

Stinson's Chief DE&I Officer Details Ebb and Flow of DEIA in Legal Management Talk Podcast

In the News

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Stinson LLP Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer [Ann Thomas](#) is featured on the Legal Management Talk podcast from the Association of Legal Administrators discussing the current state of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) programs and initiatives.

In the "Doubling Down on DEIA" episode, Thomas emphasizes the core mission of DEIA in society and shares insights on the trajectory of these efforts. "If you look at the history of social justice movements, there's always an ebb and a flow. This is just the natural part of how things evolve and progress," she said.

In recent times, companies of all sizes have scaled back or removed their DEIA programs. Thomas examines the possible consequences for customer and client relationships, which includes missing out on opportunities to better serve existing customer-client bases or accessing a new market. Despite observing a shift away from diversity-focused initiatives, she highlights successful examples of DEIA implementations within law firms, explaining the positive impact on both the firms themselves and their clients.

Thomas also discusses the importance of systemic reform, which includes taking a two-pronged approach to DEIA programs, and provides actionable steps for law firms of all sizes to embrace DEIA.

"As an organization, it is important that you examine what is maintaining the status quo or encouraging it and look for ways to broaden what exists or change or modify it so that it actually supports your DEIA goals," she said. "Join forces, take advantage of affinity organizations that are doing DEIA programs and find ways to share information, to share resources, to consider whether you can leverage internships or programs that might already exist, as a way for you to contribute."

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Thomas leads the firm's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and institutes best practices and training for attorneys and staff. She works with firm leadership and the board of directors to grow a culture that values all backgrounds and perspectives and to incorporate successful diversity strategies in the firm's strategic planning.

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