

Stinson's Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Authors *Bloomberg Law* Op-Ed; Assesses Current and Future State of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

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Stinson LLP Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer Ann Thomas authored a column for *Bloomberg Law*, "To Manage DEI Risk, Gain Buy-In With Coaching, Consensus Building."

Thomas assesses the state of diversity, equity and inclusion in light of recent and proposed legislation restricting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and provides insight for leaders across industries who are carefully weighing the risks of continuing their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. "Progress doesn't stop," she writes. "With a nuanced approach that balances advocacy with understanding and fosters constructive dialogue across differing views, companies can still be diverse, inclusive places to work."

Thomas says diversity, equity and inclusion work requires a multifaceted approach and a long-term perspective. She states that both proponents and opponents of diversity, equity and inclusion should build relationships that bridge divides and foster understanding across differences, and identify and speak to the values and emotions beneath the rhetoric. She also suggests it's important to embrace a growth mindset and apply coaching skills to empower others, as well as prioritize training and development in order to advance a more just and inclusive society.

"Regardless of setbacks, DEI can't fail in the long run because it is intertwined with the evolution of humanity," Thomas says.

Thomas leads the firm's diversity 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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