

Winter/Spring
2017
REPORT

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

 Frost
Brown Todd LLC
ATTORNEYS





On behalf of our firm and, in particular, our Women's Initiative committee, I would like to welcome you to our Diversity and Inclusion Report.

We intend for this report to highlight a number of great things that are happening throughout our firm, spotlight some of our people who help to create this great place to work, and, also to mention some of the recognitions that we have received from others.

Frost Brown Todd was an "early adopter" in seeking to encourage women to come here and advance. Our formal Women's Initiative was created in 2001. Since that time, we have continued to grow and evolve both the committee and our efforts. We think that as a firm we have addressed a number of the more obvious concerns, but we continue to press forward to determine what other changes may be needed in order to permit all of our people to feel valued for who they are and what they bring to us as a culture. That is our ultimate goal.

We know that becoming a fully diverse and inclusive firm is a journey, but we are committed to that journey because we truly believe that we will be a better firm. In addition, we know that we will provide better client service by doing so.

We hope that you will enjoy learning more about some of our team members who are on this journey with us.

Welcome!

Kimberly K. Mauer
Chair, Women's Initiative

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Our Vision Statement

Frost Brown Todd 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;
- » 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.**

Spotlight

Each of us is unique, and being inclusive means celebrating that uniqueness. Get to know attorneys and staff across the firm. **Find out what they're doing, what drives them, and what they're passionate about.**

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 efforts toward a more diverse and inclusive legal profession. **Read more about our community engagement and leadership activities.**

Awards & Accolades

Our goal is to be recognized for having the most inclusive environment in our markets. While we are proud of the recognition we have received to date, we acknowledge that we still have plenty of work to do. **Check out our most recent awards and accolades.**

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.**





Supporting the Future

FBT Louisville Helps Shape Pilot Mentoring Program for Middle School Girls

Jill Burton, Carla De La Barra Helstrom, Emily McKinney, Emily Meyer and Cindy Stewart from our Louisville office are participating in a pilot middle school mentoring initiative, sponsored by **Women Influencing Louisville (WIL)**. The program, called “500 Women Mentors,” is a joint venture between WIL and the Office of the Mayor and takes place at Frederick L. Olmstead Academy South. The school currently ranks in the lowest 10% of middle schools in Kentucky on standard achievement tests and is the only all-girls school in the Jefferson County Public School system.

WIL is a group of companies, including Brown-Forman, E&Y, FBT, GE, Humana, UPS, U.S. Bank, and YUM!, that focuses on issues that are important to women and support women's diversity. The group also includes external engagement with companies that have common diversity interests and want to leverage the power of local alliances. Cindy and Jill are both members of the WIL board.



UC Law Black Law Students Association (BLSA)

FBT's Cincinnati office hosted the annual UC Law BLSA Wine & Cheese event this year to celebrate Black History Month with the BLSA of the University of Cincinnati College of Law. The evening included attorneys and professionals from many of the local law firms and businesses from the surrounding community. In addition to celebrating black history month, law students had the opportunity to meet, socialize, and network with many of their peers in the legal industry.

Arash Hamidi, an associate at FBT, explained the value in hosting the event by stating “It's wonderful to bring together such a diverse group of people, both students and professionals, to celebrate such an important occasion in our history. Aside from meeting a diverse group of people, hosting this great event allowed me to learn about the diverse experiences that people have come from, which have ultimately led them to pursue a career in law. That might not have been possible if FBT had not taken the initiative to host this event.”



Diversity Scholarship

The Frost Brown Todd Diversity Scholarship Fund, which aims to support diverse students in their education or exploration of law, has provided over \$20,000 in scholarships, impacting 24 students nationally since its inception in 2010. The scholarship is awarded to students with strong academic and community service records who exemplify FBT's Diversity Vision Statement and who will promote diversity in the legal community. In 2017, **Justin Fowles**, an attorney in our Louisville office, was named chair of the Diversity Scholarship Committee, which plans to award \$10,000 in scholarships this year to students being educated in our footprint. Past scholarship winners include **Olivia Grieszmer**, who has joined the firm as a 2017 summer associate in Cincinnati.

FBT's Intellectual Property Scholarship Program – a collaboration between the Recruiting Committee, the IP Practice Group, and the Diversity Committee – specifically targets diverse law students with IP backgrounds and skills, with the goal of boosting interest in IP law and to encourage diverse students into the practice area. The IP Scholarship is geared toward students in their final year of undergraduate or graduate technical programs in technical fields, such as science or engineering, who will be attending law school, as well as first and second year law students with technical backgrounds. The FBT Intellectual Property Diversity Scholarship is intended to assist students financially with fees for books, LSAT classes, application fees for law school, and fees associated with bar review courses or the bar exam. Since its inception in 2014, the committees have provided over \$5,000 in scholarships to diverse recipients expressing an interest in IP law.





Supporting the Future



FBT & Junior Achievement

Amy Crotty led our annual **Junior Achievement program at Withrow High School** on February 8 and February 15. The impact of this project might make the biggest difference out of all the outreach activities we do each year. It's fun, informative, and memorable for the students, and we really believe that, over time, efforts like this benefit the broader community in ways that none of us can predict or measure.

In February, 18 volunteers spent two days on-site at Withrow High School teaching Junior Achievement's **"Economics for Success"** curriculum to six classes of eighth-grade students. The curriculum focuses on financial literacy and also encourages students to consider career options based on their personal skills, interests, and values. FBT has taught the Junior Achievement program at Withrow for four years. This year's FBT teachers included: **Kim Amrine, Kevin Carter, Tony Covatta, Amy Crotty, Michael Elliot, Michelle Feld, Ryan Goellner, Colleen Haas, Alyse Hoffer, Jenni Imsande, Andrew Johnson, Eric Landen, Rich Moore, Beth Murray, Pam Roebel, Jane Shea, Todd Spears, and Alex Strohm**. Extra thanks go to **Amy Crotty** for leading the FBT team from start to finish. See you next year!

FBT's Cincinnati office wrapped up another successful year of volunteering with the Junior Achievement program. On March 24, the firm hosted a group of 18 middle and high school students from **St. Bernard-Elmwood Place High School** for a **"Job Shadow Day."** Besides a lunch of pizza and cookies, the students enjoyed a "speed networking" activity, a Junior Achievement-themed trivia game, hearing from an expert panel of speakers (recruited among FBT staff and attorneys) on college and career planning, and a guided tour of the 33rd floor of the Great American Tower. Special thanks go to the following volunteers who participated either in person or behind the scenes: **Kevin Carter, Carole Elchynski, Michelle Feld, Ryan Goellner, Chris Habel, Colleen Haas, Karen Laymance, Marilyn Lunn, Richard Moore, Jacob Morvay, Barb Savage** and **George Yund**.

Mentoring Reception In Louisville

Sara Abner and **Becky Ragland** coordinated a Group Mentoring Reception with FBT and UPS attorney mentors on January 19 in the Louisville office. The event was hosted for the **Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)** student mentees and faculty representatives from the **U of L Brandeis School of Law**. The reception was well attended and gave the students the opportunity to meet with multiple mentors from both FBT and UPS in a relaxed setting.





Community Engagement & Leadership

Greater Cincinnati HRC GALA

FBT attorneys attended the **Greater Cincinnati HRC Gala** in March. **Ryan Goellner**, an associate at FBT, described his experience by stating “What I enjoyed most about this year’s Gala was the theme of a continuing fight for equality and emphasis on a renewed and reinvigorated campaign to stop anti-LGBT legal measures on both the state and federal level. Of course, it’s fun to reconnect with colleagues and area activists (and watch the live auction), but watching and listening to all the ways HRC has been actively engaged in fighting for LGBT rights this past year – especially for transgender individuals – renewed my personal dedication to continue to press forward for equality for all members of our community.”

FBT Teams With Habitat For Humanity of Metro Louisville

Habitat for Humanity Metro Louisville (HFHML), Kentucky’s largest HFH organization, turned to the lawyers at FBT when help was needed to implement a new funding model for its charitable mission. HFHML strengthens the community by providing disadvantaged first-time home buyers with the opportunity to realize the American dream of homeownership. But the need always exceeds the means. Thus, HFHML began exploring ways to monetize its best mortgage loans to increase its financial resources for reinvestment back into the Louisville metropolitan area. **In December of 2016, FBT provided pro bono representation in HFHML’s first-ever loan portfolio sales, of 25 loans in total, sold at par to two different financial institutions.**

“It’s wonderful when a banking law geek like myself can find a way to help such an important community organization, like Habitat for Humanity”, commented **Bill Repasky**, who led the project for FBT, along with Louisville paralegal **Jeanie Eichert**. Partnering with local banks, who realized Community Reinvestment Act credit from the loan purchases, HFHML generated **more than \$783,000** in new capital funding. HFHML’s CEO, Rob Locke volunteered, “FBT’s assistance was vital to the timely closing of both complex transactions. Our Board now intends to take full advantage of the financial opportunity that has been created for us and the community.”

YWCA Fundraiser

More than \$350,000 was raised on February 18 to support **Nashville’s YWCA** domestic violence shelter at **Wine, Women and Shoes**, one of Nashville’s largest annual fundraising events. FBT Nashville Member-in-Charge **Mekesha Montgomery** (center in photo) served as co-chair again this year, and the firm entertained a group of clients and friends at the sold-out lunch event. Entertainment was provided by singer-songwriter Clare Bowen, a star of the television show “Nashville.”



Kandi Hidde Honored As A 2017 Women Of W.I.S.H.

The **Make-A-Wish W.I.S.H.** Indiana initiative honors outstanding women for their career success, significant contributions to their community and personal passion and commitment to Make-A-Wish. This year, Indianapolis Member **Kandi Hidde** received the **Women of W.I.S.H. honor**. Each honoree will use their talent, compassion and leadership qualities to further the mission of Make-A-Wish Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. The initiative raises awareness and funds to grant the wishes of children throughout the community when they need it most.

Kandi raised more than \$8,000 to grant the wish of Ellen, a five-year old fighting Wilms Tumor. Ellen’s wish is to go to Disney World and meet the Disney princesses. Congratulations to Kandi on her outstanding achievement and ability to rally support to grant Ellen’s wish.



Community Engagement & Leadership

Women Lawyers Franklin County (WLFC)

Ashley Olikier, managing associate in Columbus, gave the keynote address at the **75th Anniversary Gala for the Women Lawyers Franklin County** on February 24. Speaking to a sold-out crowd of nearly 300 attendees, including Supreme Court of Ohio Justices, State and Federal Judges, corporate counsel and business leaders, bar association leaders, and attorneys, Ashley, current president of WLFC, provided a history of the organization, as well as recognition and remarks relating to the advancement of women in the profession. In its 75th year of existence, WLFC is one of the oldest female legal organizations in the country and currently consists of nearly 250 members. The event was held at The Boat House at Confluence Park in downtown Columbus and featured performances by the Columbus Jazz Arts Group.

TN-China Network (TNCN) Celebrates Chinese New Year Across Tennessee

On February 20, TNCN held a **Chinese New Year Dinner** with TNCN members, sponsors and the Chinese-invested companies in East Tennessee. Invitees from more than 15 companies and organizations attended the event. At the beginning of the event, Knoxville Vice Mayor Duane Grieve welcomed attendees. FBT Member **Gray Sasser** facilitated an informal discussion among attendees about the experiences of the Chinese companies that have invested in East Tennessee. FBT was thanked for sponsoring the event and helping bring together a great group of people.

Columbus Area LGBTQ Networking Event

On January 12, FBT's Columbus office – led by **Russ Kutell** and **Sam Quimby** – hosted a networking reception for nearly two dozen Columbus-area LGBTQ attorneys and law students. The two-hour reception allowed longtime practitioners in all areas of law, recent law school graduates, and current law students at The Ohio State University and Capital University Law School to forge new connections, swap tips for success in the practice of law, and socialize in an informal setting over appetizers and cocktails. The event was a tremendous success at building new connections among attorneys and law students, reconnecting area practitioners, and fostering solidarity among Columbus's LGBTQ legal community.

CONNECT: Diverse By Design

Diverse by Design is a regional initiative to attract, develop and retain diverse, high-potential talent and move Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky to full inclusion. FBT has been a leading partner in this initiative since its inception. Most recently, FBT was pleased to be selected to serve as mentors at the first two **Mentorship Cafés**, which allows cross-company employee resource groups to collaborate and learn from one another. The firm is heavily involved in leadership with **CONNECT**, which leverages cross-company employee resource groups. **CONNECT** has also created a terrific ERG Toolkit, which is the product of the collective knowledge of some of Cincinnati's top employers. Visit www.cincinnatiachamber.com/Connect/Diverse-by-Design for more information.



Chart Your Own Course Conference

"No More Go It Alone" was the theme for this year's **Charting Your Own Course (CYOC) Conference** in Orlando, in March. CYOC is an annual career development conference for like-minded lawyers of color to connect, share personal stories and learn from each other's trials and triumphs.

Representing FBT at the CYOC this year were **Mary Irozuru, Michelle Harrison, Miles Harrison** and **Kim Amrine**. Because lasting success is harder to achieve without the collective support of friends, peers and trusted advisors, attendees were encouraged to let go of their inhibitions and seek the support they need to achieve personal and professional growth. Conference sessions covered a wide range of topics, including developing effective daily habits, releasing self-limiting mental scripts, and managing tough relationships. CYOC also offered an opportunity to gain practical knowledge during an interactive performance review training session lead by Kim Amrine and other diversity and career development professionals.

During the training session, attendees were given an opportunity to review and critique actual performance evaluations and were given practical tips to improve the quality and effectiveness of their evaluations. Juan Williams, political analyst for FOX News, gave the keynote speech this year. He encouraged the lawyers in the room to use their talent and skills to engage in politics on a deeper level and to reach out to people outside of their communities. Ultimately, CYOC provides an unparalleled and rewarding experience for lawyers of color who are looking for a bit of inspiration and guidance in their careers.



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SPOTLIGHT:

Kimera Hall

Member | Dallas, TX

Kimera has been with FBT for more than 11 years and is currently a member in the Dallas office, although she has also practiced in the Columbus and Indianapolis offices. She currently sits on the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and is the service team leader of the Food & Beverage Service Team. In addition to representing clients on a variety of general corporate, commercial and day-to-day business matters, Kimera also assists clients with various merger and acquisition transactions.

Kimera is dedicated to ensuring that FBT is both a diverse and inclusive place. This dedication manifests itself through her passion for identifying, assessing, and tackling attorney professional development and retention issues that attorneys, in particular diverse attorneys, may face. "Retention is such an important issue for the firm, with respect to both diverse and non-diverse attorneys. The more talent we're able to retain, the better we will be as a whole. However, we can't retain talent if we are not intentional about making sure attorneys are receiving opportunities for proper professional development." From the beginning of her legal career, Kimera has had some amazing mentors and champions who have been strong sponsors for her and who have helped to guide and shape her development. She recognizes just how vital that has been to her career at FBT, but knows that not everyone is able to find a champion. Having been on the receiving end of such great support and sponsorship, Kimera desires to be a champion for as many others as she can. Through mentorship, general advice, simply being a listening ear, and behind-the-scenes advocacy and leadership, Kimera does her best to ensure that our diverse attorneys not only feel as though FBT is the place where they belong, but that they know that FBT is a place where they can develop, advance and thrive.



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SPOTLIGHT:

Fadil Bayyari

Senior Associate | Cincinnati, OH

Fadil is a senior associate in the International Services Group of the firm's Business Combinations & Capital Transactions practice and Co-Chair/Founder of the firm's Middle East & North Africa Desk (MENA Desk). Fadil advises multi-national companies on domestic and international corporate and commercial transactions, including M&A, joint ventures, corporate restructuring, distribution and agency, large-scale OEM equipment projects, manufacturing and supply agreements, and foreign direct investment.

Fadil's interest in diversity and inclusion stems from his passion and commitment to the American-Arab community, particularly at a time when misconceptions about Arabs and Muslims dominate the mainstream narrative. These misconceptions have presented many challenges for members of Fadil's community, and as a response, he is continually striving to promote a philosophy of open-mindedness and solidarity to people from all walks of life. As a result, Fadil has been able to work alongside a wide variety of ethnic groups and cultures and acquired transferable cross-cultural skills, including, but not limited to, language skills in Arabic and Spanish.

Fadil believes that success of any law firm is measured by its employees' diversity, unique experiences and ability to appreciate, connect, and build relationships across various cultures. For example, while working at an international law firm in Dubai and Saudi Arabia, Fadil utilized his Arabic language skills to develop a corporate/commercial practice tailored to Middle East clients. Fadil currently serves as an associate at the Council on Legal Education Opportunity and has also served on the global diversity and associates committees at various international law firms.



Internal Awareness, Development & Training

2016 Diversity & Inclusion Award Winners:

Please join us in congratulating the following individuals who have been recognized for promoting diversity and inclusion in 2016. Nominations were solicited and a selection committee created from last year's winners, selected the deserving individuals. [The 2016 Diversity and Inclusion Awards video*](#) highlights the inclusive work being done by our award winners and our nominees. Many thanks to these individuals – and to all of you – for the positive impact you are making in our firm!



Jason Cebe
Records Manager, Louisville



Ryan Goellner
Associate, Cincinnati



Doug Langdon
Member, Louisville



Noel Shepard
Member, Columbus



Jana Syrcle
Senior Associate, Lexington

*Video is on FBTCentral and will not work outside of FBT's environment.

FBT Louisville – Fostering an Inclusive Culture

Larry Woods, a member in the Louisville office, created an innovative approach to pursuing the firm's diversity and inclusion efforts when he invited the entire office for a pizza party with the goal of having people meet someone they did not know before. As Larry stated, "Our belief is that if you know something interesting about someone else it will increase the firm's institutional knowledge and make it easier for everybody to feel a part of the group. The strength of any organization is the total skill, ability, knowledge and experience of all its people."

Diversity Training Feedback: In March, FBT held unconscious bias training in Cincinnati for its attorneys and staff, who commented on the experience afterwards saying:

"I particularly valued the activity about difficult workplace dynamics. Learning my co-workers' perspectives on working through the presented challenges related to multi-cultural relationships and sexual orientation was enlightening, as others in the session considered cause/effect/solutions that I had not. Learning how those perspectives relate back to the individual experiences of my co-workers and myself was educational."

Pam Roebel

"FBT's Diversity & Inclusion Program is truly one of a kind. The program explored the myriad of "real-life" challenges and obstacles facing people from all walks of life."

Fadil Bayyari

"The firm's recent diversity and inclusion training program proved to be an enriching experience. We were challenged to share personal experiences and to analyze and discuss hypothetical scenarios implicating various aspects of social diversity. This was an eye-opening and community building exercise that served as a valuable reminder to proactively look beyond the assumptions of one's own bubble and to appreciate a given event or circumstance from multiple points of view. As a first-generation member of an Eastern European family that migrated to the U.S. in the 1950's, diversity has been a hallmark of my life that has shaped me and taught me many valuable life lessons. I am proud to be part of a law firm that continually renews its commitment to diversity, in all of its forms, within and beyond the firm's own walls."

Jason Jonovski





Internal Awareness, Development & Training

FBT Women's Initiative: We recently asked several female attorneys to share their thoughts on what FBT's Women's Initiative program means to them. Here's what they said:

"The Women's Initiative at FBT impacted me before I even went to law school. As a client, I was given an opportunity to see the level of commitment and support this firm provides for the women working within the firm and their clients. The events I had the pleasure of attending as a client helped me gain some insights about the relationships between the female attorneys at this firm and certainly impacted my desire to be a part of it."

Jenni Imsande

"The Women's Initiative has given me an instant network of mentors and friends. When I sought advancement the Women's Initiative was there to help me put together a plan and to share my story with others at the firm. When I was going through something personally the Women's Initiative was there to listen and to let me know it was going to be okay. I would not be the attorney or person I am today without the support of these women."

Rebecca Moore

"I value the mentoring relationships I have developed through Women's Initiative events. In my first six months at the firm, I attended a Women's Initiative retreat. The retreat not only provided an invaluable opportunity for me to meet and network with women across the firm, but I also witnessed firsthand the firm's commitment to supporting and empowering women attorneys."

Tessa Castner

"My entire legal career has been at FBT, so sometimes I have wondered if the grass is greener on the other side. But when I speak with my friends working at big firms, small firms, or in-house, I realize how fortunate I am to be at FBT. I don't know a firm in our footprint that has a more robust set of benefits, policies, and resources for its women attorneys. I have personally benefitted from the firm's parental leave and alternative work schedule policies. Just as importantly, I was comfortable discussing these issues with leadership, because I knew these weren't policies in name only, but a reflection of the firm's desire to create an inclusive culture."

Jana Syrcle

"The Women's Initiative provides important networking opportunities to women at FBT. It is important to be able to have conversations about the issues women face in the legal profession in an open and supportive environment. I always leave these events feeling supported, encouraged, and empowered by all of the amazing and talented women in our firm!"

Jessica Williams Schnelker



On May 9th, Women's Initiative Chair Kim Mauer hosted over 60 FBT attorneys and staff in her home. As a firm, we are challenging ourselves to be more inclusive so that our programming is not just targeted to our lawyers.





Awards & Accolades



The Ohio Diversity Council Announces 2017 Top Business Women in Ohio

Kim Amrine received the 2017 “Top Business Women” award given by the **Ohio Diversity Council**. The award was officially presented at the **2017 Ohio Women’s Conference** at the University of Cincinnati on May 9. The Top Business Women Award recognizes women who have reached the top of their professions, and who are respected and successful leaders within their organizations. As drivers of change, innovation and inspiration for others to succeed, they contribute to business growth and the strategic direction of their organizations.

FBT in ‘Best Of Cincinnati’

The 21st annual “Best of Cincinnati” issue by **City Beat** was released on March 29, and recognized FBT as the city’s best law firm. CityBeat, a free weekly newspaper, website and mobile platform serving the area, launched its inaugural Best of Cincinnati issue in 1997 with a stated mission to identify “Greater Cincinnati’s best food, night spots, arts, media, politicians, community activists, sports figures, products and services” and a collection of diverse Cincinnati highlights. The winners are selected by readers and staffers of the publication. This year’s 164-page edition – the biggest ever – is available in print as well as [accessible online](#).



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