and equity in the legal workplace. Two of its founding female partners, Becky Laffitte and Betsy Gray, have been a vital part of the firm's name and operations for over two decades. Robinson Gray, with the assistance of the You2 Team and our clients, will build upon its history as a barrier breaking and inclusive law firm by creating and sustaining a workplace as a professional law firm where diverse people work, grow, and outwardly engage one another with respect, responsibility and understanding.
 - Mission: Robinson Gray stands committed to creating a workplace and contributing to a profession that exemplifies diversity, inclusiveness, and equity with respect to unique attributes of personhood—including, but not limited to, race, religion, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and disability—and will manifest this commitment in its philosophy, policies, and practices. We share this commitment with our clients and undertake this responsibility with them. A diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace and legal community are essential to providing exceptional client services, promoting excellence in and enthusiasm for the legal profession among our attorneys and staff, and encouraging civility and trust in the administration of justice among the Bar, community and public.

DE&I Committee & Organizations

- La'Jessica Stringfellow- South Carolina Access to Justice Commission
- Kelly Morrow - graduate of Furman University's Women's Leadership Institute

Training

- Implicit Bias training for attorneys and staff facilitated by two members of the South Carolina Bar's Diversity Committee

Awards

- La'Jessica Stringfellow chosen as a SC Lawyers' Weekly 2021 Leadership in Law award recipient, in part for her DE&I work in the community throughout 2020. This included helping to plan a 'Lawyers Standing Against Racial Injustice' protest (June 2020) as well as a virtual video series featuring distinguished and diverse members of the South Carolina judiciary throughout the fall and winter.

2020

Training

- Virtual Town Hall facilitated by Dr. Nika White - attorneys and staff to shared perspectives and asked questions related to racial injustice and the Black Lives Matter movement
- DE&I Leadership training with Dr. Nika White

- Strategic Planning Facilitation with Dr. Nika White
- Members of the You2 team met for a half-day training session.

Publications & Presentations

- La'Jessica Stringfellow moderated the South Carolina Bar's Virtual Fireside Chat "Beyond the Robe" with Judge Margaret Seymour, Judge Michelle Childs, and Judge Sherri Lydon of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina
- Jasmine Smith presented on a panel at the ABA Business Law Section Annual Meeting. The program was selected as Showcase program. It was entitled "Anti-Racist Speech and Action: Where Does the Legal Profession and Amended Model Rule 8.4(g) Go from Here?"
- Jasmine Smith presented on a panel at the ABA LLC Institute entitled "New Ethical Developments in the Practice of Transitional Law: Diversity and the Duty to Inquire"
- La'Jessica Stringfellow summarized the State v. Spears South Carolina Supreme Court opinion and analyzes the "reasonable person" standard.
- Beth Richardson Janie Langdale co-authored "Two Law Firms Paving the Way in South Carolina and Beyond" in the July/August 2020 issue of The Federal Lawyer, The Magazine of the Federal Bar Association.

Community Events & Sponsorships

- Columbia City of Women sponsor
- Adopt-a-Family project

Anti-Racism Statement

"As we mourn the tragedy of George Floyd and the systemic racism of the last four hundred years, Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte believes there are no excuses for silence and denial. As such, we want to make clear to our colleagues, clients, and friends:

We reject racism in any form.

We will continue to educate ourselves and will act individually and collectively on the issues of structural and systematic racism.

We stand in solidarity with the Black community and actively seek a just, equitable, and inclusive society, justice system, legal profession, and workplace."

Awards

- Jasmine Smith named to SC Top 40 Under 40 list by National Black Lawyers

- Ashley Lamb attended the Greenville Chamber of Commerce Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit "Amplify the I, Inclusion Starts from Within"

Pro Bono Work

- Free Legal Answers Blitz - Sam, Rachel and Sheri hosted with the law clerks on July 29
- Wills Clinic – Molly and La’Jessica participated in the Greenville Bar’s clinic for teachers

Mission and Vision Statements Written

- Vision: From its inception, Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte has embraced diversity, inclusion, and equity in the legal workplace. Two of its founding female partners, Becky Laffitte and Betsy Gray, have been a vital part of the firm’s name and operations for over two decades. Robinson Gray, with the assistance of the You2 Team and our clients, will build upon its history as a barrier breaking and inclusive law firm by creating and sustaining a workplace as a professional law firm where diverse people work, grow, and outwardly engage one another with respect, responsibility and understanding.
- Mission: Robinson Gray stands committed to creating a workplace and contributing to a profession that exemplifies diversity, inclusiveness, and equity with respect to unique attributes of personhood—including, but not limited to, race, religion, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and disability—and will manifest this commitment in its philosophy, policies, and practices. We share this commitment with our clients and undertake this responsibility with them. A diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace and legal community are essential to providing exceptional client services, promoting excellence in and enthusiasm for the legal profession among our attorneys and staff, and encouraging civility and trust in the administration of justice among the Bar, community and public.

DE&I Committees & Organizations

- Cal Watson
 - Member, Diversity Committee of SC Bar
- Beth Richardson
 - Chair, WREN
 - Chair, Robinson Gray DE&I Committee
 - Committee Member, SC FBA DE&I Committee
- Jasmine Smith
 - Member, Midlands Fall 2020 Class of the Riley Institute’s Diversity Leaders Initiative
 - Board of Directors, Sistercare

- Board of Directors, SCWLA
- Member, Midlands Fall 2020 Class of the Riley Institute's Diversity Leaders Initiative
- Board of Directors, Sistercare
- Board of Directors, SCWLA
- Kelly Morrow
 - Member, Diversity Committee of SC Bar

2019

- Hired DE&I Expert Consultant Dr. Nika White
- Completed our firm assessment and received results.

Awards

- Beth Richardson received the Diversity & Inclusion Award from SC Lawyers Weekly.

Publications & Presentations

- Cal Watson participated in the SC Bar Diversity Committee's panel discussion on implicit bias at the SC Judicial Conference's Staff Attorney and Law Clerk Seminar.
- La'Jessica Stringfellow published an article on Jonathan Jasper Wright for the SCDTAA

DE&I Committees and Organizations

- Beth Richardson
 - Board Member, WREN
 - Chair, RGSL DE&I Committee
 - Member, Midlands Spring 2019 Class of the Riley Institute's Diversity Leaders Initiative
- Cal Watson
 - Member, Diversity Committee of SC Bar
- Jasmine Smith
 - Board of Directors, Sistercare
 - Board of Directors, SCWLA

Community Involvement and Sponsorships

- Columbia City of Women event
- Friend-Raiser at the Modjeska Monteith Simkins House in Columbia

2017-2018

- Formation of Committee in Fall of 2017, members include both Attorneys and Staff
 - Angela Bernardo—Legal Support;

- Ashley Lamb – Manager of HR Programs and D&I Committee Coordinator;
- Beth Richardson—Chair of D&I Committee and Partner on Business Litigation Team;
- Cal Watson—Managing Partner and on Business Litigation Team;
- Christine Skalamera—Legal Assistant;
- Grady Beard—Partner on Workers’ Compensation Team;
- Jasmine Smith—Associate on Business Litigation Team;
- Kevin Garrison—Partner on Commercial Transaction Team;
- Megan Cody—Billing Support;
- Paul Hoefer—Of Counsel on Commercial Transaction Team;
- Robin Carroll—Director of Administration;
- Presentation to Attorneys at Firm Retreat: Jackie Cranston, Founder and principal of Cranford Advisory Services, LLC – “What is Diversity and Inclusion and Why is it Important to our Workplace”
- Meetings held to discuss reasonable steps/accomplishments in 2018 and future goals– meetings held on 11/2/2017, 3/15/2018, 4/27/2018, and 10/23/18
- Identified External D&I Organizations
 - Attorneys currently involved in positions of professional leadership, training, education or volunteerism related to D&I
 - South Carolina Bar Diversity Committee
 - South Carolina Bar Diversity Committee, Partnership Subcommittee
 - Commercial Real Estate Women (Molly Campolong)
 - South Carolina Women Lawyers Association (Molly Campolong, Betsy Gray, Rachel Hutchens, Becky Laffitte, Beth Richardson, and Jasmine Smith)
 - South Carolina Bar Color of Justice Committee (Jasmine Smith)
 - Women’s Rights and Empowerment Network (Beth Richardson)
 - South Carolina Black Lawyers Association (Jasmine Smith)
 - Organizations around the D&I movement that the firm and its employees may want to be associated
 - Minority Corporate Council of America (Jasmine Smith)
 - Riley Institute for Diversity (Beth Richardson)
 - Leadership Council on Legal Diversity
- Presentation to Staff: Susan Kuo, Dean of Diversity and Inclusion at University of South Carolina South Carolina School of Law – “What is Diversity and Inclusion and Why is it important to the Workplace”; contribution made in her name.
- Paul Hoefer and Beth Richardson attended the South Carolina Bar Diversity and Inclusion CLE
- Implementation of the D&I Five: 3 to 5-minute D&I videos created by the South Carolina Bar presented at each team’s marketing meetings.
- Multiple meetings held with potential D&I consultants/advisors including: Dahlia Meyers, Candace Jackson, Nika White, and Kimberley Snipes

Community Involvement & Sponsorships

- Sponsor of Black Law Student Association at the University of South Carolina School of Law
- Sponsor of South Carolina Women Lawyers Association Annual CLE
- Sponsor of Ruth Bader Ginsburg movie with the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association

Publications and Speaking Engagements

- Article: Interview of Women in the Legal Field: In the October 2018 issue of ABA Law Practice Today, Molly Campolong interviewed Betsy Gray and Becky Laffitte. The article, Making it Rain: Elizabeth Van Doren Gray and Rebecca Laffitte, reviews Betsy and Becky's paths to becoming named partners, defining moments in their legal careers, and their experiences being women in the legal industry.

DE&I Committees & Organizations

- Ashley Lamb named Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator of Firm
- Beth Richardson
 - Board Member, WREN
 - Chair, Robinson Gray DE&I Committee
 - Member, SCWLA
- Molly Campolong
 - Member, Commercial Real Estate Women
 - Member, SCWLA
- Jasmine Smith
 - Member, SC Black Lawyers Association
 - Board of Directors, Sistercare
 - Board of Directors, SCWLA
- Betsy Gray
 - Member, SCWLA
- Becky Laffitte
 - Member, SCWLA
- Rachel Hutchens
 - Member, SCWLA
- Meredith Ann Krzyston
 - Member, SCWLA