

# PUBLICATION

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## Diversity Matters: Note from the Editor

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It seems like 2021 just began, but we are already halfway through the year. As I strive to find silver linings in the struggles the world has faced this past year, I cannot help but consider how quickly time will pass us by if we continue to have good intentions, with no action. Action. That seems to be a great mantra for 2021. Many of us became much more aware of injustices of various kinds – whether based on race, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or religion – but the world cannot afford for the good-intentioned to sit idly without taking action to address these injustices. From women's rights struggles to Asian American and Pacific Islander injustices to health inequities and systemic injustices against BIPOC, we must not only recognize the injustices, we must act to address them.

While I have taken action personally, spiritually and emotionally, I have also made an intentional effort to act professionally. Professionally, I have focused even more on my work relating to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) by recommending and conducting more client trainings on DEI topics with a specific focus on how to create sustainable inclusive workplaces; conducting internal Firm trainings on D&I for our attorneys and staff; leading the creation of a Firm podcast called [Diversity Ever After: A Baker Donelson D&I Podcast](#), which will not only highlight the voices of our diverse attorneys concerning matters of diversity, equity and inclusion but will also provide sound and practical action items for listeners (especially leaders); presenting to law school students on generational diversity and communication strategies across generations as they enter the legal profession; and presenting to attorneys across the nation on how to be allies for women of color in the legal profession. I recognize that I have an invaluable role to play that will help create a more inclusive profession, community, and world. After all, inclusion starts with "I."

This edition of *Diversity Matters* highlights the important work Assurant, Inc. is accomplishing concerning DEI, identifies five key mistakes to avoid with DEI initiatives, follows a conversation between a diverse associate and his Firm sponsor as they work through the impact of COVID-19, provides a book review on how to avoid misgendering others, and summarizes the efforts of legislators and President Biden to promote LGBTQ equality. We also show how Baker Donelson has taken action by making Juneteenth a recognized Firm holiday, hiring the most diverse summer associate class in the Firm's history, and continuing the discussion of D&I through [social media outlets](#) and a [podcast](#). As I mentioned earlier, inclusion starts with "I" . . . so, what will be your action?