

PUBLICATION

Baker Donelson's Diversity Retreat 2014

December 08, 2014

In mid-October the Baker Donelson Diversity Committee came together for its biennial retreat in New Orleans, Louisiana. The gathering, which was open to all diverse Baker Donelson attorneys, served as an opportunity for nearly 50 attendees to meet and network with their colleagues from across the Firm's 19 offices, and provided actionable advice for succeeding as a diverse attorney at Baker Donelson. For the first time, members of the committee's LGBT subgroup, Affinitas, attended the two-day meetings. The full retreat was preceded by a smaller morning-long session of the Steering Committee, led by Diversity Chair Mark Baugh, featuring an update on the committee's activities and a group session to update the goals and action steps for the Firm's Diversity Strategic Plan. A highlight of the full retreat was the General Counsel Panel, where clients Ivanetta Davis Samuels (Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary at Meharry Medical College); Iftikhar Ahmad (Director of Aviation at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport); and Toney Matthews (former Baker Donelson attorney and now Senior Counsel at The Kroger Co.) generously shared their counsel on what their companies look for when hiring legal counsel, including how diversity factors into those decisions, as well as their own career experiences as diverse professionals. Other sessions included a recruiting update and a session on how new shareholders can progress and thrive in their legal careers.