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Tracey Kennedy Receives 2024 Dianne Baquet Smith Diversity and Inclusion Award

02.22.2024

Sheppard Mullin is proud to recognize Tracey A. Kennedy as the winner of this year's Dianne Baquet Smith Diversity and Inclusion Award for her commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts and initiatives that create meaningful change.

The Award honors firm individuals who have made significant contributions to the promotion of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at Sheppard Mullin and within the broader legal community.

Tracey demonstrates a career-long commitment to DEI – both as a member of firm leadership and through other internal and external programs and initiatives. She is an active member of Sheppard Mullin's Black Lawyers Network, the firm's affinity group for attorneys of color. Tracey has moderated and appeared on a number of panels over the years at the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Attorney network and Women Lawyers Group retreats, speaking on topics such as business development, strategic career planning, firm strategic planning and more. She has also routinely presented at the firm's Partnership College and other training academies regarding the transition from associate to partner, the skills needed to be a successful partner and other talent management and professional development topics. Tracey has mentored many young lawyers in the industry over the years, both in a formal role as a partner advisor, as well as informally.

Tracey spent four years on Sheppard Mullin's Compensation Committee and nine years on the Executive Committee, using these platforms to advocate for policies and strategies that promote diversity. Her guidance and feedback have been critical to a number of the firm's most important DEI initiatives, including the Women Attorneys Success Initiative Committee and the Attorneys of Color and LGBTQ+ Attorneys Success Initiative Committee– which used data in both quantitative and qualitative methods to generate innovative programs and initiatives that continue to drive the firm's overall DEI program. She had a major role in the development and roll out of another firm initiative, the Inclusive Engagement Task Force that provides support and opportunities to all members of the Sheppard Mullin community, addresses the effects of systematic racism and fosters inclusion through both internal and external programs and activities.

Tracey is a partner in the firm's Labor and Employment practice group. An experienced trial attorney, she has tried to verdict in state and federal court employment matters such as age, race, sex, national origin, sexual orientation and disability discrimination, as well as harassment, retaliation and wrongful termination claims. Tracey has also tried to verdict three wage and hour class actions. In addition, she provides preventive counseling to clients concerning personnel and employment matters. She is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, a member of American Board of Trial Advocates and a member of the College of Employment Lawyers. She has lectured around the country on personnel practices, employment discrimination, retaliation, harassment and wrongful termination.

About the Award

The firm instituted its Diversity & Inclusion Award in 2010 to honor one or more attorneys who provide leadership and make significant contributions within the Firm and/or legal profession and whose accomplishments advance the firm's mission and goals in the area of diversity and inclusion. In 2019, the award was named in honor of Dianne Baquet Smith who served as the Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee from 2005 to 2019, as an acknowledgement of her extraordinary work in support of DEI at the firm and in the larger legal industry.

Attorneys

Tracey A. Kennedy

Practice Areas

Labor and Employment