

Deborah Bayles Talks Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives in *Law Week Colorado* Roundtable

In the News

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Denver Office Managing Partner [Deborah Bayles](#) recently sat down for a [virtual roundtable with fellow Colorado-based managing partners for *Law Week Colorado*](#). In the interview, Bayles covered a number of diversity, equity inclusion related matters, ranging from the challenges in retaining diverse talent to the shifting workplace culture due to working remote.

Bayles expressed that she has found that the firm's significant commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is not only valued by clients, but demanded by them.

"Any RFP that we respond to requires that we not only say that we support diversity, equity and inclusion but also show the numbers. What it means [is] that we really needed to do more than just put something on our website. We hired a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, a C-level executive whose sole job it is to keep us focused on diversity, equity and inclusion. It made a huge difference to have somebody whose job it was to keep us focused and to help us identify some of things we struggle with."

The need for firms to offer better support systems is a concern expressed by both Bayles and her colleagues. Bayles highlighted the firm's implementation of mentorship programs that not only guide associates through the world of law, but helps establish them professionally by including them on connection-building opportunities like client meetings and pitches. She also articulated the challenges that remote work brings, such as its potential to hinder the growth of personal relationships between partners and associates and the subsequent development of workplace culture.

"If associates aren't coming into the office and are not developing those personal relationships with people — right now there already is a chasm between partners and associates just in terms of how we all think and how we all interact at the firm. But the more we take those personal relationships out of the mix, and the more people just become boxes on a screen, the harder it is to bring the culture of the firm, which is really

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set by the partners, down to the associates and have them accept that culture.”

Bayles blends a unique combination of practical business experience with deep legal knowledge in her legal practice. In addition to serving as the Denver office manager partner, Bayles advises lenders on secured loan and lease transactions. These projects include the financing of acquisitions and operating lines of credit for business borrowers, and acquisition, construction and development loans for real estate borrowers.

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