

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Baker Donelson Named a Mortgage Bankers Association 2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Residential Leadership Award Winner**

October 25, 2021

**Baker Donelson has been recognized by the Mortgage Bankers Association (MBA) as a 2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Residential Leadership Award recipient. The annual awards recognize MBA members for their leadership efforts in DEI in three award categories: organizational DEI, market outreach strategies, and non-lender.**

Baker Donelson, which was the winner in the non-lender category, was recognized for its efforts in creating a robust program to recruit, retain, and promote women and minority attorneys, with a particular emphasis on women. The MBA specifically cited Baker Donelson's Women-to-Equity cohort program that provides opportunities for women to advance within the firm. The MBA also noted the Firm's status as a Mansfield Plus Certified firm, a voluntary initiative among law firms to ensure at least 30% of job applicants are women, attorneys of color, LGBTQ+, or attorneys with disabilities.

Baker Donelson's Diversity and Inclusion Officer [Mark A. Baugh](#) said, "Baker Donelson is always proud of any award recognizing our DEI efforts, but this recognition by the Mortgage Bankers Association is especially gratifying and humbling. We are exceptionally honored to have earned a recognition as prestigious as the MBA DEI Residential Leadership Award. It affirms we are making a difference in DEI at our firm, in our industry and beyond. We're committed to continuing with the work that still needs to be done."

In addition to these and other efforts, during 2020 Baker Donelson implemented a [Diversity & Inclusion \(D&I\) Compact](#), a multi-year plan to drastically increase the number of diverse attorneys within its ranks, as well as committing to provide additional support and remove barriers to advancement. Baker Donelson's D&I Compact outlines the Firm's commitment to be an industry-leading law firm in diversity and inclusion by December 31, 2025. In order to meet that goal, the Compact set specific benchmarks for the Firm to achieve at least 20 percent diverse attorneys, ten percent diverse shareholders, eight percent diverse equity shareholders and a ten percent diverse management team. For the purposes of the D&I Compact, diversity is defined as racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ+ status.

### **Diversity and Inclusion at Baker Donelson**

Baker Donelson strives to create an inclusive environment for all employees, welcoming people of all races, genders, ages, languages, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, disabilities, sexual orientations and religious beliefs to assist clients in achieving their legal goals. As a Mansfield Rule Certified Plus firm for the second consecutive year, Baker Donelson affirmatively considers at least 30 percent women, attorneys of color, LGBTQ+ attorneys, and attorneys with disabilities in the candidate pools for recruitment, governance roles, equity partner promotions, and inclusion in formal pitch presentations to clients. Baker Donelson is a member of the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance (LFAA), a coalition of more than 200 of the nation's leading law firms focused on utilizing private bar resources to assist legal services organizations in furtherance of their missions to dismantle barriers to opportunity in communities of color, and is a member of Out Leadership, the oldest and largest global coalition of companies working to improve LGBTQ+ equality.