

PRESS RELEASE

Baker Donelson Attorneys Named Leadership Council on Legal Diversity Pathfinders

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Baker Donelson attorneys Helbert A. Canales-Rojas and Ashley Gibson have been named Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) Pathfinders for 2024. The seven-month Pathfinder program provides participants from LCLD Member organizations with the opportunity to learn from top leaders in the legal profession as well as career development experts and is designed to connect and train high-potential, early-career attorneys from diverse backgrounds with foundational leadership skills and relationship-building resources.

Conceived as a supplement to training initiatives already in place at LCLD Member corporations and law firms, the Pathfinder program offers practical tools for developing and leveraging internal professional networks, leadership skills and an understanding of career development strategies. In addition to full-class programming, participants are placed in small groups led by a Program Facilitator who serves as a mentor to help each Pathfinder connect what they learn to the organization at which they work.

LCLD President Robert J. Grey Jr. stated, "Notwithstanding the substantial challenges to DE&I, our dedication to improving and expanding our programs for talented attorneys has only grown stronger. This initiative is designed to propel them to the next level in their careers."

LCLD Pathfinders will have several opportunities throughout the year to meet and interact with their peers, both in person and in a virtual format. This is in addition to the exclusive leadership and professional-development curriculum that is unique to the Pathfinder program.

Pathfinders are selected by the leaders at LCLD Member corporations and law firms, having been identified as early-career emerging leaders in their own right who have distinguished – or have the potential to distinguish – themselves within their organizations.

An associate in Baker Donelson's Fort Lauderdale office, Mr. Canales-Rojas concentrates his practice in the areas of financial services litigation, complex commercial litigation, and real estate litigation. Throughout his career, he has served as the lead or co-lead attorney for more than 200 litigation matters pertaining to financial services and banking litigation, general commercial litigation, insurance litigation, real estate litigation, and construction litigation. Mr. Canales-Rojas earned his Juris Doctor degree from Florida International University College of Law, where he was a Dean's Scholarship recipient and a research assistant to Judge Phyllis Kotey. Prior to law school, he worked as a judicial intern to Judge James Lawrence King of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

An associate in Baker Donelson's Chattanooga office, Ms. Gibson is a trial lawyer who focuses her practice on complex commercial litigation matters, including class actions, with a concentration in the areas of False Claims Act litigation, trade secret litigation, and other high-stakes contractual disputes. Ms. Gibson is a graduate of Emory University School of Law.

LCLD is an organization of more than 400 corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners – the leadership of the profession – who have pledged themselves, through LCLD's Leaders at the Front initiative

and other means, to creating a truly diverse U.S. legal profession. LCLD action programs are designed to attract, inspire, and nurture the talent in society and within organizations, thereby helping a new and more diverse generation of attorneys ascend to positions of leadership. By producing tangible results in institutions, LCLD works to promote inclusiveness in organizations, circles of influence, and society, with the ultimate goal of building a more equitable and diverse legal profession.