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Legal Industry Trailblazers Launch “Move the Needle Fund” — with a \$5M Investment from Law Firms — to Test Innovative Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives to Create Transformational Change in the Profession

San Francisco (September 18, 2019) – Launched today by Diversity Lab and several dozen legal industry leaders, the Move the Needle Fund (“MTN”) is the first collaborative effort designed and funded with \$5M to test innovative initiatives to create a more diverse and inclusive legal profession.

Despite decades of hard work by industry stakeholders to diversify the talent pool from law students through law firm and legal department leadership, the needle hasn’t moved far enough fast enough. Knowing varied approaches are needed, five law firms, more than 25 general counsel, and top community leaders will work together through MTN to create a first-of-its-kind experimental “laboratory” in which bold new approaches will be incubated over five years in the law firms to serve as a model for learning and transformative change in the legal profession and beyond. These five firms will set aggressive, measurable diversity goals, experiment with research-based and data-driven ways to achieve them, and publicly report their progress.

The first four MTN law firms are Eversheds Sutherland (US), Goodwin, Orrick, and Stoel Rives. To ensure an inclusive process for filling the fifth firm opening, law firms are invited to apply via a blind application and selection process through www.MTNFund2025.com. The MTN founding firm leaders and general counsel will choose the fifth firm based on the boldness of the interested firm’s diversity goal and their willingness to devote critical resources, experiment with new ideas, and share the outcomes.

The MTN law firms’ goals, detailed on www.MTNFund2025.com, reflect many of the keys to success in becoming a more diverse and inclusive organization: retention of diverse lawyers; access to career-enhancing work experiences, clients, and sponsorship; and advancement to leadership. MTN will officially begin measuring progress on these goals in January 2020.

To achieve these goals and serve as a model for others to learn from, MTN will leverage the \$5M investment made by the five firms to:

- Explore and experiment with new approaches to hiring, work/life integration, work allocation, sponsorship, promotions, feedback, performance reviews, and compensation systems;
- Implement the winning [Diversity in Law Hackathon](#) ideas;
- Test evidence-based research such as the [bias interrupters](#) from the ABA and Minority Corporate Counsel Association study as well as other inclusion research from top academic institutions;
- Crowdsource innovative ideas from other industries; and
- Share outcomes through case studies and metrics on a public website.

The founding general counsel will support the firms’ goals and boost diversity in the profession by partnering on diversity internships and other law school pipeline initiatives, providing career-enhancing work and advancement opportunities to diverse outside counsel teams, and measuring their current and

future outside counsel firms’ diversity and inclusion progress. In parallel, they will also experiment with and measure the impact of many of the innovative MTN efforts in their own legal departments.

“Instead of working in isolation as competitors, these pioneering law firms, general counsel, and community leaders are joining together to create a model that others can emulate leveraging collaboration, metrics, transparency, and experimentation as the foundational elements,” said Caren Ulrich Stacy, Diversity Lab CEO. “Predictive modeling – using the last five years of ALM data – suggests that the largest 200 firms in the country as a group won’t reach 50% women and 33% racial and ethnic minorities in their equity partner ranks – which would mirror the makeup of recent law school graduating classes – until 2057 and 2084, respectively. The goal of MTN is to reduce that timing by decades.”

The founding general counsel and legal departments supporting this effort include:

Lora D. Blum	SurveyMonkey Inc.	David Levine	Bloomberg LP
James L. Chosy	U.S. Bancorp	Tom Lue	DeepMind
Ivan Fong	3M Company	Megha Parekh	Jacksonville Jaguars
Sonia Galindo	FLIR Systems, Inc.	Laura Quatela	Lenovo
Bradley M. Gayton	Ford Motor Company	Kim M. Rivera	HP Inc.
Rachel Gonzalez	Starbucks	Allon Stabinsky	Intel
Hannah Gordon	San Francisco 49ers	Kristin Sverchek	Lyft
Julie Gruber	Gap Inc.	Scott C. Taylor	Symantec Corporation
Marie Oh Huber	eBay	Louise Pentland	PayPal
Gregory B. Jordan	PNC Financial Service Group	Amy Weaver	Salesforce
Jan Kang	Chronicle LLC	Tony West	Uber
Fleur Knowsley	Google Fiber	Scott Wilensky	Xcel Energy
Doug Lankler	Pfizer	Rishi Varma	Hewlett Packard Enterprise

The MTN community leaders, listed below, are providing valuable insights and data, challenging norms, and supporting the firms and legal departments in achieving their goals.

- Kit Chaskin, Gender Initiatives, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law (Community Leader Chair)
- Jay Benegal, Senior Vice President, Legal Industry Specialist, Citizens Commercial Banking
- Gabrielle Brown, Diversity & Inclusion Director, Morgan Stanley
- Jamie Dolkas, Director of Women's Leadership, Center for WorkLife Law, UC Hastings
- Carrie Fletcher, London Business School
- Patrick Fuller, VP, Intelligence, American Lawyer Media
- Jean Lee, CEO & President, Minority Corporate Counsel Association
- Karen Royer, Executive Director, ChIPs
- Dee Sekar, Diversity & Inclusion Manager, Chambers & Partners
- Michelle Silverthorn, Founder, Inclusion Nation
- Sandra Yamate, CEO, Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession

MTN will use a portion of the \$5M to invest in collective projects – with the MTN organizations and other interested law firms and legal departments – focused on increasing diversity and inclusion in their respective organizations and in the profession. Some of the initial projects include:

MTN Pipeline Collective – To increase the pipeline of diverse junior lawyers in law firms and legal departments and to boost their chance of success once there, many of the MTN founding organizations and others have committed to annually providing paid, split summer internships – similar to the Law in Tech Collaborative started by eBay – to 100 diverse first-year law students from law schools typically underrepresented in law firms’ on-campus interview processes.

In addition, MTN will annually donate money and Diversity Lab’s in-kind services in excess of \$100,000 to existing legal pipeline programs such as Pipeline to Practice, Silicon Valley Urban Debate League, Street Law, LCLD Pathways, MCCA 1L Scholarship, Twin Cities Diversity in Practice, Law in Tech 1L Collaborative, and other initiatives to strengthen and expand current successful efforts.

MTN Access to Opportunity Collective – The MTN founding legal departments – representing more than \$1.5 billion in legal spend annually – have committed to providing diverse teams at law firms, with a special focus on the MTN firms, with the opportunity to be considered for new and expanded business. For diverse lawyers who work on or lead their cases, the legal department leaders will also provide sponsorship in the form of advocacy, feedback, and referrals.

MTN GC Diversity Dividends Collective – To wield their collective power, many of the MTN founding legal departments will require their potential and current outside counsel law firms to consistently and progressively staff matters with diverse teams and lead lawyers. They will engage in an annual diversity data collection process – facilitated by Diversity Lab – that sets outside counsel diversity goals, collects timekeeper and firm diversity data, and rewards compliance. Current exemplar models, such as HP’s law firm diversity & inclusion initiative, have resulted in increasingly diverse teams, providing evidence that this approach produces positive results.

The MTN founding organizations will share their learnings and collaborate on these initiatives with other law firms and legal departments to drive positive changes throughout the legal profession. Details for organizations interested in getting involved can be found at www.MTNFund2025.com.

Interviews with the initial MTN founding law firms’ leaders, general counsel, or community leader chair can be scheduled by contacting Caren Ulrich Stacy at caren@diversitylab.com.

Eversheds Sutherland (US) – Mark Wasserman, Managing Partner

Goodwin – David Hashmall, Chair & Robert Insolia, Chair-Elect

Orrick – Mitch Zuklie, Chair

Stoel Rives – Jim Torgerson, Firm Managing Partner & Melissa Jones, Firm Managing Partner-Elect

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About Diversity Lab

[Diversity Lab](http://www.diversitylab.com) is an incubator for innovative ideas and solutions that boost diversity and inclusion in law. Experimental ideas – such as the OnRamp Fellowship and the Mansfield Rule – are created through our Hackathons and piloted in collaboration with more than 100 top law firms and legal departments across the country. Diversity Lab leverages data, behavioral science, design thinking, and technology to further develop and test new ideas and research, measure the results, and share the lessons learned. For more information, visit www.diversitylab.com.