



Diversity & Inclusion

Riker Danzig has a long history of commitment to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We are proud of our heritage as a leader in promoting women and people of color, including some who broke traditional leadership barriers within law firms, and others who built on their foundation at Riker to break new ground in the courts and government. While the Firm takes pride in its strong tradition, we recognize that persistent vigilance is required to combat the ongoing and pervasive issues of systemic racial bias and other forms of discrimination in many aspects of our society, including several areas of the justice system.

Therefore, the Firm views its commitment to diversity and inclusion as more than a static process. It is not enough to just recognize discrimination and social injustice; instead the Firm will remain focused on doing its part to help change attitudes and behavior through action, both within its workforce and throughout its involvement in the community and halls of justice. To that end, the Firm continuously strives to improve, steadfast in our belief that we serve our clients best by promoting and incorporating the different viewpoints reflected by diverse attorneys and staff.

We have put into place a variety of programs intended to recruit, retain, and promote attorneys of a variety of backgrounds, including those traditionally underrepresented in the legal industry. We endeavor to create a diverse team of attorneys and staff who enrich each other with unique life experiences, backgrounds and perspectives in ways that reflect our clients and our communities. It is our belief that this environment fosters excellence, and best serves our clients' needs. It is also the right thing to do.

The Firm has an established Diversity Committee that consists of Firm leadership, partners, associates, and professional and administrative staff. The Committee meets regularly to plan and execute the Firm's strategies and initiatives to maintain and improve its diversity and inclusion. The Committee is charged with educating the Firm on diversity issues, supporting and promoting diverse candidates, and representing the Firm at various diversity-related events throughout the year.

In addition, the Firm is committed to celebrating diversity in a manner that does not divide us, but instead, is focused

on celebrating what we have in common despite having some differences.

The Firm's current key initiatives include:

- Targeted and consistent recruiting efforts
- Paid summer internship each year through the Minority Student Program to a IL who is a member of a group that is underrepresented in the legal profession
- Career mentoring and development for diverse attorneys and staff
- Active involvement with community and Bar-based organizations that promote diversity and inclusion
- Promotion of understanding and education about diversity and inclusion issues
- Training attorneys and staff on issues unique to recognizing and eliminating bias and prejudice in the workplace
- Planning Firm activities to promote inclusion among attorneys and staff in social and professional settings

Our female attorneys hold positions of leadership in the Firm, including serving as Co-Chair of Riker Danzig, serving on the Firm's Executive Committee, as practice group chairs, office principal partner, and chairs of firm committees. The Firm also hosts recurring women's forums to discuss the unique concerns of our women attorneys, and offers opportunities for enhancement of their professional development. Riker Danzig's women attorneys are consistently singled out by the legal community for distinctive honors, including *NJBIZ's* "Best 50 Women in Business," *New Jersey Law Journal's* "Top 40 Women Under 40," New Jersey State Bar Association's "Young Lawyer of the Year," "Best Lawyers in America®," Super Lawyer's "Top 50 Women Attorneys in New Jersey," the Garden State Bar Association's "Young Lawyer Award," Super Lawyer's "Rising Stars," and the *Network Journal's* "40 Under Forty Achievement Award."

Recently, Riker Danzig co-sponsored a CLE legal community event which addressed implicit bias in the workplace for corporate counsel, attorneys in private practice and those in the public sector. It was supported by many affinity bar associations, including the Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association of New Jersey (APALA-NJ), Association of Black Women Lawyers-NJ (ABWL-NJ), Garden State Bar Association (GSBA), Hispanic Bar Association - New Jersey (HBA-NJ), Morris County Bar Association (MCBA), New Jersey Muslim Lawyers Association (NJMLA), and the South Asian Bar Association of New Jersey (SABA-NJ).

Riker Danzig attorneys also serve as active members of several affinity bar associations, and some have been recognized for their accomplishments.

Some of the specific recruiting initiatives the Firm is actively involved with include:

- **New Jersey Law Firm Group:** Riker Danzig maintains an active membership in this Group, which

promotes the hiring of minority law school students at the major New Jersey law firms. As part of this effort, we meet regularly to explore new state-wide initiatives that foster diverse hiring. We attend the NJLFG job fair that is held annually at Seton Hall University School of Law or Rutgers University School of Law. We serve as speakers to the New Jersey Law Firm Group and many attorneys regularly serve as mentors to the program.

- **Minority Student Program:** The Minority Student Program (MSP) is a nationally-acclaimed and highly successful post-admissions program that serves students of any race or ethnicity who are members of groups that are underrepresented in the legal profession, and who have faced discrimination or overcome social and economic hardships. The program takes a proactive approach to help students to succeed in law school by offering legal skills development, academic support, alumni mentoring and networking, internships and other opportunities.

Riker Danzig has supported MSP for decades by providing a paid summer internship for a student. The student takes part in all of the activities and programs offered to our other summer associates. Thus, the MSP student experiences the same work (client-related or pro bono), social functions and educational programs as our other summer associates, and is fully integrated into our summer associate program, which is our main recruiting tool. The Firm also supports the MSP annual fundraiser, the Minority Student Program Banquet. A current Riker Danzig counsel who participated in the MSP Program is **Jorge Sanchez**.

Since its establishment in 1968, MSP has supported almost 3,000 students in their pursuit of a career in the law in New Jersey and nation-wide. For more information, please go to <https://law.rutgers.edu/minority-student-program>.

- **Minority Recruitment Efforts:** The Firm participates in the Black Law Students Association job fairs and requests applicant resumes from law schools with historically large minority enrollments.
- Riker Danzig is proud of the following Riker Danzig women and diverse attorneys and alumni who serve(d) on the Bench or in public service, and their achievements as “firsts”:
- **Kelly S. Crawford**, Firm Co-Chair and Chair of our Products Liability, Toxic Tort and Mass Tort Practice, is the **First** female in a Top 20 New Jersey-based law firm with a woman in the senior role.
- **Travis L. Francis, A.J.S.C. (Ret.)**, Riker Danzig Of Counsel from 2017-Present, was the **First** African-American appointed as a Judge to the New Jersey Superior Court, Middlesex County, and was the **First** African-American Assignment Judge and Presiding Judge, General Equity, of that vicinage. Superior Court Assignment Judge 2007-2017; Superior Court Judge 1992-2017.
- **Judge Zahid N. Quraishi**, former Riker Partner who was appointed June 3, 2019 as a U.S. Magistrate

Judge for the District of New Jersey. He is the **First** Asian Pacific American to serve on the federal bench in New Jersey history. Prior to his appointment, Judge Quraishi was the firm's **First** Chief Diversity Officer.

- **Justice Anne M. Patterson**, Riker Danzig Partner from 1992-2011. Associate Justice on the New Jersey Supreme Court, 2011 and reappointed in 2018.
- **Tiffany M. Williams**, Riker Danzig Associate from 2005-2007. Administrative Law Judge, State of New Jersey 2010-2016.
- **Peter C. Harvey**, Riker Danzig Partner from 1990-2002. **First** African-American to serve as New Jersey Attorney General 2003-2006.
- **Susan Scott**, former Riker Danzig Partner. Judge of the New Jersey Superior Court, Morris County 1997-2000.
- **Judge Renee M. Bumb**, Riker Danzig Associate from 1988-1991. United States District Court Judge nominated by President George W. Bush in 2006.
- **Justice Marie Garibaldi**, Riker Danzig Partner from 1973-1982. **First** female Partner in a major New Jersey law firm, **First** female New Jersey State Bar President 1982-1983, **First** female Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, appointed by Thomas Kean 1982-2000.

Riker Danzig attorneys and alumni hold leadership positions and have been honored within diverse bar associations:

- *New Jersey Law Journal*, "Diverse Attorney of the Year," Travis L. Francis, A.J.S.C. (Ret.), 2019
- Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association of New Jersey (APALA-NJ), Award for Professional Achievement, Zahid N. Quraishi, 2019
- Garden State Bar Association, Young Lawyer of the Year 2018 and Executive Board Member, Natalya Johnson
- National Bar Association, "40 Under 40 Nation's Best Advocate," Natalya Johnson, 2019
- Armenian Bar Association, Member of Board of Governors, Partner Scott A. Ohnegian
- Garden State Bar Association, President, Dara Aquila Govan, Riker Danzig Alumni
- Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association of New Jersey (APALA-NJ), President, Jenny Chung, Riker Danzig Alumni
- Hispanic Bar Association-NJ, President, Julia Lopez, Riker Danzig Alumni
- *New Jersey Law Journal*, "Diverse Attorney of the Year," Firm Co-Chair Kelly Strange Crawford, 2015

Riker Danzig was proud to support the following recent events that promote and support diversity within our community:

- Armenian Bar Association – "20 Under 40 Rising Stars" Banquet and the Annual Public Servants Dinner
- Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association of New Jersey Gala (APALA-NJ)

- Association of Black Law Students, Rutgers University School of Law 28th Annual Jazz for Justice
- Association of Black Women Lawyers-NJ (ABWL-NJ)
- Association of Black Women Attorneys-NY Ruth Whitehead Whaley Scholarship Awards (ABWA)
- Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce Golf Classic
- Executive Women of New Jersey
- Garden State Bar Association 44th Anniversary Scholarship and Awards Gala (GSBA)
- Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey – 38th Annual Scholarship Gala (HBA-NJ)
- Jewish Law Symposium
- Jewish Lawyers Guild
- Morris County Bar Association (MCBA)
- National Bar Association's "40 Under 40" Awards Gala
- New Jersey Muslim Lawyers Association Gala (NJMLA)
- New Jersey State Bar Association – Black History Month Program
- New Jersey Women Lawyers Association 12th Annual WILL Platinum Gala (NJWLA)
- NJWLA Intersectionality, Bias and the Practice of Law Program
- NJWLA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; A Fresh Perspective
- Princeton University Diversity Summit
- Regent Atlantic Capital Wall Street Women's Forum
- Riker Danzig Women in Leadership Receptions
- Rutgers Minority Student Program (MSP) 50th Anniversary Celebration
- Seton Hall Law School's 10th Annual Diversity Banquet
- South Asian Bar Association of New Jersey – 6th Annual Gala (SABA-NJ)
- Thurgood Marshall College Fund – 18th and 19th Annual New Jersey Awards of Excellence
- Women Entrepreneurship Week Conference, Montclair State University
- Women's Political Caucus Awards Reception

2021 Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Chair: **Lance J. Kalik** (Executive Committee Member)

Members:

Maha M. Kabbash, Partner

Khaled J. Klele, Partner

Francis L. Travis, A.J.S.C. (Ret.), Of Counsel

Timothy P. Carr, Director of Administration and Chief Financial Officer

Richelle J. Delavan

, Director of Practice Development

[Alison M. Feldman Walsh](#), Director of Human Resources

[Jennifer Gonzales-Frisbie](#), Director of Business Development

[Ronald Z. Ahrens](#), Counsel

[Kenneth Dzikowski](#), Associate

[Jorge A. Sanchez](#), Counsel, former Summer Associate and MSP Student

[Pauline M. Tarife](#), Associate, former Summer Associate

Alicia Longmore, Budget and Strategic Planning Analyst

Riker Danzig Celebrates Black History Month

Riker Danzig's Diversity Committee distributed daily emails throughout February 2021 in celebration of Black History Month, providing interesting stories and details of African-American culture and history, extending to important inventions, sports, social life, religion, art and more. We invite you to enjoy some of this fascinating content at the following links:

[The History of Black History Month](#)

[The Pullman Porters](#)

[Historically Black Colleges and Universities \(HBCUs\)](#)

[African American Greeks](#)

[What's Inside the Green Book?](#)

[The Tulsa Race Massacre \("Black Wall Street"\)](#)

[The African American Press](#)

[The Power of "Place" About Martha's Vineyard](#)

[The African American Church](#)

[The Harlem Renaissance](#)

[The National Museum of African-American History and Culture \(N.M.A.A.H.C.\)](#)

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