

always ahead

proudly ahead

DORSEY'S LGBTQ AFFINITY GROUP

Dorsey's LGBTQ Affinity Group aims to enhance the recruitment and retention of LGBTQ attorneys and promote a better understanding among all of the firm's attorneys and staff of the unique issues facing the LGBTQ community.

Benefits and Policies

Dorsey is an equal opportunity employer and offers a comprehensive benefits package to attorneys, including 10 weeks of paid parental leave (plus 6-8 weeks of paid short-term disability leave for lawyers who give birth), an adoption assistance program, and back-up emergency child care. The Firm recognizes that attorneys may have life circumstances that create a need or desire for flexible work arrangements. We offer three types of arrangements:

- Reduced hours expectation
- Telecommuting
- Flexible full-time

Diversity & Inclusion Education and Training

Dorsey regularly offers diversity and inclusion educational sessions and events for lawyers and staff. Recent LGBTQ programs include:

- Pride Celebration
- What's Next in the Movement for LGBTQ Equality? What Lawyers Need to Know
- National Coming Out Day Celebration

100%

**SCORE ON
CORPORATE
EQUALITY INDEX**

Thirteenth Consecutive Year
Human Rights Campaign 2019

ADOPTION ADVOCATE

ADOPTION-FRIENDLY
WORKPLACE

*Dave Thomas Foundation for
Adoption 2019*



Dorsey has participated in the AIDS Walk in New York in 2018 (left) and 2019 (right).

Mentoring

Dorsey's Minneapolis office offers a Diversity Advisor Program for LGBTQ and other diverse associates. The advisors are Partner attorneys from another practice area who provide guidance and support as the associates advance in their careers at Dorsey.

Networking with a Purpose

Dorsey's LGBTQ Affinity Group meets regularly and is designed to encourage our LGBTQ attorneys and staff to forge connections within the Firm. For example, the LGBTQ Affinity Group holds regular marketing events for LGBTQ clients that help our associates gain business development experience. In addition, LGBTQ attorneys host regular events attended by clients and community members.

Participation in External Diversity Organizations

Dorsey encourages its diverse attorneys to participate in outside national and local diversity organizations and affinity bar groups by sponsoring memberships in these organizations. Additionally, many Dorsey attorneys and staff serve in leadership roles or are otherwise actively involved in various diversity organizations.

Sponsorships & Events

Dorsey hosts and sponsors many networking and social events in partnership with various diversity organizations and affinity bar groups, including:

- Colorado LGBT Bar Association
- Human Rights Campaign
- Legal Executives Diversity Summit
- Minnesota Lavender Bar Association
- Orange County Diversity Task Force
- QLaw: The LGBT Bar Association of Washington
- Twin Cities Diversity in Practice

Recruiting

Dorsey is committed to recruiting diverse candidates, including LGBTQ candidates. Dorsey achieved Mansfield Certification Plus in 2018 after completing the inaugural one-year Mansfield Rule pilot. Dorsey received Mansfield Certification Plus again in 2019 after completing Mansfield Rule 2.0. Dorsey is currently participating in Mansfield Rule 3.0, which measures whether law firms have affirmatively considered at least 30 percent women lawyers, lawyers of color, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ lawyers for leadership and governance roles, equity partner promotions, formal client pitch opportunities, and senior lateral positions.

The Firm participates in several diversity job fairs each year, including the LavenderLaw CareerFair, Minnesota Minority Recruitment Conference, Northwest Minority Job Fair, and Rocky Mountain Diversity Legal Career Fair. Through the Dorsey & Whitney Diversity Fellowship, our Firm hires diverse first and second year summer associates who receive a stipend for law school tuition and expenses. LGBTQ law students are regular fellowship recipients.

Pro Bono & Community

- Dorsey is representing a transgender woman in her discrimination claim against a place of public accommodation.
- Dorsey is representing Sexual Minorities Uganda. SMUG advocates for the protection and promotion of human rights of LGBTQ Ugandans. In a lawsuit pending in Massachusetts, SMUG is seeking to recover damages under the Alien Tort Statute against a U.S.-citizen who helped persecute LGBTQ individuals in Uganda.



Erin Bryan (Associate) and Rebecca Bernhard (Partner) at the Lavender Law Career Fair (2019).

Pro Bono & Community (continued)

- In conjunction with OutFront Minnesota, a nonprofit working toward LGBTQ equality, and both the national and local ACLU, Dorsey launched a successful challenge to the constitutionality of a Minnesota statute that banned the use of medical assistance funds for sex reassignment surgery, regardless of medical necessity. The plaintiffs included OutFront Minnesota as well as an individual plaintiff. On November 14, 2016, the plaintiffs received an Order from the Minnesota district court declaring the statute unconstitutional.

The district court concluded that the statute violated the Minnesota Constitution's equal protection clause and the right to privacy.

- Dorsey is assisting an Iowa municipality in the preparation of a transgender policy.
- Dorsey is assisting a LGBT support organization with the formation of an endowment.
- Dorsey's pro bono asylum practice includes representation of various individuals who have been persecuted due to their LGBTQ status.
- Dorsey hosted "First Comes Love: Portraits of Enduring LGBTQ Relationships" events in our Minneapolis, New York and Seattle offices. The photographs celebrate the lives of LGBTQ couples who have been together for more than a decade.
- Dorsey represented an undocumented LGBTQ client in a U-Visa application, which would grant work permission in the United States.
- Dorsey's Des Moines office represented several Iowa couples in their pursuit of marriage equality in the landmark Varnum v. Brien litigation. Dorsey played an integral role in this pro bono representation, coordinating legal strategy with co-counsel Lambda Legal from the outset of the case in 2005 through a successful appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court in 2009. The Court's unanimous opinion confirmed Dorsey's clients' right to marry in Iowa and, at the time, gave the marriage equality movement one of its earliest victories and the first in a state that was not on one of the coasts. It was a stirring victory for the firm, and a watershed moment for marriage equality.
- Dorsey is providing intellectual property advice in the production of a documentary regarding LGBTQ rights.
- Dorsey attorneys provide nonprofit board service to LGBTQ affinity groups, including the Minnesota Lavender Bar Association, which advocates for the advancement of LGBTQ legal professionals and equity in the profession.
- Dorsey participates in and raises funds for annual Delaware and New York AIDS walks.
- Minneapolis and Denver Dorsey attorneys are providing pro bono assistance in the formation of a nonprofit that invests in LGBT entrepreneurs.
- Dorsey attorneys staff a free walk-in clinic for the LGBTQ community through the Volunteer Lawyers Network.

2018 Minneapolis Pride Month Celebration

