

WINTER 2026

DIVERSITY MATTERS NEWSLETTER



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DIVERSITY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

EDITORS' NOTE - REFLECTING ON OUR BACKGROUNDS AND EXPERIENCES THAT MAKE US WHO WE ARE

By: Ruby Delarosa and Felicia Romain

**"No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive." -
Mahatma Gandhi**



Ruby Delarosa



Felicia Romain

Winter is a time to slow down and reflect. For this edition of our *Diversity Matters* Newsletter, we have brought together articles that explore the many backgrounds and experiences that shape who we are, as individuals and as a firm.

This issue of WG's *Diversity Matters* Newsletter highlights perspectives across culture, age, and race, amongst others. This issue considers how those experiences influence the way we work, connect with one another, and serve our clients. Each piece offers a reminder that diversity is not only about representation, but about understanding, respecting, and learning from one other.

We hope this edition sparks conversations and reflection and encourages you all to continue thinking thoughtfully about inclusion, both in our professional and personal lives. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of our newsletter, and to our readers for engaging with the important work that is 'DEI.'

Thank you,
Your Co-Editors,

Ruby Delarosa and Felicia Romain

We want to hear from you! If you have ideas for future DEI programs or know someone who would be a great speaker, please reach out to **Carolyn Mirabile** or **Gabi Outlaw** and let us know.



DIVERSITY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

How My Identity Shapes My Advocacy and Approach to Law

When I first entered the legal profession, I used to think the best path to success was to blend in, stay quiet, work hard, and avoid drawing too much attention to myself. I thought that if I kept my head down and operated under the radar, I could prove that I could think, write, and advocate just as well as anyone else in the room.

But with time and experience, I learned that my power did not come from conformity. It came from the lens I carry as a Black woman navigating a system I came to understand both from within the courtroom and through lived experience. That lens have become central to the lawyer I am today.

Throughout my career, I realized that my experience as a Black woman is both unique and deeply relatable to many individuals who are a part of the judicial system, including judges on the bench, opposing counsel, and the clients I work with every day. Law school taught me how to think like a lawyer, but my identity taught me how to bring depth, empathy, and personability to my advocacy.

As an attorney in the General Liability group in our New York City office, I interact with many clients who are minority business owners. I see firsthand the distrust some of them carry, sometimes even toward their own attorney (me). In these moments, my lived experience becomes one of my greatest assets. I approach those clients with understanding and transparency, letting them know that I am here to work with them and for them, not against them. I instinctively know when I need to be more communicative, more present, and more intentional about explaining each step of the process.

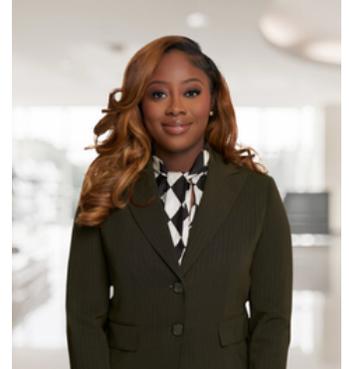
Many minorities, including business owners, have historically had limited trust in the judicial system, often feeling overlooked, unheard, or taken advantage of. Because I understand where that fear comes from, I know how important it is to build trust.

I always aim to be transparent about their case, our defenses, and the strengths and weaknesses of their positions. I communicate with clients clearly, respectfully, and never condescendingly, because I know what it feels like to be dismissed. Clients often open up to me because they sense that I understand the obstacles they face.

Because I know what it feels like to be underestimated or overlooked, I work even harder to make sure my clients never feel that way, regardless of who they are. My instinct to protect, to uplift, and to zealously advocate is something my identity has strengthened.

My identity shapes my advocacy in several ways by ultimately grounding me. It reminds me of the kind of lawyer I strive to be, which is one who leads with insight, compassion, candor, and conviction. If there is one lesson my journey as a Black woman in law has taught me, it is that my identity is not a barrier. It is an advantage, and it is a powerful lens through which I bring my full self to every case, every client, and every courtroom.

Felicia Romain is an Associate in Weber Gallagher's New York City office.



By: Felicia Romain

DIVERSITY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Age Discrimination in the Law: Different Generations, Mutual Advantages



By: Ruby Delarosa

As we continue to make strides in establishing more inclusive and diverse work environments, one often-overlooked area of discrimination remains a critical issue – age discrimination. This form of bias can impact individuals at both ends of the age spectrum: those who are younger, facing assumptions about their inexperience or capability, and those who are older, subjected to stereotypes about being outdated or resistant to change. For companies and firms, it's essential to understand the different aspects of age discrimination, how it impacts individuals and employers, and the importance of adopting age diversity in the workplace.

As workers approach middle age and beyond, they may find themselves subject to assumptions that they are not tech-savvy, unable to adapt to new trends, or simply "too old" for certain roles. At the same time, younger workers may be overlooked for promotions or leadership opportunities based on the perception that they lack experience or maturity, regardless of their qualifications. In today's day and age, age-related discrimination can limit the advancement of both employees and employers.

Age discrimination can also be attached to other forms of workplace imbalance. For example, women, particularly women of color, often face a compounded form of bias in which both gender and age discrimination overlap. Latina professionals, in particular, may struggle with stereotypes that limit their career growth and leadership potential, not just based on their ages, but also due to societal assumptions about their culture and capabilities. It is not news that there is a constant stereotype that surrounds Latina women in professional settings, alleging they can be "hot-headed" and "feisty." As a younger, female lawyer, how I carry myself before other lawyers and the courts is definitely with my keeping in mind how I may be perceived due to my age, race, and sex combined.

In the legal profession, diversity in age is especially important. The practice of law is not just about applying established practices but also about understanding clients' diverse needs and perspectives. Having attorneys of different ages allows firms to cater to a wider client base, while also ensuring that the firm can adapt to changing legal landscapes and technological advancements. Younger lawyers can bring a world of knowledge when it comes to the new technology out there, as well as AI. Combining the young lawyers with the wiser lawyers, who have decades of experience at times, is only all that more beneficial to firms.

Younger individuals often face barriers when it comes to leadership opportunities, not because they lack the necessary skills or qualifications, but because of assumptions about their readiness. In fact, research shows that diverse leadership teams, those that include individuals of various ages, make more strategic decisions and lead more effectively because they have the ability to consider a wider range of experiences and perspectives. Creating an age-inclusive environment in leadership means recognizing that experience and innovation are not mutually exclusive. It's about breaking down the notion that leadership is reserved only for one age group and instead embracing the full range of experiences that contribute to strong, effective leadership. Luckily, some of us have found companies that know this and take advantage of all the benefits of having well-rounded staff and attorneys, combining the speed and determination of the youth and the wisdom and experience of those that have been doing the work for decades.

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AGE DISCRIMINATION IN THE LAW: DIFFERENT GENERATIONS, MUTUAL ADVANTAGES - CONTINUED

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Age discrimination is not only a legal issue but also an opportunity for organizations and firms to rethink their commitment to diversity. Age diversity brings unique strengths to a workplace, improving innovation, decision-making, and client relations. By eliminating age-related biases and embracing the value that individuals of all ages bring to the table, we can create workplaces that are truly inclusive and empowered to succeed in a rapidly changing world. For attorneys, understanding the dynamics of age discrimination is crucial, not just to advocate for clients but to build stronger, more diverse firms and organizations.

Ruby Delarosa is an Associate in Weber Gallagher's Mt. Laurel office.

Messages of Inspiration and Hope at this Year's Barristers' Annual Memorial Breakfast



By: Gabi Outlaw

“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.” – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On January 19, 2026, our nation celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, which is a day to honor the achievements of the influential civil rights leader, inspire moments of reflection, and encourage acts of service throughout one's community. I had the pleasure, as I do every year, of attending the Barristers' Association of Philadelphia, Inc.'s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Annual Memorial Breakfast.

The Barristers' Association of Philadelphia, Inc. was established in 1950 with the mission to promote the professional development and progress for Black attorneys in the city of Philadelphia. The organization continues to carry out this mission through its programming, continuing legal education seminars, scholarships for law students, and outreach in the Philadelphia community.

While the Barristers was founded for and promotes opportunity for the development of Black attorneys, the organization is open to all attorneys regardless of race, and this inclusivity is embodied in the audience of the Annual Memorial Breakfast, which is the organization's signature event. Every year, over 700 attendees from various backgrounds and forms of legal practice are welcomed to a dynamic program that is not only engaging but also fills the room with hope and encouragement for the future.

Four awards are given to three notable attorneys who embody the principles and commitments of the organization and one local organization that has a profound impact on diversity and inclusion in the Philadelphia community. The program also includes fellowship through music, lively, prominent speakers, and inspirational remarks from members of the Barristers' Executive Board.

This year's program was especially notable for the words of speakers and honorees who encouraged the audience at large about the motivation of moving forward and standing tall in the face of challenging times. Thus, as the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated, while there may be paths in one's journey that lead to momentary disappointment, that does not mean that we can or should ever lose hope for what the future will bring.

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MESSAGES OF INSPIRATION AND HOPE AT THIS YEAR'S BARRISTERS' ANNUAL MEMORIAL BREAKFAST

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Thus, as we move through this February, which also marks the 100th year of Black History Month, the words of Dr. King are more powerful than ever. On August 16, 1967, Dr. King delivered his dynamic speech, "Where Do We Go From Here?" at the 11th Annual Southern Christian Leadership Conference. During his speech, he aptly stated, **"Let us be dissatisfied until integration is not seen as a problem but as an opportunity to participate in the beauty of diversity."** I am grateful for opportunities like the Barristers' Annual Memorial Breakfast and this DEI Committee that continue to demonstrate and promote the beauty of diversity and all that a world of representation has to offer.

Gabi Outlaw is an Associate in Weber Gallagher's Philadelphia office.



Women's History Month - Women of Weber Campaign



Weber Gallagher is excited to highlight the amazing women of our firm this Women's History Month throughout the month of March. Stay tuned for our Women of Weber Campaign and follow along on social media @WeberGallagher.



DIVERSITY MATTERS

NEWSLETTER

Does DE&I Make Business Sense?

In the wake of George Floyd's murder, many U.S. business and professional firms revisited diversity, equality, and inclusion ("DE&I") policies. Although there is a common perception DE&I programs began in 2020, many businesses had such programs dating back to the 1970s to address historical imbalances in hiring and retaining diverse talent. However, in 2020, such policies came to forefront as businesses confronted the impact of past DE&I policies.

After an initial surge of policies being implemented, some businesses have scaled back in the wake of lawsuits and legislation restricting such policies and programs. As part of the scaling back process, businesses have begun to view these programs through a lens of profitability rather than social justice.

This leads to an obvious question; how does a business measure a DE&I program's impact on the bottom line. Recent studies have shown DE&I policies have positive effects on businesses of all sizes in terms of improving internal innovation and customer satisfaction. Yet, it is difficult to measure how such amorphous qualities translate into dollars and cents. The key may well be to establish a direct, significant connection between DE&I programs and a company's core business.

Tech Target Enterprise Strategy Group conducted a large global survey of 2,000 organizations. They found the businesses with the most established DE&I programs experienced the highest return on investment. They also found certain significant elements to successful DE&I programs. The most successful programs contained the following:

1. DE&I strategies were discussed with employees regularly
2. DE&I programs were led by the organization's leaders and HR
3. Organizations showed flexibility over time with regard to DE&I policies and programs

4. Goals should be "SMART" – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely
5. Organizations must hold themselves accountable

Successful DE&I programs lead to a diverse workforce, which in turn leads to a positive impact on profitability. One of the reasons this is true is fairly straightforward.

Inclusion not only attracts but also retains diverse talent, which reduces employee turnover with all the hidden costs of recruitment and training costs. More importantly, a diverse work force, and in particular, a diverse leadership group opens access to a wider customer base. This is particularly important as world demographics have been changing rapidly.

A 2023 McKinsey study showed diverse businesses were more profitable. One of the reasons is diverse workforces are much less likely to adopt "group think" and far more likely to be creative with regard to solutions and business strategies. According to the McKinsey study, businesses with an executive group consisting of more than 33% women outperformed competitors who were the least diverse by 39%. And the same held true for executive groups with similar ethnic diversity.

It appears as the political climate has grown more hostile towards DE&I policies and programs, the focus must shift towards the positive business aspects of such programs in order for DE&I to survive.

Scott Wilson is a Partner in Weber Gallagher's Mt. Laurel office.



By: Scott Wilson

DIVERSITY MATTERS! CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to Associate Gabi Outlaw, who has been elected Vice Chair of the Philadelphia Bar Association Board of Governors!

The Philadelphia Bar Association is a keystone in the ongoing developments of the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania legal systems. We are excited to see Gabi's continued growth within the Philadelphia legal community.



We are thrilled to celebrate our law clerks, Jacob Yu, Mairead Tuttle, and Abed Rahman who have successfully passed the Bar exam and officially joined the firm as Associates!



Mairead R. Tuttle, Scranton
Abed Rahman, Philadelphia
Jacob Yu, New York City

Please join us in congratulating Family Law Associate Ashley Coleman on her recent acceptance to be a Court-Appointed Guardian ad Litem in Montgomery County, PA.

A Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) is a court-appointed attorney who investigates and advises the court to protect a child's best interests in custody, abuse, or neglect cases.



DIVERSITY MATTERS! CONGRATULATIONS



Weber Gallagher is proud to share that Alexa Santangelo, Human Resources Manager, has been named President of the Association of Legal Administrators Philadelphia Chapter for the 2026-2028 term.

Alexa has been an active and dedicated leader within the Chapter, previously serving as President-Elect, Vice President of Business Partner Relations, and Assistant Vice President of Business Partner Relations.

Please join us in congratulating Felicia Romain, Associate, for being appointed to the Board of Directors for the Association of Black Women Attorneys - New York Chapter!

Founded in 1976, The Association of Black Women Attorneys is a nonprofit bar association committed to promoting and supporting the professional development, personal growth, talents, and skills of Black women lawyers.



DIVERSITY MATTERS

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2026

WEBER GALLAGHER'S DEI ACTION CHECKLIST

- Join Weber Gallagher's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and actively participate.
- Recommend a diverse attorney or staff person for employment at Weber Gallagher.
- Write an article about diversity, equity, and inclusion for Weber Gallagher's diversity newsletter, Diversity Matters!
- Attend one (1) or more conferences, programs, or CLE seminars on diversity-related topics.
- Attend one (1) or more program(s) sponsored by Weber Gallagher's Diversity Committee.
- Participate in "The Breakroom," a small group discussion fostering a safe place to share your thoughts and experiences while learning about your colleagues.
- Read an article or book about diversity and inclusion.
- Develop a mentoring relationship with an attorney, law school graduate, or law student of a diverse background.
- Mentor a high school student, college student, or paralegal interested in pursuing a career in law.
- Learn about the impact of subtle, unconscious, and implicit bias by visiting Project Implicit and take one of the surveys.

