



## Diversity Committee Welcome

On behalf of the Diversity Committee, welcome to our new and improved Diversity Update! We have been publishing our Diversity Update for about two years. In each issue, we report on the dynamic range of activities in which Covington lawyers are involved to promote diversity at the firm and in our broader professional and social communities, as well as matters of note from our pro bono practice. In this issue, we have added special feature stories we hope you will find of interest, along with a new look.

Stuart Stock shares his views on the importance of diversity at the firm and our ongoing diversity initiatives. Charles Miller takes a look back at Covington's rich legacy of championing civil rights and diversity in the legal profession in an essay on one of the firm's legendary leaders, Howard Westwood. Hrishi Karthikeyan reports on the important work he has been doing as a leader

of the South Asian Bar Association of Washington, DC (SABA-DC), which focuses on building mentoring and networking relationships for South Asian lawyers. We also have a guest contribution on the activities of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), a leading nonprofit Latino litigation, advocacy, and educational outreach institution. SABA-DC and MALDEF are two of the numerous community groups we partner with and support.

As many of you know, our clients are increasingly focused on our diversity efforts. We thought it would be helpful to get one client's perspective on diversity firsthand. Jamaal Lesane, a recent alum of our New York office and now at HBO, a firm client, was kind enough to share his personal perspective with us.

Finally, we have included a story about the firm's recent work to promote equal justice in Virginia. And of course, this issue of the Update also includes our regular report on recent and upcoming events and an update from the Women's Forum.

Covington lawyers and staff throughout our offices devote their talents to promoting diversity at the firm, in the legal profession, and in their respective communities. We hope this expanded Diversity Update provides you an enhanced glimpse into the firm's rich history in championing civil rights, our deep commitment to maintaining a culture in which the best and brightest from all backgrounds can flourish, and the personal and professional time and energy that members of the Covington community have devoted to promoting diversity inside and outside the firm.

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*Linda Goldstein Mike Labson*

Linda Goldstein and Mike Labson  
Co-Chairs of Covington's Diversity Committee

## Message from the Management Committee

In the most recent *Minority Law Journal* survey, Covington improved its overall diversity ranking from 50 to 45. Over the last two years, we have improved from 102 to 45. In a number of areas, including openly gay or lesbian and African American lawyers, our performance is particularly noteworthy among the AmLaw 200 firms.

We are pleased with the progress we have made, but we are not satisfied. We view diversity as both a core value of our firm and as a business imperative. In order to remain the leader we believe we are, we need to attract and retain the best, brightest, and most diverse group of lawyers we can.

Our success in these efforts will allow us to continue to provide our clients with the diversity of perspective that has become an important component in providing superior legal service in an increasingly diverse and demanding business environment. It will also mean that the firm will continue to be the interesting and stimulating environment the firm has been since its founding.

Covington is a place where women, men, ethnic minorities, LGBT people as well as people with

diverse backgrounds and styles can be successful. To ensure that we stay that way and that our commitment is visible to those considering the firm as a career or those looking to retain us, we launched a number of initiatives that cut across all aspects of the firm's operations. Some of the changes are very apparent. For example, our recruiting materials are much more visibly multicultural and reflective of our diversity.

Other efforts, particularly the networking and presentation skills based programs sponsored by our Women's Forum and Associates' Committee, are less obvious externally, but have had a real impact on lawyers. What all of our initiatives have in common is that they have increased our focus on diversity as a priority. Our historical commitment and our recent measurable progress are heartening; however, we are still very much a work in progress. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions on ways we could improve our efforts.



by **Stuart Stock**  
Chair of the Management Committee

## Celebrating Nearly 30 Years of Collaboration with MALDEF

Founded in 1968, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) is the leading nonprofit Latino litigation, advocacy, and educational outreach institution in the United States. MALDEF's mission is "to foster sound public policies, laws and programs to safeguard the civil rights of the 45 million Latinos living in the United States and to empower the Latino community to fully participate in our society."

MALDEF achieves its objectives through advocacy, community education, collaboration with other groups and individuals, the awarding of higher education scholarships in law and, when necessary, through the legal system. Through the years, MALDEF has been at the forefront of civil rights litigation, setting precedent in many cases and establishing new systems to elect officials, hire and promote employees, and educate children.

Covington lawyers have worked shoulder-to-shoulder with MALDEF since at least 1978. In that year, MALDEF and

Covington worked together on a petition urging President Carter to rescind an Executive Order prohibiting the employment of resident aliens in the federal civil service. More recently, Covington advised MALDEF on any federal laws and regulations that might impact MALDEF's planned talks with Mexican government officials on issues affecting Mexican Americans. In addition, Covington and

MALDEF have worked together in several civil rights, voting rights, and labor cases.

In a show of ongoing support, in February, Covington lawyers attended MALDEF's 8th Annual Washington, DC Awards Dinner. Also recently, a MALDEF attorney (Eric Gutierrez) and a Covington attorney (Richard Chaves Mosier -- who as a law student worked at MALDEF as a voting rights intern) were jointly honored by the Hispanic Bar Association of DC.

by **Etelvina De La Torre**,  
MALDEF Director of Development  
and **Richard Chaves Mosier**,  
Covington Associate

## Women's Forum Update

Covington's Women's Forum is designed to foster greater interaction among women lawyers at all levels of the firm and in all five offices. The Forum addresses issues of common interest, including career growth, client development, leadership and training opportunities, and work-family balance.

This spring and summer, the Women's Forum has hosted more than two dozen events throughout the firm, including training sessions, client development and career growth presentations, networking and mentoring opportunities, and social events for the firm's women lawyers.

In Washington, the Women's Forum offered a training opportunity with Rebecca Diaz-Bonilla, a former adjunct professor at the University of Virginia School of Law. She focused on improving our attorneys' oral presentation and advocacy skills. The Forum also participated in a webinar entitled "Women Rainmaking: The Clients Speak" presented by West Legalworks. In our other offices, the Forum has recently hosted CLE

programs (SF), partner presentations (DC and LO), and events for Summer Associates (DC and NY).

In addition to client development and career growth, the Forum also focuses on mentoring and social networking, hosting events such as dinners, small group sessions, and larger internal meetings on topics of interest to our women lawyers. London, New York, San Francisco, and Washington Forum groups each held an annual dinner this spring - the Washington dinner drew over 60 women attorneys. In New York, the Forum hosted events around the city, including ice skating at Wollman Rink, dinner at 5 Ninth, and an upcoming tour of the Jewish Museum. In addition to this, the Forum hosts regular informal lunches and dinners in each office.

The Women's Forum is also active in the communities where we live and work. On March 6th, the Washington Forum hosted a lunch for, and presentation by, the Fellows of the "Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa" (LAWA) Program, part of the Georgetown Law Center-based "Women's Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program." A similar program was presented in 2006.

The Women's Forum continues its strong tradition as an active presence inside and outside of the firm. To become more involved or for more information on the Forum's activities, contact Committee Chair Lee Tiedrich in Washington, Carey Roberts in New York, Wendy Feng in San Francisco, Anne Ware in London, or Jetty Tielemans in Brussels.

### Tom Williamson Receives Wiley Branton Award

On June 14, 2007, the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs presented partner Tom Williamson with the Wiley Branton Award for a lifetime commitment to equal justice and civil rights advocacy.



Tom Williamson

The award is presented annually and is named for Wiley Branton, a civil rights attorney. Branton worked for many years as a civil rights advocate in Arkansas and went on to a distinguished career in government service. Branton also served as Dean of the Howard Law School and later, while in private practice, as a leader in several highly respected civil rights organizations. He served as Co-Chair of the Washington Lawyers' Committee in 1987 and 1988.



In March, the Women's Forum hosted a presentation by Fellows of the LAWA program at Georgetown Law Center. Pictured above (left to right) are Lee Tiedrich, LAWA Executive Director Julia Ernst, Anne Proctor, Emily Williams, LAWA Fellow Amelia Vukeya, Raqiyyah Pippins, LAWA Fellow Linda Dumba, Aisha Williams, and Lizzy Shackelford.

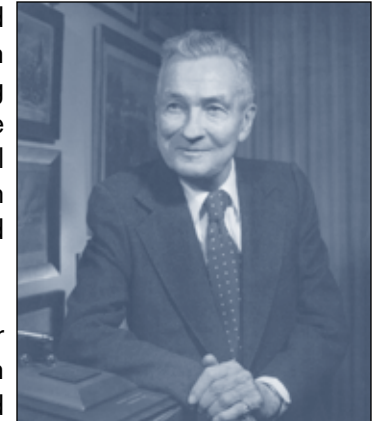
## Diversity History & Heritage: Howard Westwood

Howard Westwood, born of the prairie and true to his heritage, became a cyclonic force transforming all that lay in his path. Howard came to the firm in 1934, after an abruptly foreshortened undergraduate career at Swarthmore, graduation from Columbia Law School, and a clerkship with Justice Harlan Fiske Stone. He joined that group of giants that became the backbone of the early firm and indelibly established its character.

Howard became a key figure in the firm's management and administration. He was a force for nationwide recruiting of associates based on excellence. Equally enduring was his influence on expanding the firm to include minorities and women. He took the lead in opening staff positions to minorities, and in hiring minority lawyers at a time when Washington was still a segregated city. And then, with the assistance of one or two other like-minded lawyers in the city, he set out to integrate the local bar association, which was then closed to African Americans. That was a protracted effort, culminating after several years in an unprecedented meeting of the Bar membership in which Howard foiled various procedural efforts to avoid a vote and shepherded through the resolution to eliminate the racial barrier.

Howard more than anyone is responsible for creating and nurturing the firm's pro bono practice. He took the lead in establishing a rotation program under which young lawyers could serve stints with the Legal Aid Society - something that no firm in Washington had previously done. He was involved in conceiving and establishing what became the Public Defender Service to handle criminal matters

for the indigent. And he was instrumental in developing and securing federal funding for the Neighborhood Legal Service in Washington and for Legal Aid throughout the country.



Howard Westwood

Howard had another great passion - American history - that he pursued with his customary enthusiasm. The Civil War period fascinated him, and he became one of the nation's leading authorities on it. Howard was especially drawn to the role of black troops during the conflict. His pioneering research and writing on that subject brought to light aspects of the war that would otherwise never have been known. His work contributed to a highly acclaimed feature film, "Glory," that told the story of black troops during the war.

Howard Westwood was one of a kind. No one did more to give the firm its unique personality, to forge its commitment to pro bono work, to open its doors fully without regard to race or gender, and to engender camaraderie among its people. He was the conscience of the firm and the embodiment of its spirit. And in the end, he achieved what most revolutionaries can only hope for: he changed the world around him for the better.

by Charles Miller  
Senior Counsel

## Summer Associate Diversity Event at Rosa Mexicano, June 2007



## Pro bono Practice Achieves Significant Victories

Covington has long been recognized for its commitment to pro bono work. In 2007, *The American Lawyer* ranked Covington #1 in its annual pro bono survey, a ranking that we have achieved in nine of the last 16 surveys. While we look to highlight some of the most significant victories in the Diversity Update, they represent only a very small portion of the work Covington lawyers do to promote justice in our communities.

### Covington Achieves Historic Reform of Virginia's Indigent Defense System

Covington's effort to improve the quality of indigent defense in Virginia yielded results in early March when the General Assembly approved landmark legislation permitting judges to waive the unreasonably low mandatory caps on legal fees paid to lawyers representing poor criminal defendants in Virginia's circuit courts. Under the previous system, attorneys representing indigent defendants charged with a felony punishable by life imprisonment could be paid only \$1,235; defendants facing a felony charge carrying a sentence of up to 20 years could be paid only \$445.

For many years, the caps had been criticized as encouraging a "meet and plea" routine of processing criminal cases that denied poor defendants their constitutional right to meaningful and effective assistance of counsel. Despite repeated calls for reform, the caps remained in place, earning Virginia the reputation as the worst indigent defense system in the country.

Working with its pro bono client, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL), Covington spearheaded a multi-year effort to make the constitutionally guaranteed right to counsel a meaningful reality in Virginia. Covington initiated and supported a statewide study documenting the pernicious effects of the caps on the quality of legal representation, mounted a legislative and educational campaign, and prepared the class action lawsuit that ultimately persuaded Virginia's Republican Attorney

General to join with its Democratic Governor to push through the reforms enacted this year.

"Covington's legal prominence and commitment to the cause of equal justice were instrumental to securing passage of this historic reform," said Steve Benjamin, a NACDL Board member and nationally known criminal defense lawyer based in Richmond.

The Covington team included John Hall, Sarah Wilson, Josh Carpenter, Brent Starks, Hope Hamilton, Jodi Steiger, Dan Suleiman, and Virginia Desilets.

### Covington Receives Favorable Decision from Supreme Court in *Lopez v. Gonzales*

The United States Supreme Court handed down a favorable decision in *Lopez v. Gonzales*, a significant



immigration case in which Covington represented the petitioner, Jose Antonio Lopez. The Court's opinion was written by Justice Souter and joined by every Justice except Justice Thomas. The decision holds that state drug convictions do not count as "aggravated

felonies" for purposes of federal immigration law unless the offense is punishable as a felony under the federal drug laws. The "aggravated felony" label is significant because conviction of an aggravated felony renders an immigrant ineligible for withholding of deportation, asylum, or US citizenship (and has other adverse consequences). The Court's decision reverses the lower court's ruling that Mr. Lopez's conviction on a simple drug possession charge was an "aggravated felony" for immigration purposes.

Covington lawyers Ted Metzler, Ed Bruce, and Nick Cartier worked on the briefs, and Covington partner Bob Long argued the case.



by Anne Proctor  
Pro bono Counsel

## Leading SABA-DC

### Insights from Covington Associate Hrishi Karthikeyan

Soon after arriving in DC in late 2003, I decided to become involved with the South Asian Bar Association of Washington, DC (SABA-DC). I had been active with the South Asian students group in law school, so this seemed like a natural opportunity to continue pursuing those interests. SABA-DC has a broad-ranging mission that includes building mentoring and networking relationships for South Asian lawyers, promoting professional development and legal education on issues of interest to our community, and serving the public through pro bono and other community-related activities.



In January 2004, I joined SABA-DC as a director in charge of programming. One of our first events was a panel discussion on outsourcing. With the cooperation and support of Covington, we were able to host the event at the firm. The event was a success and served as a springboard for a continuing relationship between Covington and SABA-DC that continues to the present.

In 2005, I served as Vice President of SABA-DC and in 2006 as President. In June 2005, the National South Asian Bar Association annual conference was held in Washington, DC. Covington was a strong supporter of that event, contributing \$5,000 as a Silver Sponsor. Stu Irvin was a presenter, discussing lessons learned from the Japanese economic cycle of the 1990s and

new business opportunities in India in the coming years.

Since that time, Covington has actively supported both my efforts on behalf of SABA-DC, as well as the group's mission as a whole. Apart from myself, a number of other Covington lawyers have been actively involved with SABA-DC, both as members and on the Board – including Probir Mehta, Priti Agrawal, Shankar Duraiswamy,

Mona Patel, Fuad Rana, and Shehzad Akhtar. In addition, a number of Covington lawyers joined the litigation team of Salim Ahmed Hamdan, headed up by Georgetown Law Professor Neal Katyal. Professor Katyal was the featured speaker at a SABA-DC dinner held at Covington in October 2006.

In short, the relationship between SABA-DC and Covington has been productive and mutually beneficial over the past several years. As the organization continues to grow and evolve, I am confident that Covington will remain an engaged and visible supporter of the South Asian legal community in DC and elsewhere.



by Hrishi Karthikeyan  
Associate

## Recent Honors & Awards

### The Human Rights Campaign National Ally of Justice Award

The Award recognizes legal allies, coalition partners, and others in the legal profession who have made significant contributions to HRC's work in support of equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans.

### Presumed Equal: What America's Top Women Lawyers Really Think About Their Firms

Ranked seventh nationally in this listing of more than 100 law firms based on training and advancement opportunities, work-life balance priorities, mentoring, diversity, and firm culture and leadership.

### Working Mother, "100 Best Companies"

Ranked as one of the top companies nationally based on a survey of all areas of work-life, including company culture, family-friendly policies, and compensation.



### Yale Law Women: Finding the Right Law Firm - Pro Bono, Training, Balance, and Beyond

Ranked fourth nationally for family-friendly firms and first nationally for pro bono work in 2006.

## Alumni Perspectives: Interview with Jamaal Lesane



**Jamaal Lesane**  
Associate Counsel  
The Home Box Office  
New York, NY

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Covington Associate  
2001 - 2006 (New York)  
Harvard Law School, 2001  
Yale University, 1998

### Looking back, can you identify where an institutional commitment to diversity has had a personal impact?

Yes. I received a scholarship to attend the Collegiate School in Manhattan through the Prep for Prep program. Prep for Prep is a long-term investment strategy to develop the leadership potential of able young people from segments of society grossly under-represented in the leadership pool from which all of our major institutions draw. Prep's strategy is to identify talented students from minority group backgrounds, prepare them for placement in independent schools, and provide a sense of community, peer support, critical post-placement services, and a range of leadership development opportunities. The Prep for Prep program, and Collegiate's own historic commitment to a diverse student body, changed my life.

### How much consideration did you give to the stated and apparent commitment to diversity of your college, law school, and Covington factor into your decision?

It honestly did not really matter to me when I chose Yale. I felt my experience at the Collegiate School had prepared me for the environment I would find in New Haven. I did not think about it at all when I was accepted by Harvard Law. I considered it very briefly when I made the decision to come to Covington. In choosing Covington, what really mattered to me was the great interview I had with Scott Smith. I felt an immediate rapport, and he kept in touch after the interview. During my interviews in the New York office, the lawyers at Covington made me feel wanted as

an individual. That is really what mattered most in my decision to join Covington and to remain there until The Home Box Office presented an opportunity that was really in my career sweet spot.

### In the long run, do you think that the current commitment to diversity as evidenced by the corporate Call to Action and other initiatives will matter?

Definitely. Increasingly, businesses will need the diversity of ideas that women and men who come from different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds bring to the table. To stay relevant, law firms must meet those needs. I think my own experiences, seeing life from a lower income neighborhood and from a prep school, has given me a great deal of experience in seeing problems and opportunities from different angles. I know diversity, and the perspectives a diverse staff offer, is important to HBO and to the entertainment industry as a whole. The increasing economic impact of female and minority entertainers is apparent. What is less apparent, but just as important, is the increasing need for and importance of minorities in the board room where the trends are spotted, the investments are made, and the contracts are negotiated.

### Any closing comments about diversity?

Yes. I have two very different comments. First, I have benefited personally from Prep for Prep and the Collegiate School's commitment to diversity. As a result, I feel a very deep sense of responsibility to the program and school's goals. This sense of responsibility has kept me grounded and has made me deeply committed to giving back. I decided to be as visible an example of the program's potential as I can. I bought a home in the neighborhood where I grew up and I try to be an active and visible role model there. Second, and on a completely different note, I recently negotiated a contract with Time Inc. Home Entertainment, our sister organization. The lawyer on the other side was Dasha Smith Dwinn, an African American alum of Covington's New York office who had a great experience at Covington and who highly recommended the firm to me back in 2001. How's that for a small world?

## Upcoming Events

### Mentoring and Networking Events

7/18 **New York Women's Forum** women's breakfast with summer associates.

7/25 **New York Women's Forum** tour of the Jewish Museum Exhibit.

### Recruiting Events

Michael Baxter is the Chair of the **DC Road Show Committee**. In 2007, Covington will participate in Road Shows at Michigan (Chris Moody), NYU (Jeff White), Harvard (Michael Baxter), Penn (Keir Gumbs), Columbia (Aisha Williams), George Washington (Catherine Dargan), Georgetown/Howard (Andria Boateng), and Yale (Damara Griffith).

## Mosier Named "Rising Legal Star"



Associate Richard Mosier was recognized as a "Rising Legal Star" by the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia at its 29th Annual Equal Justice Awards Reception.

## Recent Events

### Community Events

3/22 **Raqiyah Pippins** represented Covington at the 39th Annual NBSA National Convention in Atlanta.

2/27 **Covington** hosted the APABA-DC's Practicing Attorney Resource Program focused on career development.

### Mentoring and Networking Events

7/11 WALRAA 15th Annual Summer Associate Diversity Reception.

6/28 **Christopher Moody** and **Ryan LaLonde** hosted an informal networking and social get-together for LGBT attorneys.

5/3 **New York Women's Forum** Foundation Breakfast.

4/11 **New York Women's Forum** women's dinner at 5 Ninth.

3/21 **Covington's Women's Forum** held its annual dinner in Washington, DC.

### Recruiting Events

3/29 **Paul Ainsworth** served a panelist at a University of Pennsylvania Law School event on the topic of being openly gay in the profession. The panel covered a variety of issues from recruitment, to pro bono, to work-life balance.

3/22 **Andrea Reister, Abigail Corbett, and Paul Ainsworth** attended a networking reception for law students sponsored by the George Washington University Lambda Law group.

### Sponsorships

7/12 Hispanic National Bar Foundation Annual Awards Dinner.

5/18 Asian Law Caucus 35th Anniversary Celebration.

4/18 National Native American Law Students Association Annual Awards Banquet.

### Training Sessions

6/19 Presentation Skills and Oral Advocacy, sponsored by **Women's Forum**.

## Contributing to our Diversity Efforts

If you would like to become more involved with diversity efforts at Covington or contribute information to upcoming issues of the Diversity Update, please contact Linda Goldstein at [LGoldstein@cov.com](mailto:LGoldstein@cov.com) or Mike Labson at [MLabson@cov.com](mailto:MLabson@cov.com).