

Harrity & Harrity LLP – A Great Diversity & Inclusion Success Story

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The Commitment

“Put your resources to work, show you are committed to diversity and inclusion – action, money, speaks louder than words on your website” - is what I told H & H. Harrity & Harrity, LLP, stepped up. An IP national boutique firm specializing in the preparation and prosecution of electrical and mechanical patent applications since 1999, was surprised, really impressed with the response to their new fellowship - scholarship opportunity.

A firm based in Fairfax, VA, they approached me to help them with their “Diversity Story.” You see, many firms have a solid diversity story but they don’t tell anyone, it is not on their website, not in their marketing literature, not in their RFPs. Almost a well-kept secret, but, if no one knows (law school graduates, laterals, even the client) about your commitment to diversity and inclusion, why would anyone even consider your firm for employment or for legal work?

John and Paul Harrity said to me - “We are committed to the ‘Rooney Rule.’ We want every position, every opening to be considered an opportunity for diverse talent to join the firm. We are constantly asking - who is not here, what background, what walk of life, and what perspective(s) are we missing in the practice of law? Our clients demand innovation and creativity and we believe that the ‘practice of law’ is advanced by a more diverse legal team – with diversity of background, upbringing, education, and perspective comes quality legal innovation. We also think a diverse firm is a healthy, vibrant firm.” I could not agree more!

So they wanted to make a big splash. They came up with the 2016 Harrity & Harrity 1L Diversity Fellowship. They launched their fellowship earlier this year and have realized very good results.

The program is an integral part of the firm’s ongoing diversity initiative to recruit, retain, and advance attorneys, who will contribute to the diversity of the firm’s practice areas.

The Program

The Harrity and Harrity 1L Diversity Fellowship Program is comprised of three parts:

- A paid summer associate clerkship position at Harrity and Harrity during the summer of 2016
- Mentoring throughout the year by attorneys of the firm (a special rotation apprenticeship); and

- A \$10,000 scholarship - Harrity and Harrity will award \$5,000 to all 1L Diversity Fellowship recipients upon completion of their 1L summer associate clerkship with the firm; and award an additional \$5,000 to those who join the firm as an associate, after receiving and accepting an associate offer with the firm following the completion of their 2L summer clerkship with us.

The Results

- H & H reached out to 65 law schools and received 24 applications were received.
- Mr. Charles Lee was awarded the fellowship and he starts his summer associate clerkship this summer and the firm is very excited about the future of this program.
- Letters were sent to each law school announcing the winner Mr. Lee.
- Most important – H & H brand visibility and image at these 65 law schools has experienced a huge surge in activity, interest, and H&H expect great results in the years to come.

H & H is a national boutique competing with firms with greater resources but we found few firms (bigger or smaller) who “put their money where their mouth is – showing, illustrating, their commitment to diversity and inclusion.”

For more information go to the Harrity and Harrity website harrityllp.com

Does your law firm have a Diversity Story to Tell – a diversity and inclusion best practice? Please share with me.

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