

Spring  
2018

REPORT

# DIVERSITY INCLUSION

 Frost  
Brown Todd LLC  
ATTORNEYS





I'm honored to introduce this edition of FBT's quarterly Diversity and Inclusion Report. As many of you are aware, this is an exciting time at the firm. We are celebrating new leadership. Effective January 1, Adam Hall became our new chief executive officer and Robert Sartin our new chairman. We've asked Adam and Robert to answer some questions about their personal experiences with diversity and inclusion and discuss our challenges moving forward. I'm pleased to share with you their candid and personal responses.

As diversity professionals, we often talk about the importance of "support from the top." I can sincerely say that our leaders have not just been supportive over the last 12 years. They have been consistently and actively engaged in our efforts to make the firm's culture more inclusive. I've never taken this for granted. Still, whenever there's a leadership change, I have concerns that we might stumble in our journey. This is not the case, however, with Adam and Robert. In just two short months, I am not only reassured by Adam and Robert's engagement – I'm energized. They have been clear with me that, despite the progress the firm has made, we've got more work to do, and we have the full support of our senior leadership. I'm excited for what lies ahead.

I'm also constantly amazed by the involvement we've seen from across the firm. More and more, the voices for change that champion this work comprise a broad cross-section of FBT professionals. It is not just those from traditionally disadvantaged groups who see the benefits of being a more diverse and inclusive firm. So many of us now recognize that, for true progress to occur, advocacy cannot rest solely on the shoulders of those in the firm with formal diversity and inclusion responsibilities. It takes more people – from all levels and titles – to make a difference. I wish I had space to name all of you personally, but the list would be too long. But you know who you are. Thank you.

We'll need everyone's help as we press forward. Developing diversity and inclusion best practices and initiatives is relatively straightforward. The greater challenge lies in building and maintaining a truly inclusive culture, where unconscious bias does not interfere with our systems and processes. I'm so grateful for all of your support and efforts as we tackle the tough stuff together.

**Kim Amrine**

Member and Director of Diversity & Inclusion

## Our Vision Statement

Frost Brown Todd (FBT) is committed to building and maintaining, as a central and permanent part of our culture, a diverse and inclusive team environment based on the following beliefs:

- » each of us is unique, and being inclusive means celebrating that uniqueness and encouraging each of us to bring our whole and best selves to work every day;
- » a diverse and inclusive culture is critical to the success of each member of our team and, therefore, to the success of our firm as well; and
- » we must never be satisfied but must be dedicated, individually and as a firm, to always seeking new and better ways to support and encourage the personal growth and professional development of all.

### Supporting the Future

The firm promotes building a pipeline of diverse attorneys in our local legal community by supporting diverse students in their education or exploration of law. We have had over 75 attorneys volunteer to mentor diverse law students and, in our Cincinnati and Louisville markets, we serve minority high school and college students by offering internships that introduce them to the legal profession. **See how we're supporting the future.**

### Let's Talk D&I with FBT's Leadership

### Community Engagement & Leadership

Through various outreach programs, we connect with organizations in our communities and invest both significant funding, as well as volunteer hours, toward their missions. By reaching beyond the firm and supporting various local and national organizations, we play a part in the broader effort toward a more diverse and inclusive legal profession. **Read more about our community engagement and leadership activities.**

### In the News

We're honored to see FBT recognized in the news, whether it's a single employee or team whose work is being celebrated. We know we have exceptional people of diverse perspectives, who do exemplary work. We're simply glad more people are taking notice. **Read about our team members.**

### Internal Awareness, Development & Training

Diversity and inclusion impacts every aspect of our working environment, our relationships with each other, as well as our relationships with our clients and the extended community. We conduct regular mandatory training for all employees on unconscious bias and inclusion, supplemented by optional workshops to help everyone develop cultural competencies. **Learn more about our awareness, development and training activities.**



# FBT'S NEW LEADERSHIP TALKS DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



Adam P. Hall, FBT CEO

Robert V. Sartin, FBT Chairman

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you in your roles as chief executive officer and chairman, respectively? In what ways do you think diversity and inclusion are important to someone in your respective roles at FBT?

**Adam Hall:** *Diversity and inclusion means building and maintaining an environment at FBT where all our attorneys and business professionals are valued and respected and where their hard work and talent – not uneven opportunities – determine their success. It also means building and maintaining a workforce that reflects the diversity of our communities, so that FBT offers the variety of life experiences, viewpoints, and talents needed to capitalize on new opportunities and craft the best solutions for our clients' legal and business needs. Finally, it means a broader understanding of how diversity is an asset to us all and fosters relationships that enrich our firm.*

**Robert Sartin:** *To me, it means FBT must become a diverse and inclusive law firm and not merely be a law firm with D&I programs or initiatives. We have to accept that we have a long way to go to make this a reality. We had a dedicated group of people start our efforts, and they've helped put us on the right path. But it is everyone's responsibility, and our work is not finished. Now, more than ever, progress in D&I is not a "nice to have" but a "must have" goal. As we work together to realize this goal, we are making FBT a more vibrant business and a better client service provider.*

## Have you seen value from diversity and inclusion in your legal practice? If so, how?

**AH:** *In my personal practice, I have seen the impact of a diverse and inclusive FBT team manifest in a variety of ways. For example, as a litigator, I have learned that building a case is not just about the facts and the law; it is about developing themes of what is fair and just. Having colleagues of diverse backgrounds and life experiences help create and test your themes is critical in avoiding blind spots and the danger of getting locked into your own way of thinking. Judges and jurors come from diverse life experiences and may have very different reactions to your themes. Developing those themes through a variety of lenses with your colleagues and team members always makes them more effective.*

**RS:** *Learning of another's culture helps you understand, appreciate and respect the way others think and do business. This, in turn, helps you apply these lessons to your own way of thinking and doing business, which simply makes you a better person and professional.*

## Have your views on diversity and inclusion changed during your legal career? If so, how?

**AH:** *Before I became an attorney, I had it drilled into my head from childhood that I was to treat everyone with respect and value each person's unique human dignity. That message seemed exactly right to me for as long as I can remember, even if, admittedly, I have not lived it perfectly at times. I certainly think more broadly now about the meaning of diversity and inclusion. As I have been privileged to serve in a variety of leadership positions for the firm, I have spent much more time thinking about how my colleagues experience their professional lives at FBT, the challenges they face, and how to enhance their experience at the firm and their opportunities for professional success.*

**RS:** *Yes, my views have changed through the course of my career. Like Adam, I was raised to respect and value others and never understood those who didn't. However, it took time and education for me to recognize and appreciate how an organization must intentionally manage against unconscious bias in the workplace.*

## In your opinion, how have FBT's markets responded to diversity and inclusion initiatives? What about our clients?

**AH:** *Most of our geographic markets do not have a legal talent pool that reflects that market's broader community. As a result, it has been important for us to be invested in helping to promote progress in our profession. FBT has been deeply involved in terrific organizations that help drive this progress, such as the Greater Cincinnati Minority Counsel Program (GCMCP), Cristo Rey, BLAC/CBA Roundtable, Summer Work Experience in Law (SWEL), the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD), the Law & Leadership Institute, Diverse by Design, and programs at Central High School and Withrow High School. Many of our clients are involved in these same efforts, and it is fulfilling to collaborate with them to impact the diversity of our legal profession.*

**RS:** *The relative diversity of our markets has always impacted our ability to recruit diverse professionals. But as these markets, and the country as a whole, become more and more diverse, the circumstances will almost certainly favor businesses that are prioritizing diversity and inclusion. Today, even if our clients recognize and appreciate the progress we've made, they are rightfully demanding more. Our success will continue to depend on our ability to leverage a broad range of perspectives in service to our clients and communities.*

## How has your background or personal experience prepared you to be effective in an environment that values diversity and is committed to inclusion?

**AH:** *Growing up, my maternal grandmother, who had been widowed before I was born, lived with us most of my life before I left home for college. She was born in the United States shortly after her family emigrated from Spain. She often shared stories of what it was like living as an immigrant family in the U.S. during the first half of the 20th century. When I moved to Cincinnati in 1989, I became involved in an organization comprised of representatives from 17 different religious traditions who worked together on local public policy issues. The group's by-laws required that all decisions be based on unanimous consent. My experiences with this group demonstrated that people of diverse backgrounds and belief systems could craft far better approaches and solutions to confounding issues than any individual or ideologically similar group. Working on these issues with some of the African American ministers in that group, who were young men during the 50s and 60s, also gave me a closer appreciation of the previous generation's personal experiences with race relations.*

**RS:** *I am a product of a large public-school system in the north Houston area, where I had the benefit of diversity in all aspects of my upbringing. I learned from a young age the value of diverse talent and thinking. My wife, Dana, and I also supported our girls' participation in a Spanish immersion program for their schooling, in part for the value of being bilingual, but more for the value of the understanding and learning gained from cultural immersion. My background and perspective will help the firm, but it will take a unified effort for us to truly succeed.*

## Do you think diversity and inclusion issues and legal issues are related? If so, how?

**AH:** *Diversity and inclusion issues at FBT must go much deeper and broader than just ensuring compliance with the law. Our goal as a firm is to have our people feel comfortable being themselves and feel valued for their unique talents and contributions and for our firm to understand and use our diversity as a strength.*

**RS:** *Diversity and inclusion issues and legal issues are separate but related. Complying with the law is one thing, but being a diverse and inclusive firm – and a better one because of it – is something else altogether. And it is more than just making us a better service provider and business. A diverse and inclusive culture will simply make FBT a better place to work and be for everyone.*

## Do you have anything else to add on this subject that we have not touched on?

**AH:** *Thanks for the thoughtful questions that caused me to pause and reflect.*

**RS:** *D&I will be part of our DNA or, said differently, become more and more a part of our core business planning, ensuring that all employees are rewarded through a transparent process that recognizes and promotes these values. Thank you for these questions, and I look forward to what we will accomplish together.*



# Supporting the Future

## Andrew Johnson at Charting Your Own Course

FBT Associate **Andrew Johnson** recently returned from the **Charting Your Own Course Career Conference** in Orlando, Florida. Here are his reflections on the event:

*“The Charting Your Own Course Career Conference provided a unique opportunity to identify and adopt success strategies to face challenges common to diverse attorneys. Because the sessions and panels were targeted to my experience, I learned from an assortment of attorneys who shared their perspective on what it takes for me, as a junior attorney, to be effective and productive in the firm environment. The conference’s welcoming environment provided a strong sense of camaraderie and allowed me to network with attorneys within my practice area. I would strongly recommend the Charting Your Own Course conference for other diverse attorneys seeking experienced guidance from professionals who can easily relate to them.”*

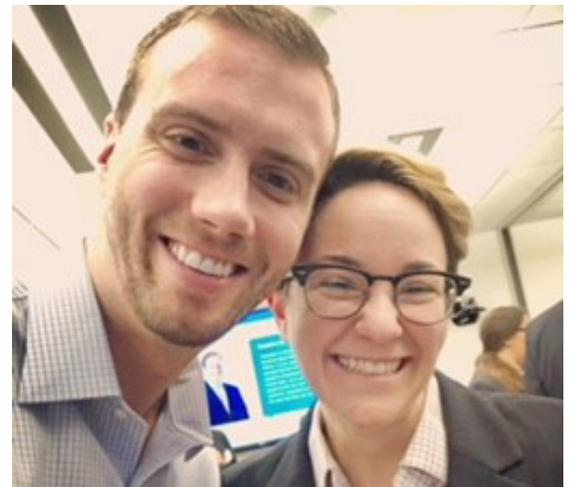
Andrew Johnson, Associate, Cincinnati



## Columbus Office Hosts LGBTQ Law Event

On February 15, FBT Columbus hosted LGBTQ law students and attorneys from the Columbus area for an evening of networking. Forty students and attorneys attended the third annual event, which is aimed at connecting LGBTQ attorneys and law students in the region and helping them forge new relationships and strengthen existing ones.

Columbus Member **Russ Kutell**, who spearheaded the event with Member **Sam Quimby** and Associate **Shely Berry**, said, “I am excited to see such a positive response to our diversity efforts and have FBT Columbus be seen as a leader for the LGBTQ community in Central Ohio.” In addition to Russ, Sam and Shely, FBT Columbus Member-in-Charge **Noel Shepard** and attorneys **Steve Ellcessor**, **Ryan Goellner**, **Zack Stillings** and **Steve Tolbert** also attended.



FBT attorney Shely Berry and Trent Stechschulte of EquitasHealth.

## FBT Continues Partnership with Withrow High School

FBT attorneys in Cincinnati taught a condensed **Junior Achievement “Economics for Success”** program to five classes of Withrow High School’s eighth-graders on February 14. For the fifth consecutive school year, FBT was proud to partner with Withrow and Junior Achievement to teach this curriculum, which explores personal finance and students’ education and career options based on their skills, interests, and values, while also demonstrating the economic benefit of staying in school.



FBT Member Rich Moore leads the students through a prize auction at the end of the lesson.



## Community Engagement & Leadership



*LTR: Erika & Simon Svirnovskiy, Julie LeMaster of the Immigrant and Refugee Law Center, Chris Holt of the Cincinnati Public Library, and Robyn Lamont of Refugee Connect.*

### FBT Assists in Citizenship and Green Card Application Workshop

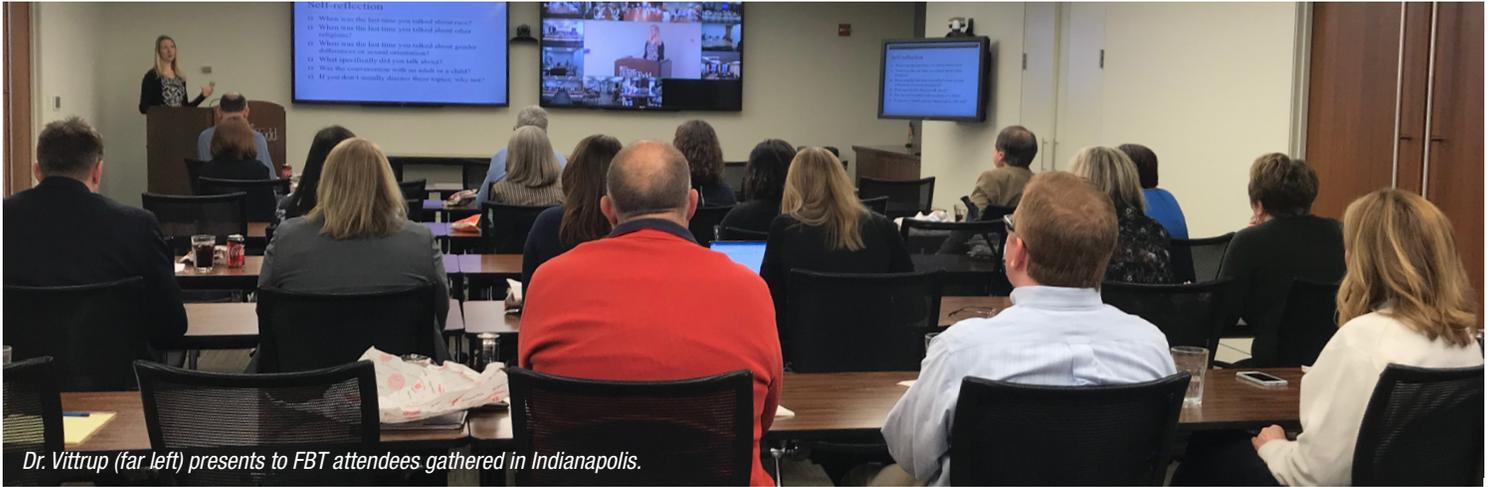
FBT Cincinnati Associate **Simon Svirnovskiy**, with the help of several others in FBT's Cincinnati office, including **Kevin Carter**, **Matt Blickensderfer**, **Kim Amrine**, and **Alicia Kappers**, organized a workshop for refugees to apply for naturalization and lawful permanent resident status. Held at the Westwood Library on December 16, 2017, the inaugural workshop was led by Julie LeMaster of the **Immigrant and Refugee Law Center** and planned by Julie, Simon, Robyn Lamont of Refugee Connect, and Chris Holt from the Cincinnati Public Library. Volunteers assisted 15 people with their naturalization or lawful permanent resident applications. The group hosted another workshop for 10 new Americans on February 24 and plans to organize regular workshops like this around Cincinnati every two months.



*Chris Holt of the Cincinnati Public Library assists an applicant with her N-400 naturalization application.*



# Internal Awareness, Development & Training



Dr. Vittrup (far left) presents to FBT attendees gathered in Indianapolis.

## Inclusion Workshop Series: “Colorblindness” and Internal Bias

On February 1, in FBT’s Indianapolis office, the Diversity & Inclusion Committee hosted **Dr. Brigitte Vittrup, Ph.D.**, an associate professor of **Early Childhood Development and Education at Texas Woman’s University**, who spoke with attorneys and business professionals from each office about her research on the racial socialization and external influences impacting children’s racial attitudes. As a mother of mixed-race children, Dr. Vittrup described how colorblindness can preserve the status quo, and even breed prejudice, and provided attendees with the tools to have difficult conversations surrounding race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and national origin. More than 200 employees tuned in, and the dialogue created by Dr. Vittrup’s presentation has been eye-opening. Several members, associates and business professionals have already reported back with personal examples of how much it has affected the way they address these topics with their children. *This presentation was part of FBT’s ongoing Inclusion Workshop Series.*

## Diversity and Inclusion Committee Charts its Course for 2018

On Wednesday, January 31, FBT’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee hosted its annual Strategy Retreat in the Cincinnati office. The retreat was focused on analyzing current strengths that FBT can build on in 2018, along with weaknesses that are keeping the firm from achieving its vision. The committee also examined opportunities to bring FBT closer to its vision and preventative steps for potential obstacles. The committee is chaired by **Steve Elcessor** and includes **Kim Amrine, Jason Bergeron, Jenai Brackett, Adam Hall, Kimera Hall, \*Jena Hamrick, \*Miles Harrison, Carla De La Barra Helstrom, Alicia Kappers, Kim Mauer, Rich Moore, Sam Quimby, Martha Staude, and \*Jared Tully.** (\*new member).



Committee members discuss and plan the firm’s 2018 diversity and inclusion strategies.

## Women’s Initiative 2018 Strategy Session

On January 30, the Women’s Initiative Committee met in Louisville to discuss the findings of the 2017 Women’s Retreat held in Berea, Kentucky. Over the course of the afternoon, the committee discussed the four common themes or principles that emerged from the retreat: leadership, support, transparency, and teamwork.

Working to advance these four principles will guide the efforts of the Women’s Initiative this coming year. The Women’s Initiative is chaired by **Kim Mauer** and includes **Kim Amrine, Tonya Austin, Keeana Boorman, Darren Craig, \*Peter Cummins, \*Amy Curry, \*Kara Eaton, Alicia Kappers, Katie Klingelhafer, \*Patricia Plavko, Ali Razzaghi, and Jessica Schnelker** (\*new member).



Members of the committee pause for a quick photo in the middle of their discussions.



## In the News



**Steven McDevitt**  
Associate, Cincinnati



**Samantha Quimby**  
Member, Columbus



**Neal Patel**  
Member, Cincinnati

### **Steven McDevitt Selected as FBT's First LCLD "Pathfinder"**

FBT Cincinnati Associate **Steven McDevitt** has been selected as the firm's first candidate for the **Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) Pathfinder Program**. Pathfinder is a national program that trains early-career and high-potential attorneys in critical career development strategies, including foundational leadership skills and the building of professional networks. Pathfinders have been identified by their organizations as having the potential to assume leadership roles, not only internally, but overall in the legal profession.

### **Samantha Quimby Recognized Among the World's Most Outstanding Trademark Practitioners**

Described as "the best lawyer in town" by clients for her work in trademark law, **Samantha Quimby** has been included in the **World Trademark Review (WTR) 1000** for the fourth consecutive year. The WTR 1000 uses exhaustive qualitative research to identify the most outstanding firms and individuals in 70 jurisdictions globally, qualified to serve brand owners as they seek to protect their brands. With the 2018 edition recently released, the publication is now in its eighth year and considered a go-to resource for clients seeking world-class legal trademark practitioners.

### **Neal Patel Selected for Landmark Program Advancing the Next Generation of Leaders in Law**

FBT Member **Nilesh (Neal) Patel** has been selected as a **2018 Fellow of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)**. The LCLD Fellows Program is a national, game-changing program that identifies, trains and advances the next generation of leaders in the legal profession. Patel joins a select group of experienced attorneys from diverse backgrounds, all of whom have been recognized for leadership potential in their organizations. The year-long, in-depth program is devoted to relationship-building, in-person training, peer-group projects, and extensive interaction with LCLD's top leadership.



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