



BELL NUNNALLY ANNOUNCES 2019 LCLD FELLOW, PATHFINDERS

March 05, 2019

Bell Nunnally Partner Alana K. Ackels has been selected to the 2019 “Fellows Program” class for the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) – an organization comprised of more than 300 corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners dedicated to building a more open and diverse legal profession. In addition, Bell Nunnally attorneys Katie R. Beaird and Sang Eun “Jennice” Lee were selected to the LCLD’s 2019 “Pathfinder Program.”

“We congratulate Alana, Katie and Jennice on their initiative in working to champion a more diverse and inclusive legal industry – goals the firm strongly supports through both words and actions,” said James Skochdopole, managing partner of Bell Nunnally. “We are proud to support the LCLD, a vital organization whose work has yielded, and continues to yield, meaningful results.”

Ackels was selected as a “Fellow” following past fellows Karen L. Hart, Sonja J. McGill and Kassandra G. McLaughlin. Beaird and Lee were selected for the “Pathfinders” program, following Natasha Gandhi, Scott R. Larson, Saba F. Syed and Murphy C. Sayre.

The LCLD “Fellows Program” members are mid-career professionals who have been nominated by their company or law firm’s executive members in recognition of strong past performance and leadership. The “Fellow” year focuses on relationship-building, in-person training, peer-group projects and extensive contact with the LCLD’s leadership. The “Fellows Program” has trained more than 1,000 mid-career attorneys since 2011.

The LCLD “Pathfinder Program” members are early career attorneys, also nominated by their company or organization, who have three-to-five years of practice experience. The initiative aims to arm its set of diverse, high-potential professionals with practical tools for developing and leveraging internal

professional networks. The "Pathfinder Program" focuses on relationship building, foundational leadership instruction and career development activities.

Ackels is a member of Bell Nunnally's Labor, Employment and Benefits; Litigation; and Workplace Culture and Misconduct Investigation practices. Alana works for companies of all sizes, advising them on how to minimize risk, protect key business assets and navigate the state and federal laws governing the employer-employee relationship. Ackels also prepares employment contracts, confidentiality and non-competition agreements, employee handbooks and other key employment policies. She also guides employers through the process of opting out of workers compensation in Texas by crafting injury benefit plans, managing the rollout, consulting on difficult claims and handling litigation when it arises. Ackels assists employers in difficult terminations, conducts workplace investigations, provides strategic advice for successful corporate transitions, manages reductions in force, counsels clients on difficult leave of absence issues and audits companies for compliance with wage and hour laws.

In the litigation setting, Ackels defends employers in claims involving discrimination, harassment, unpaid wages, trade secrets and non-compete matters. She also handles complex business disputes, non-subscriber negligence claims, certain employee benefit challenges under ERISA and insurance coverage disputes.

Ackels is featured in the Dallas Business Journal's 2019 "40 Under 40" list and in "The Best Lawyers in America 2019." She was named among D Magazine's "Best Lawyers Under 40 in Dallas" in 2018. Ackels has also been featured in Texas Monthly as a "Texas Rising Star" each year since 2015. She earned both her law and undergraduate degrees at Southern Methodist University (J.D., cum laude, 2009 and B.A., cum laude, 2006).

Beaird practices in the firm's Labor, Employment and Benefits group. Beaird works with business managers, in-house legal departments and human resources managers to ensure compliance with a wide array of federal, state and local employment laws, including Title VII, the Fair Labor Standards Act, Family Medical Leave Act and the Fair Housing Act. She has experience defending employers against claims of discrimination, harassment and retaliation before the Texas Workforce Commission, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and in both state and federal court. Beaird also counsels clients on employment agreements, severance agreements, non-compete and non-solicitation agreements and employment policies and handbooks. She is a graduate of Baylor Law School (J.D., magna cum laude, 2014) and Texas A&M University (B.A., summa cum laude, 2011).

Lee is a member of the firm's Intellectual Property practice. She counsels and represents major international and domestic clients in their trademark and copyright portfolio management, including trademark and copyright filings, clearance searches, enforcement and ex parte appeals before the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board. She also handles opposition and cancellation proceedings as well as takedown procedures involving copyright and trademark claims on social media. Lee is a graduate of Syracuse University School of Law (J.D., 2014) and Emory University (B.A., summa cum laude, 2010).



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Related Practices

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