

# Facets



# Winter '18

## To Our Readers

The current social climate has brought into sharp focus both the challenges and opportunities for diversity and inclusion, in the legal industry and beyond.

Our Q&A with five Skadden colleagues who are Muslim sheds light on the prejudice that Muslims contend with, as well as the ways their allies can make a difference. We also spoke with Juan Cartagena, the general counsel of LatinoJustice PRLDEF, who discusses his organization's civil rights advocacy and efforts to broaden the pipeline of Latino law school students. Recent developments have spurred attorneys throughout the firm to redouble their commitment to public service — in that vein, we highlight some of the efforts undertaken by our affinity networks.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions for future editions. Please email me at [eric.friedman@skadden.com](mailto:eric.friedman@skadden.com) or the magazine at [facets@skadden.com](mailto:facets@skadden.com).

Regards,



**Eric Friedman**  
Executive Partner

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# Muslim Attorneys Share Their Experiences in Big Law, Society

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**Faiz Ahmad**  
**Ayesha Minhaj**  
**Noha Moustafa**  
**Zahir Rahman**  
**Amr Razzak**

Moderator

**Robin Davidson**

**Robin:** Thank you all for being willing to share your experiences. Let's start with the topic of working in Big Law, where mentoring and networking are crucial parts of your careers. To what extent do you seek opportunities to network with fellow Muslims? And is it difficult to do that?

**Faiz:** I sometimes find it difficult, but that's not due to the firm. My practice is in Wilmington, and we're a smaller office. Our legal community is working to increase its diversity. My connection to other Muslim attorneys is purely personal, people I know from college and law school in the D.C. area. It can be a little isolating at times — like during Ramadan, when you're fasting alone. I remember attending a conference as an associate, and one of the moderators asked the room whether there were partners at our respective firms who looked like us. It made me think critically about whether there was a path for me here. I stayed with the firm and succeeded because of the support of my mentors, including Bob Pincus, Allison Land and Steve Daniels. As a junior associate, seeing people like you in senior positions is empowering.

**Amr:** I don't know if there were other Muslim attorneys at Skadden when I joined in 2000 — it didn't feel like there were any. My mentors have not been Arab or Muslim either. They've been folks like Ken King, Phyllis Korff, Alec Tracy, Michael Gisser and Jonathan Stone. Our generation is the first in which Arabs and Muslims have more frequently chosen careers in the law. My dad was a doctor, and you'll find a lot more doctors and engineers among Muslim professionals than lawyers.

**Ayesha:** Both my parents are doctors. No one in my parents' generation was a lawyer so I didn't have the same guidance I would

have had if I had gone to medical school, but many Muslim kids in my generation did go to law school. I would say it's not hard to find Muslim attorneys generally now, but it's still challenging to find them in Big Law.

**Zahir:** It's definitely harder to find people who have traveled the Big Law path. The community of Muslim lawyers in D.C. is pretty large, but when you narrow it to lawyers at large law firms, it gets much smaller. I was really happy that Noha was here on my first day. We've supported each other in finding mentors and establishing networks in D.C.

**Noha:** It makes a big difference having even one person you can identify with. We network with other Muslims in the city, but it's not the same as having people in the firm who you work with every day.

**Robin:** How does the current social climate in the U.S. and around the world impact you as Muslims?

**Amr:** Unfortunately, negative stereotypes and impressions about Muslims or Arabs are everywhere — even here in the Bay Area. And the climate has gotten decidedly worse over the past year and a half, with the degradation of political discourse. There are more physical attacks and hate crimes, and I believe a sense of physical danger, which is a new phenomenon. That said, more and more Muslims are both finding their public voice and getting support from all corners. It has increased people's desire to learn and appreciate the history and experiences of other communities of color.

**Faiz:** I always wonder what people's first impression of me is, when they see my name in writing or in an email before they've spoken to me — what preconceived notions



### Amr Razzak

Partner / Corporate / Palo Alto

“I was born in Egypt. My family moved to England when I was a baby and to the U.S. when I was 3. I grew up in Baltimore, Maryland. I studied international affairs in college, and afterward I joined the Peace Corps and was posted to northern Cameroon. I had traveled to Egypt, but the Peace Corps was the first time I lived in an area with a predominant Muslim influence. I then did a joint degree in law and international affairs, thinking I would work in political development, but I tried Big Law and loved it.”

### Ayesha Minhaj

Associate / Litigation / Palo Alto

“My parents are from India and moved here in the early 1980s. I spent a few years in India as a toddler, but I was born and raised in Davis, California. I studied political science and journalism at UCLA and worked briefly at NBC. I ended up going to law school because I feel that more Muslims need to be involved in the institutions that directly affect us.”

**“As Muslim Americans, our concept of our nationality is so tied to this country; we think we are 100 percent American. The Muslim ban made me begin to think critically about my nationality, my faith and even my career.”** – Zahir Rahman

they might have and whether it will affect my ability to serve them and be an asset to our firm. But other than for a short period after 9/11, I’ve never felt particularly fearful as an individual. However, in the last year, as hateful rhetoric is becoming normal and especially because we travel so much for work and sometimes to places we are not familiar with, I’ve thought, “If I get stopped here, what could happen? What do I need to be careful of, and how should I react if confronted by someone?” I had never felt that way before.

**Zahir:** We work at a premier law firm, and that feels empowering. But when I think about being profiled or dealing with random people on the street, I feel I can be reduced

to a stereotype. As Muslim Americans, our concept of our nationality is so tied to this country; we think we are 100 percent American. The Muslim ban made me begin to think critically about my nationality, my faith and even my career. I never imagined myself at a firm like Skadden, but here I am. And the last year has forced me to think about whether I’m using my privilege in the best way to make this country a better place to live.

**Ayesha:** I agree. I’m very aware of my identity in a way that I wasn’t before. Day-to-day, everything is fine. I go to work and live my life like everyone else, but every few weeks or months something happens in America or elsewhere in the world, and I have to stop

and recalibrate. We are constantly exposed to negative headlines, fear-mongering and Islamophobia.

**Noha:** For me, this shift happened after 9/11. There haven’t been more or fewer incidents of people treating me a certain way now as opposed to then. Maybe it’s because I have always worn a hijab and been hyper-aware of how I look every second of every day, but I don’t feel any differently now than I did 16 years ago.

The one thing that does make me feel different now is that I feel empowered as a lawyer. Knowing how to use the legal system, but also knowing its limits, makes me feel bolder and more confident. That sense of confidence and empowerment — I want all Muslim women who wear the hijab to feel it.

**Amr:** I try to distinguish between those who are malevolent and those who are just ignorant. You can try to address ignorance with outreach and exposure. Malevolence is different. I also worry when bias comes from



## Zahir Rahman

Associate / Energy and Infrastructure Projects / Washington, D.C.

“I was born and raised in Baltimore. My parents are from Bangladesh and came to the United States in the late 1970s. After college, I lived in Morocco for two years as a Fulbright scholar studying youth and activism in the Arab Spring.”

## Noha Moustafa

Associate / Litigation / Washington, D.C.

“I was born in Egypt. My family moved to the U.S. in the early 1990s when I was 4 or 5, and I grew up primarily in Michigan. After college, I spent a year living and working in Egypt. I studied human rights and political science in undergrad with the goal of working on human rights policy.”

an authority, like the government or the media. That has to be challenged.

**Ayesha:** Even though I’ve never endured it directly, I have friends who have faced discrimination or been the victim of a hate crime. Every Muslim has these stories — either something they experienced directly or that someone with one degree of separation has experienced. It really hit home when, earlier this year, my childhood mosque was vandalized. Davis, California, is about as “progressive” and “educated” as you can get. If these incidents can happen there, it’s hard to think about what may be happening to Muslims in other parts of the country.

**Zahir:** Growing up post-9/11, my parents taught me that the only way people would understand Islam and Muslims was through us and the way we acted. From a young age, I took that very seriously. I worked really hard, was always courteous, opened doors for people. And I did that because I thought I could be a good example for Islam.

But it’s exhausting. It’s hard enough worrying about whether I’m doing well for myself without adding to it the feeling that you represent all Muslims in every single interaction. My view now is that people are going to think whatever they want about my faith and my heritage despite what I do. Since 9/11, people have had ample opportunity to study Islam, find out what Muslims are about. And many still think that Islam and terrorism are synonymous.

**Noha:** Whether it’s the Muslim ban or a man getting shot by police, diverse attorneys have to come to work the next day and act like nothing happened. It’s really challenging to compartmentalize your emotions like that. Emotions factor into people’s ability to work, and especially the ability to produce high-quality work. You want to be able to have conversations about these incidents to help process your feelings.

**Amr:** Having a venue to process and talk to others who are supportive of what you’re

going through is incredibly valuable. Notwithstanding the fact that Skadden doesn’t have a lot of folks like us, ethnically and religiously, there are a lot of folks like us in the sense that they are open to hearing what you have to say, they sincerely want to help, and they are supportive and curious.

**Robin:** When the travel ban first took effect there was a call for *pro bono* help, not just from Skadden, but the legal community more broadly. Did you volunteer and what was your reaction to the response?

**Ayesha:** I remember receiving an email on Saturday morning the week the ban was announced saying that the firm needed volunteers. It was Super Bowl weekend, but within a few hours dozens of attorneys had volunteered. There are only a handful of Muslim attorneys at Skadden, so the overwhelming majority of people were non-Muslims. It was really encouraging to see that level of mobilization and engagement.



## Faiz Ahmad

Partner / M&A / Wilmington

"I was born in the U.S. and raised in the Chicago suburbs and then outside Washington, D.C. My father emigrated from India in the late 1960s to study in the United States, and my mother arrived in the early 1970s. I've been to India many times but did not see myself living there. I'm very clearly American."

**"I always wonder what people's first impression of me is, when they see my name in writing or in an email before they've spoken to me — what preconceived notions they might have and whether it will affect my ability to serve them and be an asset to our firm."** – Faiz Ahmad

**Noha:** I went to Dulles International Airport with several colleagues. When we first heard about the travel ban, we were stunned and wanted to go to the airport as quickly as we could. One of us sent an internal email asking if we could go, and we were told the firm was working on it. A few hours later, an email went out to everyone saying we could — and should — start volunteering the next morning.

**Faiz:** I thought the response was great. I'm always proud of our firm, but that weekend reminded me of the exceptional colleagues we get to practice with.

**Robin:** What are other ways your colleagues and the firm can be supportive?

**Zahir:** I met Faiz at a career fair at Penn Law School. Seeing that a Muslim of South Asian descent could succeed at a law firm like Skadden was really inspiring. It was important to me to find a place that not only tolerated the fact that I am Muslim, but embraced it, and Skadden was like that.

As a summer associate at Skadden during Ramadan, I wasn't able to attend a number of lunches and dinners. Our recruitment office found the Capital Area Muslim Bar Association for me, and I got to meet other Muslim attorneys who worked in Big Law.

**Noha:** Support from the firm is not to be understated. We held our second iftar dinner this year and so many colleagues made an effort to attend. Mitch Ettinger, as the D.C. office leader, also said a few words. This year he had been traveling and literally came straight off the plane to the dinner. That meant a lot to me personally. These are good examples of concrete ways colleagues can support Muslims. Create prayer rooms, attend iftars, go out to dinner at 8:30 during Ramadan so those who are fasting can participate.

**Ayesha:** Little things make a big difference. I really appreciate how respectful people have been of Eid — essentially the equivalent of Muslim Christmas. Most people don't know what it is or when it's happening, but when

I explain why I'll be out of the office that day, everyone has been very understanding.

**Faiz:** In large part, people have been very kind to me, and not just at the firm. One of my clients called me about a year ago, and he said, "Listen, we've never met in person, but just based on your name I am making some assumptions. And I want you to know that we're thinking about you." It was such a nice conversation, completely out of the blue.

**Amr:** I had a similar experience. Clients really do care. When you work with people regularly, they appreciate the work you do for them and respect you for who you are.



# Skadden Affinity Networks Spurred Into Action

In 2017, Skadden's New York office's Black and African American Affinity Network launched a Social Justice Subcommittee with the goal of finding *pro bono* opportunities to allow group members to address issues affecting African American communities.

Led by the subcommittee's co-chairs, associates **Creighton Davis** and **Brittany Hazelwood**, the firm has partnered with The Bronx Defenders to host monthly legal clinics for victims of excessive force. As of October 2017, approximately 10 affinity network members have participated in the clinics, helping more than 100 people file claims of excessive force by police officers or other government agents. With the guidance of Skadden partner **Rossie Turman**, the affinity network also has teamed up with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law to research

how recent changes in Department of Justice policy may affect the quality of policing in jurisdictions subject to consent decrees. Under Attorney General Jeff Sessions, the DOJ has encouraged limited federal intervention in police departments. The *pro bono* team has conducted preliminary research to examine whether data indicate that the departments are less effective and communities less safe as a result. The team is now analyzing the research to determine whether a study highlighting the impact of these changes is warranted.

Creighton and Brittany's commitment to social justice predates their joining Skadden. During law school, Creighton worked at a criminal defense and re-entry clinic with the Bronx Legal Aid Society and Brittany served as a research assistant and communications director for

**“Several of the issues that colored activism in the past few years ... have highlighted concerns and systematic vulnerabilities that have existed for many years. People are really energetic about working on these issues right now.”**

Columbia Law School Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw, a leading civil rights advocate and the founder of the #SayHerName campaign, which was created to raise awareness about women and girls killed by police officers. The acrimonious social climate has deepened their commitment to social activism and *pro bono* service, as it has for their fellow affinity network members.

“Several of the issues that colored activism in the past few years, such as police misconduct and calls for policing reform, have highlighted concerns and systematic vulnerabilities that have existed for many years,” Brittany says. “People are really energetic about working on these issues right now, and we want to offer opportunities for those hoping to capitalize on that energy.”

Many of Skadden’s more than two dozen other local affinity networks also have recommitted to public service.

In October, the Chicago office’s Asian and Middle Eastern Affinity Network partnered with the National Immigrant Justice Center to host the first of a regular series of naturalization clinics. Associate **Peter Cheun** has led the effort, recruiting participants and overseeing the logistics. Like Creighton and Brittany, Peter has long been dedicated to making a difference — during law school, for example, he volunteered at the Korean American Bar Association’s monthly legal clinic, where his work included immigration assistance — and has been spurred by the upheaval of the past year to bolster his efforts.

“This is something I would have been doing regardless, but when the first travel ban was announced, it was a wakeup call, making

clear the urgency of the moment,” Peter says. “There’s a natural connection between our affinity network and this work. For many of us of Asian and Middle Eastern descent, the immigrant experience doesn’t date as far back as it does for some of our fellow Americans. With that in mind, these clinics help us renew and affirm our citizenship by helping others achieve their own.”

Associate **J. Raul Garcia** reached out to his fellow New York LGBT Affinity Network members when he learned that the Transgender Law Center was looking for volunteer attorneys to draft an attorneys’ manual for representing transgender immigrants.

“As a law student, I learned of the misery that transgender immigrants go through in immigration detention centers, which in reality are prisons. This incredibly vulnerable population suffers further verbal and sexual harassment within the detention centers, the same violence that prompted them to flee their countries of origin in the first place in search of asylum,” Raul says. “When I presented the opportunity to the affinity network, associates **Andres Caicedo** and **Andrew Karp** and summer associates Christina Zhang and Rachel Malhiet quickly signed up to draft chapters.”

Creighton says he expects the current social climate to have a lasting impact on the members of the affinity networks and their commitment to *pro bono* service.

“This past year has created a sense of urgency to get others involved and widen the scope of our work over the long term,” he says. “We’re committed to continuing to attack the injustices people and communities are experiencing.”



Protestors at JFK International Airport marching against the January 2017 travel ban.

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**"Seeking to make systemic changes in law using classwide approaches is the bread and butter of what we do."**

## Fighting for Systemic Change and Changes to the System

Juan Cartagena, President and General Counsel, LatinoJustice PRLDEF

**Juan Cartagena** joined the Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund as a summer intern in 1979, following his first year at Columbia Law School. Founded in 1972, the New York-based nonprofit was the first Latino-centered civil rights organization on the East Coast and, with a series of successes in support of voting, employment and education rights, had already established itself as the preeminent legal advocacy group for Puerto Ricans in the mainland United States.

The internship proved pivotal in Juan's development as a leading activist for Latino rights. Prior to joining PRLDEF, Juan planned to support his community as a criminal defense attorney. "As I started getting more deeply involved in issues of housing and employment discrimination, I began to recognize that criminal defendants were beset by a wide range of obstacles and socioeconomic pressures. I decided I wanted to try to make a dent in their problems by looking at these larger issues," Juan recalls.

After graduating from Columbia, Juan spent eight years at PRLDEF as a staff attorney. He continued to advocate for civil rights at the Community Service Society of New York, from 1988 until 2011 (with a break from 1990-1991, when he served as the legal director of Puerto Rico's Department of Puerto Rican Community Affairs, in New York), ultimately becoming CSS' general counsel and vice president for advocacy and directing its Mass Imprisonment & Reentry Initiative.

In 2011, Juan returned to the recently renamed LatinoJustice PRLDEF as president and general counsel. In addition to supervising the 10 attorneys in the organization's Manhattan, Long Island, and Orlando, Florida, offices, Juan remains active in both policy and litigation matters, focusing on criminal justice, policing, drug policy reform and the effects of mass imprisonment on Latino communities.

"Generally, our model is the NAACP Legal Defense Fund model, in which you pick your issues, you look for the best cases, and you litigate," Juan says. "Seeking to make systemic changes in law using classwide approaches is the bread and butter of what we do."

Among other matters, the organization has helped lead successful challenges in Alabama, Pennsylvania and South Carolina against the recent wave of anti-immigrant laws, and helped secure a settlement limiting stops, frisks and arrests in private apartment buildings in New York.

LatinoJustice PRLDEF also has been actively involved in Puerto Rico's Hurricane Maria rebuilding efforts. The organization sent a team to the island in October to learn how attorneys can help and has begun training hundreds of volunteers to help residents apply for insurance benefits, disaster assistance and compensation for lost wages.

Skadden *pro bono* coordinator **Ron Tabak** is a member of LatinoJustice PRLDEF's board and was on the search committee that recommended Juan as president and general counsel. "Juan was a perfect fit for the position. In addition to his long history with the organization, he is highly regarded in the public interest legal community as a leader in a variety of areas relating to Latinos, including immigration, voting rights and discrimination against workers," Ron says. "He has been a forceful and very successful leader for LatinoJustice PRLDEF."

Along with their litigation and advocacy efforts, Juan and LatinoJustice PRLDEF also spend considerable time and resources addressing the underrepresentation of Puerto Ricans and other Latinos in the legal industry. "Helping to increase the diversity of the legal profession has been part and parcel of our work from day one," Juan says.

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**“What gives me hope is the newfound recognition of intersectionality ... what affects several groups that are on the margins, that are being ostracized, affects us all.”**

While Hispanics constitute the fastest-growing share of the work force, the legal industry remains predominantly and disproportionately white. “Collectively, we haven’t moved the needle that far when it comes to the total proportion of people of color who are lawyers,” Juan says. “For Hispanics, it still hovers at about 4.4 percent — it hasn’t really shifted much in 20 years.”

The causes are both opaque and multifaceted, Juan says. The consistently low number of Latino lawyers has led to the emergence of few role models to inspire students to enter the profession. The recent recession has also resulted in lower rates of law school attendance, particularly for Latinos. “For about six years, there were significant declines — people weren’t even applying to school,” Juan says. “That’s in large part because the recession still hasn’t completely rebounded in the legal job market. Prior to 2008, people were already questioning the viability of becoming a lawyer in a tight labor market and amassing hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. These concerns become even more acute for groups that are already at the margins.”

LatinoJustice PRLDEF’s efforts to encourage Latino students to attend law school include LAWbound, a week-long program offered twice a year that helps college students navigate the law school admissions process. The LAWbound academy provides extensive pre-law school services, such as guidance on selecting potential schools and applying for financial assistance. Participants get to meet with current law students and attorneys and are offered mentoring opportunities for the duration of their legal educations. “During the academy, we expose the participants to law firms, prosecutors’ offices, the judiciary, the criminal defense bar, civil rights organizations — everything we can — and lead workshops on topics like financial planning and the admissions process,” Juan says. “We try to get them really motivated for law school.”

Through LAWbound, LSAT prep courses and counseling workshops, LatinoJustice PRLDEF has provided assistance to more than 10,000 prospective law students. In addition, in 2017, the organization revived

its corporate law internship program, following a hiatus during the recession. As part of the two-year program, Latino law students spend their 1L summer at an in-house law department and their second summer at a law firm, with the expectation that one or both will make the student an offer.

Recently, LatinoJustice PRLDEF has sought to broaden the Latino law student pipeline by engaging high school students in social justice campaigns, such as an anti-stop-and-frisk initiative. “We’re not asking the students if they want to become attorneys,” Juan says. “With stop and frisk, we deliberately went out to find high school youth who already knew the issue, who were subject to the abuse, and had them help us figure out how to express their frustrations. The campaign exposed them to how lawyers engage in social justice movements and may eventually move the dial toward an interest in law.”

Despite the recent wave of discriminatory legislation and the persistence of the diversity challenges within the legal profession, Juan sees reasons for optimism regarding LatinoJustice PRLDEF’s mission.

Having recently celebrated its 45th anniversary, LatinoJustice PRLDEF has helped produce some of the Latino legal role models that the legal community has been lacking. “We’re asking the attorneys who have already gone through the process to give back,” Juan says. This year, the organization launched the Next Generation Leadership Program, which pairs high school and college students with mentors based on each student’s background and interests.

Juan also believes a newly emerging unity among marginalized communities will strengthen all of their efforts to support equality and fight discrimination.

“What gives me hope,” Juan says, “is the newfound recognition of intersectionality — the recognition that what affects several groups that are on the margins, that are being ostracized, affects us all.”

# News

## Skadden Partners Rated Among Top Women Lawyers

*Crain's Chicago Business* has named real estate partner **Nancy Olson** to its list of the city's "Most Influential Women Lawyers." The publication noted that "Olson has led many high-profile and transformative transactions, including both domestic and foreign assets and complex cross-border aspects" and called her a "leader in the senior living sector."

Global corporate finance co-head **Stacy Kanter** was named one of the "Top Women in Law" by the *New York Law Journal*. The publication highlighted Stacy's position as a "go to" attorney for companies and investment banks. "In less than two years, her personal practice has facilitated more than \$53 billion in capital markets offerings," the article said. Stacy's commitment to promoting diversity, including as a global Diversity and Inclusion co-chair, also was highlighted.

## Lea Haber Kuck Speaks on Diversity in the ADR Industry

New York international litigation and arbitration partner **Lea Haber Kuck** spoke at the Minority Corporate Counsel Association's 2017 Creating Pathways to Diversity Conference. The conference addressed the lack of diversity in the demographics of neutrals and steps the alternative dispute resolution community can take to diversify the profession, as well as best practices for selecting the right neutral while anticipating possible challenges to neutral disclosures.

## Navy Vet and Paralympian Speaks at Veterans Day Program

In November 2017, Skadden employees gathered for a Veterans Day program featuring Brad Snyder, a retired U.S. Navy officer and explosive ordnance disposal technician

who was blinded by a bomb in Afghanistan. Following his injury, Brad competed as a swimmer in both the London and Rio Paralympics, setting several world records and winning five gold medals.

## Ken King, Thomas Ivey Discuss Board Diversity

Palo Alto corporate partners **Ken King** and **Thomas Ivey** spoke at the 2017 Corporate Governance Intelligence Council — Bay Area Regional Exchange, hosted in Skadden's Palo Alto office. The interactive discussion among in-house counsel and corporate secretaries focused on the latest developments in sustainability, board diversity and other hot topics in corporate governance.

## Panelists Discuss In-House Counsel as Diversity Allies



In March 2017, Skadden hosted "In-House Counsel as Diversity Allies," a panel discussion organized by Law & Re-Order. Panelists discussed how in-house lawyers can best use their unique position to promote diverse talent at the legal service providers with whom they work and what both majority and minority firms can do to set and meet diversity benchmarks. Panelists also addressed the growing impact of American Bar Association Resolution 113, which urges corporate clients to direct a greater percentage of the legal services they purchase to law firms that show real progress on diversity.

## Firm Recognized for Support of Hong Kong LGBTI Anti-Discrimination Legislation

An article in the *South China Morning Post* recognized Skadden for our support of a joint statement issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Gender Research Centre at the Chinese University of Hong Kong calling on the Hong Kong government to pass legislation against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status. "By signing the statement, a number of major Hong Kong employers — leaders in their industries by revenue and size of workforce — have for the first time called for the introduction of LGBTI anti-discrimination legislation," the article said.

## Firm Hosts Four GC Conversations on Diversity

In June 2017, Skadden hosted two general counsel conversations on diversity, one as part of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's Fellows Alumni Symposium, at which New York corporate finance partner **Dwight Yoo** provided welcoming remarks, and the other as part of a Skadden program New York banking partner **Rossie Turman** initiated with Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals GC Michael-Bryant Hicks. In November, Rossie moderated a conversation with Skadden alumnus Atiba Adams, the GC of Mars Global Petcare, and in February, Rossie spoke with another alum, Cox Enterprises GC Juliette Pryor, as part of Skadden's celebration of Black History Month.

## Felicia Gerber Perlman Selected as a Flex Success Award Honoree

Chicago corporate restructuring partner **Felicia Gerber Perlman** was selected by the Diversity & Flexibility Alliance as a 2017 Flex Success Award honoree. Felicia and firm client Charles Baker, the general counsel of



## David Herlihy Participates in Panel Discussion on London Diversity and Inclusion Issues

In May, London partner and Diversity Committee member **David Herlihy** spoke at the FTI Consulting event “Diversity and Inclusion in the City: Balance Network.” FTI invited speakers from organizations with long-standing “D&I” programs — including Skadden, Bank of England, Barclays and Bloomberg — to talk about the importance of, and the business case for, diversity and inclusion.

David said the panel provided an opportunity to share ideas with other organizations committed to fostering diversity in the U.K. “As lawyers, we make a living from the law, including its most basic principle that everyone is created equal,” he said. “For us more than any other professional services organizations, equality should never end at the statute books. We have to give breath to it in all aspects of our legal practice, including hiring, retention and promotion. But the moral and business case for D&I extends far beyond law firms, and Skadden welcomes chances to work with others who are interested in the same outcome.”

The panelists discussed their own personal experiences, their firms’ initiatives and the ways in which D&I issues impact their businesses. More and more U.K. clients are asking professional services suppliers, for example, to ensure that their teams reflect society at large.

The panel also agreed on the importance of emphasizing “both of the letters in D&I” — in addition to recruiting a diverse workforce, businesses must foster an inclusive environment where people are able to bring their “whole self” to work. “Not only is it the right thing to do, results show that it’s the smart thing to do,” David added. “That’s as true for us in London as it is in the United States and across our entire office network.”

Ball Corporation, were nominated together and recognized for their commitment and success in creating and working in a flexible environment.

## Skadden Co-Hosts Discussion on LGBT Judges and Judicial Officers

In June 2017, Skadden’s LGBT Affinity Network and the LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York (LeGaL) co-hosted a panel discussion and reception recognizing New York’s LGBT judges and judicial officers, “Out on the Bench: Perspectives, Challenges and Opportunities Relating to LGBT Diversity in the Judiciary.” Skadden litigation partner and former U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York Judge **Stephen Robinson** moderated the discussion, which featured Judge Pamela Chen of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York; Judge Josh Hanshaft of the Civil Court of the City of New York; Justice Marcy Kahn of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Division, First Department; and Judge Paul Oetken of the Southern District.

## African American/Black Affinity Network Hosts Evening With Clippers

The Los Angeles African American/Black Attorney Affinity Network hosted an evening of networking and basketball at the Staples Center in March 2017. Guests included a variety of clients and potential clients. The group cheered on the L.A. Clippers as they took on the Milwaukee Bucks. The Clippers’ general counsel, Nicole Duckett-Fricke, invited the group down to the floor to shoot free throws before the game.

## Chicago Office Hosts Diversity Reception

In July 2017, the Chicago office hosted its sixth annual citywide diversity reception, “Conversations on Inclusion,” featuring

**“For us more than any other professional services organizations, equality should never end at the statute books. We have to give breath to it in all aspects of our legal practice, including hiring, retention and promotion.”**

– David Herlihy

discussions about racial equality, socioeconomic differences, the LGBT community and intent versus impact. The event provided the more than 200 attendees from Chicago’s legal community an opportunity to talk about diversity in the legal industry and expand their professional networks.

### **Firm Launches Professional Development Conference for Midlevel Women Associates**



Attendees at the Women’s Midlevel Conference.

In October 2017, Skadden hosted our inaugural Women’s Midlevel Conference to support our fourth- to sixth-year U.S. women associates in their professional development. Held in our New York office, the conference focused on such areas as leadership, networking and community-building. Panel discussions included “Paving the Way — Career Path Discussion With Women Partners,” “Understanding the Process for Advancement at the Firm,” “Mothers in Law — Striking the Balance,” “Thriving in All Areas of Your Life” and “Practical Midlevel Associate Business Development Activities.”

### **Washington, DC Office Hosts DNC Chairman Tom Perez**

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Washington, D.C. office hosted a conversation in September 2017 with Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chairman Tom Perez. Washington, D.C. *pro bono* counsel

**Don Salzman** made introductory remarks; litigation associates and Latinx Affinity Network members **Erica Perdomo** and **Gina Cardenas** led the conversation. Tom shared his experience as a first-generation American, speaking to the struggle currently facing the working class with regard to voting rights. He also discussed his role at the DNC and the work he’s doing with Democrats across the party’s political spectrum.

### **Women’s Initiative and Morgan Stanley Hold Leadership Workshop**

In November 2017, Skadden’s Women’s Initiatives Committee and Morgan Stanley’s Legal and Compliance Division’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee held an evening workshop and reception on leadership and authenticity. The workshop was led by Susan Dunlap & Associates, a firm offering leadership and executive workshops and coaching to help lawyers and other professionals become more successful and fulfilled in work and life. Partner **Ann Beth Stebbins** gave opening remarks on behalf of the Women’s Initiatives Committee.

### **Comedian Hasan Minhaj and Associate Ayesha Minhaj Speak in New York**



Ayesha and Hasan Minhaj.

In recognition of Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, the New York office hosted a conversation in May with comedian and writer Hasan Minhaj and his sister, Skadden’s Palo

Alto litigation associate **Ayesha Minhaj**. The siblings talked about their lives growing up as first-generation Indian Muslim Americans, the political and social realities that have influenced Hasan’s approach to comedy, and the creative process behind his provocative and acclaimed White House Correspondents’ Dinner speech. New York government enforcement and white collar crime associate **Ramya Ravishankar** made opening remarks on behalf of the Asian and Middle Eastern Affinity Network. The firm’s Houston, Palo Alto, Wilmington and Washington, D.C. offices participated by video conference.

### **Planned Parenthood President Cecile Richards Speaks at Firm**



Ashby Jones and Cecile Richards.

In May 2017, Skadden hosted a conversation in New York featuring Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, with Ashby Jones, the legal bureau chief of *The Wall Street Journal*. Cecile shared her views on today’s political climate, Planned Parenthood’s role providing health care services for women and men throughout the U.S., and the harmful repercussions that would occur — particularly for low-income women — if the Planned Parenthood lost federal funding. New York partner **Maura Barry Grinalds** and Washington, D.C. partner **Kady Ashley**, who co-chair the Firm’s Women’s Initiatives Committee, made introductory and concluding remarks.

