

Groom Law Group has always found strength in differences in background and perspective among our attorneys. We value professionals who are smart, creative, and able to participate in our team-oriented environment. We want our colleagues to be comfortable being themselves, and we encourage every person to realize his or her potential.

Diversity Update: Spring 2009

The Groom Law Group Diversity Committee would like to take this opportunity to update our clients on a variety of diversity events in which we have been involved during the Spring of 2009.

Employee Benefits Panels – Howard University School of Law and American University Law School: In February 2009, several Groom attorneys, including Jon Breyfogle, Executive Principal, Christy Tinnes, Recruiting Committee Chair, Ellen Goodwin, Will Wilder and Hisham Amin, participated in an event at Howard University Law School. With more than 30 attendees from several Washington, DC area law schools, the panel was a chance to introduce law students to the employee benefits field in a meaningful way. The panelists explained the practice area, discussed their everyday work experiences, and took questions from students. We continue to hear from fellow employee benefits practitioners and law students how important and useful these panels are in promoting employee benefits as a practice area. For instance, Groom's Ellen Goodwin was recently contacted by a law student who had attended a similar panel program sponsored by Groom at George Washington Law School in 2008. This panel introduced the student to the field of employee benefits and sparked her interest in pursuing a career in benefits. The student reported to Ellen that she has lined up a summer job at a government agency doing employee benefits work.

Following on the success of the panel at Howard, several Groom attorneys also participated in its second panel event at American University, Washington College of Law in March, 2009, moderated by Ellen Goodwin. The panelists for the event were Groom attorney Debbie Leung, Department of Labor attorney Adrienne Dwyer, Miguel Martinez, Tax Counsel for the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee, and Shannon Salinas of the American Council of Life Insurers. Also present to answer questions were Groom attorneys Dipal Shah and Will Wilder. Over twenty students attended, and several contacted Groom after the panel with interest regarding the field of employee benefits law. Groom is currently planning another career panel at George Washington University in the fall.

Diversity Update: Spring 2009
Continued

Annual APABA Asian Education Fund Dinner: On March 26, 2009, Groom attorneys Jason Lee, Sarah Touzalin, Julia Zuckerman, and Dipal Shah attended the Annual APABA Asian Education Fund Dinner at the National Press Club. Groom also served as a sponsor for the annual dinner, which raises funds for stipends that are given to law students interested in public interest law. Another goal of the event is to raise awareness of the impact made by Asian Americans on the legal profession. This year's keynote speaker was Michelle Rhee, Chancellor of District of Columbia Public Schools. Ms Rhee gave an insightful speech on how her Asian background has influenced her leadership style. Groom and its attorneys have sponsored and attended this event for the past three years.

Wake Forest Alumni Reception: On Tuesday, March 31, Groom Law Group's Diversity Committee met with Blake Morant, Dean of the law school at Wake Forest University, to exchange thoughts and ideas regarding the firm's diversity initiatives. Groom attorney and Wake Forest alum Alexander Ryan organized the event. Knowing that Dean Morant is an active promoter of diversity within legal education and the legal profession at large, our Diversity Committee took the opportunity to solicit Dean Morant's input about successful diversity initiatives and his experience with diversity issues in the legal profession. Diversity Committee members Lonie Hassel, Jon Breyfogle, Will Wilder, and Dipal Shah all participated in the meeting with Dean Morant. After the meeting, Groom hosted Dean Morant and approximately 60 DC-area Wake Forest law school alumni at a reception in our offices that evening.