

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Half of Illinois' 20 largest firms are headed by women – here's what they had to say

BY CHICAGO LAWYER STAFF





Diane Webster

Hinshaw & Culbertson, partner-in-charge of the Chicago office

We try to identify up-and-comers [through Hinshaw's Women Affinity Network], rising star associates that we want to get behind to really focus our efforts in helping them become noncapital or nonequity partners, and ultimately to equity status, which is the goal for each and every single one of them. We have social events throughout the year where we get together. They are fun events where you are encouraged to get to know each other so that we can essentially build our own network that men oftentimes take for granted. We try to create this internal network that we hope will become strong and organic such that these women attorneys can work together to build business externally. The reason that is important is because if you want to have a seat at the table, you have to have an independent book of business and I think it's through those leadership roles that you are going to get there.

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Tina M. Tabacchi

Jones Day, partner-in-charge of the Chicago office

Law firms should continue providing opportunities for all lawyers to develop the skills that they need to advance in their careers, conduct merit-based assessments of performance, support flexibility that enables attorneys to take time away from work and make promotion decisions that reflect the full contribution of each lawyer beyond billings and collections. Having women in positions of leadership in law firms can only help young women in the profession more easily see a path to success for themselves. There are so many great lawyers — men and women — who mentored me and generally shaped so much of my professional life. As much as I am grateful to them for teaching me how to become a lawyer, I am also grateful for the example they set in their commitment to their families and life outside of work. I hope that I can provide the same for those lawyers coming up behind me.