



Winter 2014

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### MESSAGE FROM JOHN KANE, DIVERSITY PARTNER

The Diversity Committee is off and running and looking forward to a productive and impactful 2014! We had our first meeting of the year in January and started identifying our goals for 2014. High on our list is to revise the firm's Diversity Action Plan as well as to continue our focus on promoting diversity at the firm and fostering a welcoming and inclusive work environment for all. We encourage you to visit the Diversity Committee's new SharePoint page, accessible from your Intranet home page under the Committees tab, where we share events, news, pictures, and other diversity-focused items of interest. The committee has also started planning our events for this year. We hope that everyone will be able to take part in our firmwide Pot Luck Lunch on February 10. This is a chance to interact with our fellow co-workers and get a taste of different cuisines from the various cultures represented at Robinson & Cole. Another event that we will be sponsoring again this year is our Summer of Service volunteer program. We are hoping to add additional volunteer opportunities to the list. If you know of a local nonprofit that could benefit from this program, please contact Marnie J. Rubin.



As spring approaches, many of the affinity bar associations and other organizations that promote diversity in the legal profession will be holding their annual dinners and other events. Please be on the lookout for invitations and make every effort to attend. Our support is critical to the important work of these organizations and our own diversity efforts at the firm. Additionally, these events are extremely helpful to the firm's recruiting efforts and provide excellent client networking opportunities. As always, if you have feedback about our programs and initiatives, please feel free to contact me or any other member of the committee. I look forward to our continued work in 2014, and I hope to see

you at one of our events!

### **JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT DAY**

The firm held its ninth Junior Achievement/Robinson & Cole Day on November 15, 2013, with 20 lawyers and staff participating in the program at Parkville Community School. Program participants taught over 200 students in 10 classrooms, ranging from kindergarten through second grade, using a JA-developed curriculum focused on developing financial literacy and good life skills.

Volunteers Lorraine Andexler, Madeleine Adam-Kearns, Frances Ciotto, Diana D'Angelo, Alaine C. Doolan, Marilyn Guimond, Nancy Marcove, and Linda L. Morkan engaged four different classes of kindergarteners with compelling stories, along with hands-on activities, to demonstrate the concepts of helping, working, earning, and saving.

First grade volunteers Margaret DeLeo, Tammie Marchant, Susan Masters, Elvira Ortiz, Todd R. Regan, and Molly Stephanou instructed three classrooms on the role people play in the local economy, involving the students with activities about needs, wants, jobs, tools and skills, and interdependence.

Gabriela Arias, Matt Grettler, Catrina Cartagena Kohn, Marnie J. Rubin, Jonathan H. Schaefer, and Lisa Vooy's taught three second grade classes about our community, exploring the interdependent roles of workers in a community, the work they perform, and how communities work.

### **ABILITY MENTORING DAY**

Robinson & Cole participated in Ability Mentoring Day on October 28, 2013. Connect-Ability, an organization dedicated to removing the barriers to employment for people with disabilities in Connecticut, sponsored the statewide program that paired participating organizations with special education classes at local high schools for the day. Robinson & Cole's Diversity Committee welcomed high school students from Hartford's Law and Government Academy for a program in the firm's Hartford office.

The students attended a session on interview tips, took a tour of the office, viewed a firm history video, and heard from a panel of Robinson & Cole lawyers and staff about their jobs at the firm and their career paths generally.

### **TOY COLLECTION FOR THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF HARTFORD**

Once again, the lawyers and staff of Robinson & Cole made a difference to more than 100 children living in the northwest section of Hartford over the holidays by collecting toys for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford. For 10 years, Lisa M. Boyle, co-chair of the firm's Health Law Practice Group, has organized the toy drive at the firm.

### **MARTIN ONORATO MODERATES DIVERSITY PROGRAM**

Construction lawyer Martin A. Onorato moderated a program on diversity in the construction industry for the Connecticut Building Congress on November 12, 2013. The program featured Commissioner Donald DeFronzo of the Department of Administrative Services, who discussed the State of Connecticut's policies in support of greater opportunities for minority-owned businesses in the construction industry. The speakers also included representatives of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering, which recently concluded a Phase 1 Disparity Study focusing on the set-aside programs currently in use on public works projects in Connecticut. Mr. Onorato and other speakers emphasized the importance of diversity, the evolving workforce demographics, and the need for a collective focus on practices that remove obstacles to achieving diversity.

### **STAMFORD LAWYER COMMITTED TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Real estate lawyer Kevin C. George attended a ceremony to mark the midpoint in construction of Gini's House in Norwalk, Connecticut, on October 7, 2013. Scheduled for completion in June 2014,

Gini's House will provide supportive housing for women and their children and treatment for women who are homeless or need help with substance abuse or mental health issues. On-site support services will include educational classes, job training, and employment counseling. Also touring the site were Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Norwalk Mayor Richard A. Moccia, as well as officers from Enterprise Community Investment and United Healthcare, investors in the project.

New Neighborhoods Inc. (NNI), a nonprofit housing developer and manager, oversees the construction site of Gini's House on behalf of Liberation Programs. Committed to improving the quality of life in Fairfield County, NNI works to provide housing that promotes economic stability, creates ownership opportunities, and serves as a catalyst for strengthening neighborhoods. Mr. George is on the Board of Directors of NNI.

### **ACHIEVE HARTFORD! HOLDS ANNUAL SPELLING BEE**

Achieve Hartford! held its Seventh Annual Community Spelling Bee at the Theatre of the Performing Arts on the campus of Trinity College in Hartford on October 4, 2013. Middle and high school students, in teams of three, competed in a friendly competition to spell increasingly difficult words. The Community Spelling Bee provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity for the Hartford community to celebrate and support the need for high-quality public education for all Hartford students. Proceeds raised from the Spelling Bee help support Achieve Hartford!'s college and career readiness research and community engagement strategies.

Connecticut native Javier Colón, 2011 winner of The Voice, emceed this year's Spelling Bee. Products liability lawyer Eric D. Daniels, who chairs the board of Achieve Hartford!, delivered the evening's closing remarks.

### **JONA KIM SWORN IN AS CAPABA'S SECRETARY**

Jona Kim, business litigation lawyer in Stamford, was sworn in as the secretary of the Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA) at its 13th Annual Dinner in New Haven, Connecticut, on October 29, 2013. An affiliate of the national organization (NAPABA), CAPABA is a network of Asian Pacific American lawyers in Connecticut advocating for its members by promoting activities that coordinate legal services to Asian Pacific American communities within the state, broaden their professional experience, and support their advancement within the legal profession.

### **SCOTUS – A DISCUSSION SERIES**

Robinson & Cole's Diversity Committee welcomed to the firm Professor Hugh C. Macgill on December 13, 2013. Professor Macgill led a discussion focused on two recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions. In June 2013, the Supreme Court issued decisions in *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, a challenge to California's Proposition 8 measure, and *U.S. v. Windsor*, which considered the constitutionality of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). These cases had, and continue to have, a significant impact on the issue of government treatment of same-sex marriage in the United States. Lawyers and staff attended Professor Macgill's program, which included a discussion of the cases, their history, and their effect on state and federal laws going forward.

### **DIVERSITY EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY**

The **Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association** hosted its annual dinner on October 29, 2013, in New Haven, Connecticut. Among those in attendance from the firm were Jona Kim, Richard Martinez, Joey Lee Miranda, and Marnie J. Rubin. Robinson & Cole sponsored the event.

Real estate lawyers Matthew J. Lawlor and Carla M. Moynihan represented Robinson & Cole's Real Estate Group at the **Citizens' Housing and Planning Association's** (CHAPA) Annual Dinner on October 29, 2013. The firm sponsored the event. Before a packed house of over one thousand attendees at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center in South Boston, keynote speaker Professor John McDonough, from the Harvard School of Public Health, talked about opportunities in merging housing, health, and health reform. A nonprofit umbrella organization for affordable housing and community development activities in Massachusetts, CHAPA is the only statewide group that

represents all aspects of the housing field, including nonprofit and for-profit developers, municipal officials, local housing providers and advocates, lenders, property managers, architects, consultants, homeowners, tenants, local planners, foundations, and government officials. Its mission is "to encourage the production and preservation of housing that is affordable to low and moderate income families and individuals and to foster diverse and sustainable communities through planning and community development."

Connecticut Supreme Court Justice Andrew McDonald spoke at the **LGBT Section of the Connecticut Bar Association's** program on November 13, 2013, at Max Downtown in Hartford. Kristopher I. Moore and Elizabeth W. Kaloyanides attended from the firm.

The **Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association** held its annual dinner on November 14, 2013, at Saint Clements Castle in Portland, Connecticut. The firm sponsored the event and Kristen M. Bandura, Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson, Catrina Cartagena Kohn, Marnie J. Rubin, and summer associates Sandra Marin, Kelly Frye, and Christie Jean attended the event along with client guests from United Technologies Company.

The **South Asian Bar Association of Connecticut** hosted its annual awards dinner on December 5, 2013, at the Hilton Hotel in Hartford. Among those in attendance from the firm were John B. Lynch Jr., Joey Lee Miranda, Kristopher I. Moore, Evan J. Seeman, Brian T. Smith, Marnie J. Rubin and her mentee from the Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity, and summer associates Sandra Marin, Kelly Frye, and Christie Jean. Robinson & Cole sponsored the event.

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#### **DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Patrick M. Birney | Antionette D. Bishop | Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson

Amanda S. Eckhoff | John H. Kane, Chair | Peter V. Lacouture | John B. Lynch Jr.

Richard Martinez II | Virginia McGarrity | Kristopher I. Moore | Keisha S. Palmer

Marnie J. Rubin | Edward J. Samorajczyk Jr. | Evan J. Seeman | Howard K. Shafer

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