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INNOVATION IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARD

HOW LATHAM IS WORKING TO EXPAND PIPELINES INTO THE LEGAL PROFESSION

Latham & Watkins and the Ron Brown Scholars are nominated for the California Legal Awards' Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion Award for its investment in the next generation of lawyers.

Abid Qureshi, the global chair of Latham's recruiting committee, and Kendall Johnson, the committee's vice chair, told The Recorder how the firm is working to remove barriers to entry to the legal profession.

Please tell us about your diversity and inclusion initiative and the underlying problem that sparked the initiative.

Here at Latham, we seek to recruit the very best legal talent. Achieving that goal requires recruiting lawyers and staff representing a diversity of backgrounds. Understanding that not everyone has equal access to the legal profession, we are committed to expanding the pipeline to law school.

Encouraging young people to pursue legal careers begins



Abid R. Qureshi, Global Chair of Latham & Watkins' Recruiting Committee. Kendall Johnson, Vice Chair of Latham & Watkins' Recruiting Committee

not only with educating them early about the legal profession, but also providing them with the tools and resources needed to thrive in law school and beyond. Latham's investment in the next generation of lawyers and leaders includes its longstanding partnership with Ron Brown Scholars. The Ron Brown Scholar Program,

established in 1996, provides academic scholarships, service opportunities and leadership experiences for young African American college students in the U.S. The program seeks to accelerate participants' progress into leadership positions in a wide spectrum of professions while instilling a dedication to service.

We collaborate with this program in a multitude of ways. For example, Latham financially sponsors the program and facilitates internship opportunities for rising college seniors and students who have been admitted to law school.

What are the measurable outcomes of the initiative?

Since launching the partnership in December 2018, Latham has hired 28 Ron Brown Alumni — young African Americans of outstanding promise. This group includes twelve pre-law interns, eight recruiting interns and eight hires in the firm's Business Services Trainee Program, which offers individuals beginning their careers the

opportunity for growth and career development by exposing them to the many facets that make up the administration of a global law firm.

Based on the great success of our partnership with the Ron Brown Scholar Program, the firm has taken on other sponsorship opportunities to invest in the next generation of lawyers and leaders. Partnerships and programs include the Pipeline to Practice Foundation, JD Advising Scholars Program, SEO Law Catalyst Program, Thrive Scholars, Law Preview Diversity Scholarship Program, Legal Education Access Pipeline, The Appellate Project, Yale Law School's

Launchpad Scholars Program, powered by Latham & Watkins, and PracticePro's Diversity Scholar Program.

What advice do you have for members of the legal industry looking to launch similar initiatives?

Do it! Working to remove barriers to entry through initiatives like The Ron Brown Scholars Program helps ensure that underrepresented communities have equitable access, training, and resources to pursue a career in law. These programs and partnerships are integral to transforming the legal industry into a more diverse and inclusive space, benefiting us all.