

April 2023 Legal Industry News Highlights: Law Firm Growth and Notable Hires, Industry Awards and Recognition, and a Spotlight on DEI and Women in Law

Article By:

The National Law Review

Welcome back to another edition of the National Law Review's legal industry news roundup! We hope your springtime season has found you happy, safe, and healthy. Please read below for the latest news in law firm hiring and expansion, prominent legal industry awards and recognitions, and a special focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion!

Law Firm Hiring and Expansion

[Rikke Dierssen-Morice](#) has joined [Blank Rome LLP](#)'s Insurance Recovery practice at the firm's [Chicago](#) office. Ms. Dierssen-Morice has a great deal of experience as a litigator, previously representing commercial policyholders in the United States and abroad, and obtaining multimillion dollar recoveries for clients in state and federal courts. She will bolster the already nationally recognized [practice group](#), which was recently honored by Benchmark Litigation as the 2023 Insurance Firm of the Year.

"I am thrilled to welcome Rikke to our firm and leading Insurance Recovery team," said [Grant Palmer](#), [Blank Rome](#)'s Chair and Managing Partner. "With significant experience in numerous industries, including construction, food, and manufacturing, and her strong relationships with major corporations across the region, Rikke will help expand our firm's [insurance recovery services](#) and platform as we continue to grow our Chicago office."

[Tycko & Zavareei LLP](#) has elevated [Andrea R. Gold](#) to equity partner. Ms. Gold, an experienced whistleblower attorney, has spent her legal career advocating for consumers, employees, and [whistleblowers](#) with skill and dedication. She has recovered hundreds of millions of dollars for class members in cases against major banks, technology companies, and insurance companies. In the process, she has been recognized by a number of prominent organizations over the years, including The National Trial Lawyers, Top 100 Civil Plaintiff Lawyers, and Super Lawyers.

"Andrea has been key to the growth and success of [the firm](#) over the past 16 years," said firm partner [Hassan Zavareei](#). "She is a phenomenal lawyer, and I am elated that she has elected to join as an equity partner."

[Yan Zhang](#) has joined global law firm [Norton Rose Fulbright](#) in San Francisco as a partner. Mr. Zhang has a great deal of experience in [corporate law](#), mergers and acquisitions, and [securities](#), previously representing entrepreneurs, boards of directors, and VC/PE investors in public offering and private placement of securities, cross-border mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and licensing and foreign direct investment, [general corporate governance](#), and more.

[Jeff Cody](#), Norton Rose Fulbright's US Managing Partner, said of Mr. Zhang, "Yan joining us demonstrates our ongoing commitment to bringing in highly regarded corporate and M&A lawyers. We also continue to focus on growth in California, which adds to him being an outstanding fit. His international practice will benefit our clients in the US and globally."

[Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky](#) has announced that [Gretchen E. Moore](#) has been elected Firm President, effective April 1, 2023. Ms. Moore, the firm's first woman President, has been with [Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky](#) for 19 years, serving as the chair of the firm & e-Discovery Group, as well as the co-chair of the firm's [Investigation](#) Group, and driving force of the firm's Women's Initiative. She will lead the firm on a platform of communication, accountability, and development and growth, working closely with the newly elected firm officers.

"Moral excellence comes about as a result of habit," says [David Strassburger](#), Immediate Past President of the firm and Gretchen's predecessor. "We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, and brave by doing brave acts. Gretchen leads with these ancient lessons in mind. I could not be more confident in the success of our firm under her leadership."

"I am so proud of Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky and its people. I look forward to leading, supporting, and developing our talented team and upholding this firm's mission of 'Committed to Our Clients. Dedicated to Each Other. Devoted to Our Communities.'" said [Ms. Moore](#).

Legal Industry Awards and Recognition

[Moore & Van Allen PLLC](#) has been recognized as a Global Competition Review 2023 "Behavioural Matter of the Year – Americas" award winner. The award, which recognizes creative, strategic, and innovative work in criminal or civil proceedings against [antitrust](#) enforcement authorities, was given to the firm for securing complete acquittals in a high-profile Department of Justice [criminal antitrust prosecution](#) of executives in the chicken industry. The awards were presented at GCR's [13th annual awards event](#) on March 28 in Washington, D.C.

"We are honored to be recognized for our efforts in this case and congratulate the lawyers for each of the other executives for their excellent work, perseverance, and collaboration," said [John A. Fagg Jr.](#), Moore & Van Allen's lead counsel and [White Collar Defense & Investigations](#) Co-head. "What's most important is that we succeeded in clearing our client's good name. After three grueling trials, justice prevailed for all the defendants."

[Stacey George](#), partner at [Varnum LLP](#), was presented with the Affiliate Service Achievement Award at the most recent [Commercial Alliance of Realtors](#) awards ceremony. Ms. George, who works with [the firm](#)'s Real Estate practice group, was honored for her work on the CAR Forms Committee, where she manages updates to transaction forms used by CAR members in daily buy, sell and lease transactions.

As a practiced [real estate](#) attorney, [Ms. George](#) represents business owners, residential real estate developers, property buyers and sellers, builders, and condominium associations. Her practice is

primarily focused on consulting and negotiating on a variety of real estate-related documents for both residential and commercial real estate matters, including leases, buy and sell agreements, financing documents, and easements.

The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and the Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management have named [Steptoe & Johnson PLLC](#) to the 19th Annual “[Best Places to Work in Kentucky](#)” list. The firm is listed in the “large companies” category, which includes employers with 500 or more U.S. employees. [Steptoe & Johnson](#) has now been named to the list six years in a row.

For selection to the “Best Places to Work” list, [employers](#) are assessed by the Workforce Research Group, examining the company’s employee policies and procedures and completing a survey of employee engagement and satisfaction. The final rankings of each company will be announced at an awards dinner in June.

Law Firm DEI News and Women in Law

[George D. Medlock, Jr.](#), a partner in [Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP](#)’s Birmingham office, has been selected as the recipient of the 2023 Gail K. Johnson Award from the University of Alabama’s Black Law Students Association. The annual award recognizes an [Alabama](#) attorney who is dedicated to serving the minority community.

Mr. Medlock, [Bradley](#)’s director of [inclusion and diversity](#), leads the firm’s DEI efforts, including recruitment, training and retention of diverse attorneys. He additionally works to promote a workplace culture that reflects Bradley’s core values of inclusion and respect.

In recognition of Women’s History Month, [ArentFox Schiff LLP](#) is sponsoring the National Women’s History Museum’s [companion website](#) for their new exhibition, “We Who Believe in Freedom: Black Feminist DC.” The initiative, which is led by [the firm](#)’s Women’s Initiative Network, focuses on developing and supporting women’s leadership and advancement by exploring and addressing the many ways gender can impact one’s career trajectory.

The “[We Who Believe in Freedom: Black Feminist DC](#)” exhibition was curated by historians Sherie M. Randolph and Kendra T. Field. It spotlights the stories and voices of more than 20 Black feminist organizers and theorists, including Anna Julia Cooper, Mary Church Terrell, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Loretta Ross, whose work changed the lives of millions of Black women across the US. The in-person exhibition will be open and free to the public at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library through September 2024.

[Adriana Perez](#), attorney at [Hunton Andrews Kurth](#), has been selected to the National Association of Women Lawyers’ [2023 Rising List](#). Since 1899, the NAWL has sought to provide leadership, a collective voice, and essential resources to advance women in the [legal profession](#) and advocate for the equality of women under the law. Ms. Perez has been recognized for her growth as a young lawyer, as well as her trajectory to become an industry leader.

[Ms. Perez](#) is a member of [the firm](#)’s national Insurance Recovery practice and is based in the Miami, Florida office. Her practice is focused primarily on advising policyholders in [insurance coverage](#), reinsurance matters, and other business litigation. She has represented clients in federal and state courts in [insurance coverage](#), [reinsurance](#), and other complex insurance litigation matters.

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