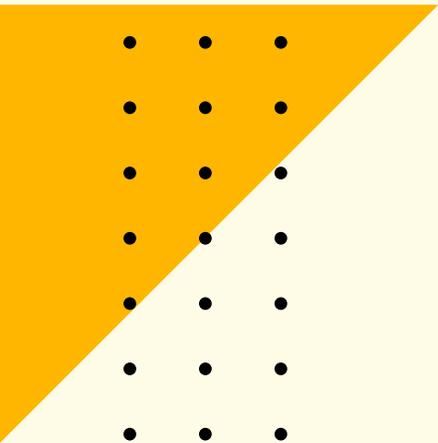
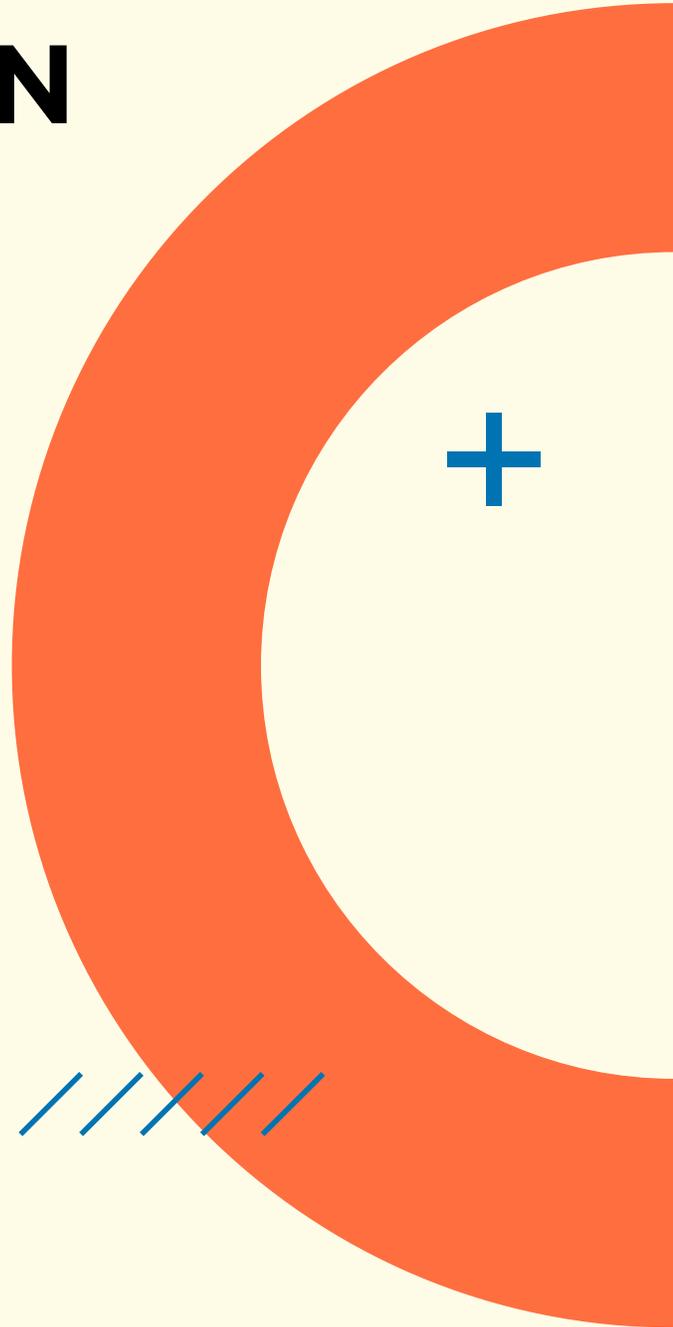




# DIVERSITY + INCLUSION

2020 REPORT



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## AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

In 2020, we faced circumstances and situations unlike any in history.

The year presented a seemingly never-ending set of challenges that our firm and clients faced ... together.

The unprecedented and justified outrage after the murders of Rayshard Brooks, Daniel Prude, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and more at the hands of law enforcement personnel made us address universal evils in our society left primarily untouched for decades and generations.

We examined unconscious bias in our thought and communication. We promoted active listening with those who should be heard. We acknowledged our prejudices when civil disruption, widespread protests, and avoidable tragedies demanded a response.

We hope our firm's commitment to service functions to fight through the known, and unknown, problems we possess.

**We are collectively working to adjust to systemic racism.**

This Annual Report summarizes the steps we took to serve our communities and transform our leadership in the legal profession, including:

- Actions For Change that laid a foundation for our own efforts regarding listening, reading, and learning about our colleagues' experiences
- LCLD programming for a more open and diverse legal profession
- Organizational support to aid suppressed segments of society
- Increased focus on hiring, retention and promotion practices

The pledge made in years' past rang true in 2020 and perhaps more so due to non-legal activities and advice than our work in legal matters. That is why we repeat our commitment now, and promise to you ...

We will be difference makers for our clients.

**Miller Johnson, Attorneys**



JUNE 8, 2020

# MILLER JOHNSON CONDEMNS POLICE BRUTALITY AND RACIAL INJUSTICE

Recent events have forced us to examine how we at Miller Johnson can meaningfully engage in the collective conversation happening on streets and public squares around the world and more directly in the communities we call home. We believe in the following.

**Miller Johnson condemns police brutality, racial injustice and the senseless murder of George Floyd.**

Miller Johnson is outraged by the murder of George Floyd at the hands of those sworn to protect him. George Floyd’s murder was a senseless act of violence. His death, and the violence against so many African Americans before him, is abhorrent to us as individuals and as a community. We recognize and condemn the legacy of systemic racism which led to his death and countless others whose deaths were not captured on video.

**Miller Johnson challenges all people to educate themselves on the value of the vast contributions African Americans have made, and continue to make, to this nation’s greatness, while shouldering the burden of racism.**

We do not issue this challenge to suggest that only due to these contributions do African-Americans deserve to live free of injustice and

inequality. We do so, to help rid our community of the unconscious bias often rooted in negative stereotypes of an inherent inferiority of African Americans. We have learned in this time from listening to some of our African American lawyers that the weight they carry is heavy, yet so familiar to their existence they rarely speak of it. We recognize numerous factors contribute to the continued existence of systemic racism and the belief that one person’s life is worth less than another’s. The time is now to not only directly address the injustices we see but to till the soil of our sub-conscious in search for a better refrain when interacting with those who are different.

**Miller Johnson sends its support to all peaceful protesters and law enforcement officials, and encourages everyone to stay hopeful in this time of hopelessness.**

For far too long, police brutality and racial injustice has been common place in our society, resulting in an eerie sense of normalcy. This sense of normalcy may lead to a crippling sense of hopelessness. This time things are different. We support those protesters taking a stand for change. We also support our law enforcement officials who carry out their duties in a manner which preserves

our right to peacefully protest, while also serving the vital role of protecting our communities. Please remain hopeful that justice will prevail and those who are charged with keeping the peace will do better.

**Miller Johnson challenges all community leaders to reflect on what makes this nation great and whether we have created a legacy we can be proud of.**

Among the many things that make this nation great is the promise of peace and tranquility for all. For many African Americans and other people of color, this promise has been nothing more than a facade. We ask leaders at all levels to reflect on what makes this nation great, and whether we have been living up to those principles. We challenge all leaders to use their authority to guide our communities to a better place.

Miller Johnson will cultivate a diverse and inclusive culture, inside and outside our walls. We all must effect positive social change, and Miller Johnson is dedicated to working for a more just and equitable future for all. Miller Johnson plans on contributing to **8 Can’t Wait**. We encourage others to similarly contribute to an organization of your choice and hope that, although greatly appreciated, financial contributions are only the first of many steps taken to address police brutality and racial injustice.

We will create opportunities for our law firm and our wider community to engage in discussion, exchange and education about racial injustice. We will listen, we will learn, and we will be part of the solution. We are ready and eager to engage with our community partners in this important work. We stand with the black community.

And yes, Black Lives Matter.



# DIVERSITY + INCLUSION COMMITTEE

## DIVERSITY + INCLUSION COMMITTEE



Kelley Stoppels  
Attorney, Chair



Bob Wolford  
Managing Member



Betsy Raymond  
Chief Operating Officer



Katie Aguilar  
Attorney



Chelsea Austin  
Attorney



Kevin Battle  
Attorney



Mary Bauman  
Attorney



Kelly DeRaad  
Human Resources Director



Loic Dimithe  
Attorney



Keith Eastland  
Attorney



Jeff Fraser  
Attorney



Lance Hartman  
Marketing Director



Michelle Smith  
Recruitment Director



Rebecca Strauss  
Attorney

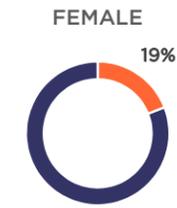
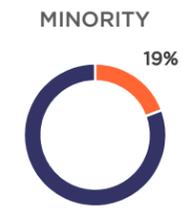
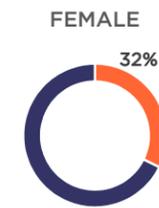


Shoran Reid Williams  
Attorney

# KEY STATISTICS

Our approach to serving our clients is deep rooted in knowing our clients' business and their legal matters as well as we know the law. To support this approach the make-up of our firm needs to best reflect those we serve. As community demographics change, ***we also strive for continued change.***

Here are the key demographic statistics regarding our diversity in 2020:

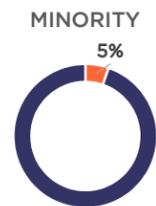
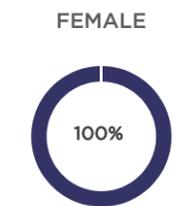
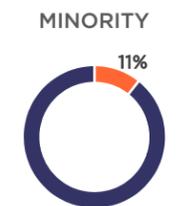
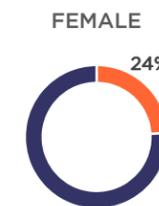


### Associates

| RACE / ETHNICITY         | FEMALE    | MALE      | TOTAL     |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| African American         | 1         | 2         | 3         |
| American Indian          |           |           |           |
| Arab American            |           |           |           |
| Asian / Pacific Islander |           |           |           |
| Hispanic                 | 1         | 1         | 2         |
| Multi-Ethnic             | 1         |           | 1         |
| White                    | 7         | 18        | 25        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>10</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>31</b> |

### Members/Partners

| RACE / ETHNICITY         | FEMALE    | MALE      | TOTAL     |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| African American         |           | 1         | 1         |
| American Indian          |           |           |           |
| Arab American            |           |           |           |
| Asian / Pacific Islander |           | 1         | 1         |
| Hispanic                 |           | 2         | 2         |
| Multi-Ethnic             |           |           |           |
| White                    | 13        | 51        | 64        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>13</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>68</b> |

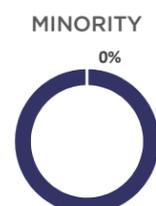
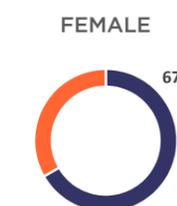
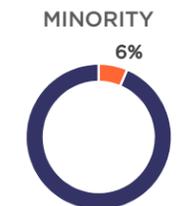
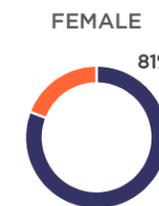


### All Attorneys

| RACE / ETHNICITY         | FEMALE | MALE | TOTAL |
|--------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| African American         | 2      | 3    | 5     |
| American Indian          |        |      |       |
| Arab American            |        |      |       |
| Asian / Pacific Islander |        | 1    | 1     |
| Hispanic                 | 2      | 3    | 5     |
| Multi-Ethnic             | 1      |      | 1     |

### Paralegals

| RACE / ETHNICITY         | FEMALE | MALE | TOTAL |
|--------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| African American         |        |      |       |
| American Indian          |        |      |       |
| Arab American            |        |      |       |
| Asian / Pacific Islander | 1      |      | 1     |
| Hispanic                 |        |      |       |
| Multi-Ethnic             |        |      |       |



### Staff

*(Legal Administrative Assistants, Marketing Staff, Accounting Staff, Information Technology Staff, etc.)*

| RACE / ETHNICITY         | FEMALE    | MALE     | TOTAL     |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| African American         |           |          |           |
| American Indian          |           |          |           |
| Arab American            |           |          |           |
| Asian / Pacific Islander |           |          |           |
| Hispanic                 | 3         |          | 3         |
| Multi-Ethnic             |           |          |           |
| White                    | 35        | 9        | 44        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>38</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>47</b> |

### Firm Management

*(Information Technology, Marketing, Recruitment & Development)*

| RACE / ETHNICITY         | FEMALE   | MALE     | TOTAL    |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| African American         |          |          |          |
| American Indian          |          |          |          |
| Arab American            |          |          |          |
| Asian / Pacific Islander |          |          |          |
| Hispanic                 |          |          |          |
| Multi-Ethnic             |          |          |          |
| White                    | 4        | 2        | 6        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>4</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>6</b> |

# ACTIONS FOR CHANGE

## ACTIONS FOR CHANGE

8 minutes and 46 seconds ...

is the time it took for Minneapolis police officers to murder George Floyd. It took the same 8 minutes and 46 seconds for the world to decide it was time to address the pervasive problem of systemic racism.

Miller Johnson decided that we must engage and be leaders in this fight. Through our commitment to foster an environment to help us identify the biases we each hold and to move beyond them; in our hiring, retention and promotion practices; in how we spend our dollars as a firm; and how we donate our time and legal services, we committed to being the change we want to see.



## CONVERSATIONS FOR CHANGE

“Conversations for Change” represents our engagement in the collective exchange regarding racial inequality, social injustice and unconscious bias while explaining this endeavor to positively affect systemic changes requires time and commitment with both internal and forward-facing actions.

All videos can be viewed on the “Conversations for Change” Playlist on our YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/user/millerjohnsonlaw>



### Presenting Conversations for Change

**Bob Wolford**  
Managing Member

### From the Bloodline of Freedom and Sharecroppers to Miller Johnson

**Shoran Reid Williams**

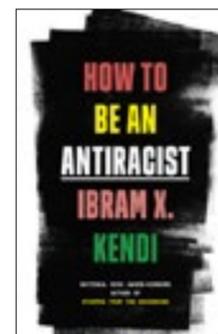


### Racial Justice – Allies in the Classroom

**Chelsea Austin**

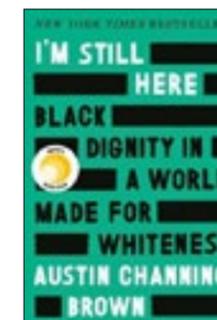
## READING FOR CHANGE

“Reading for Change” accepts that much of the work needed to effect lasting change regarding race relations is personal. We all have a different starting point. As part of this effort, we recommend books and reference materials that raise these topics for self-exploration, including:



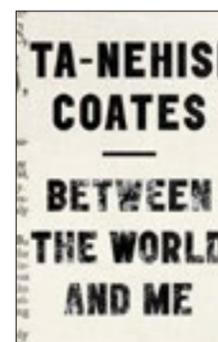
### “How to be an Antiracist”

by Ibram X. Kendi,  
Director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University



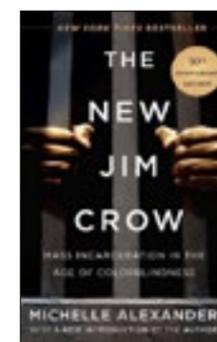
### “I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness”

by Austin Channing Brown



### “Between the World and Me”

by Ta-Nehisi Coates



### “The New Jim Crow”

by Michelle Alexander

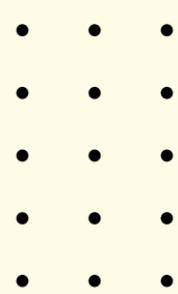


### Book Clubs

We facilitated small group “book clubs” to discuss our readings and share personal viewpoints on the material. Zoom meetings over breakfast and lunch provided an open forum for conversation and the exchange of thoughts.

This effort intends to give voice to the experiences of our colleagues and expand our collective understanding of what it means to be black in America.

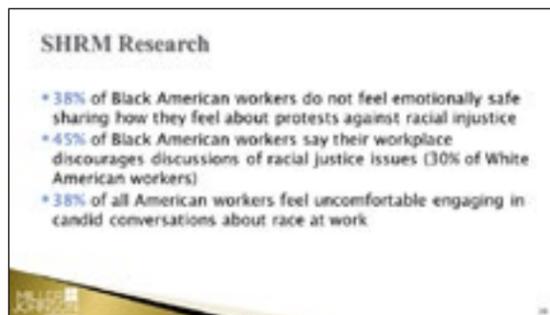
DIVERSITY + INCLUSION



## EMPLOYMENT LAW SEMINAR

In October, we led off our annual Employment Law Seminar with a candid conversation between **Rebecca Strauss** and **Shoran Reid Williams** centered on Shoran's experience as a person of color in a predominantly white workplace/profession.

The conversation on racism was thoughtful, truthful, and memorable.



### Our attendees echoed that sentiment:

*"The first segment about diversity and inclusion was great. Shoran should seriously teach a class on this."*



*"I did enjoy the open, honest discussion between two people who trusted each other enough to ask (and answer) questions we are afraid to ask - getting answers is how we grow and learn about each other."*



*"Race and Diversity in the workplace was my favorite to listen to. Your group did a great job overall. Thanks for providing this content."*

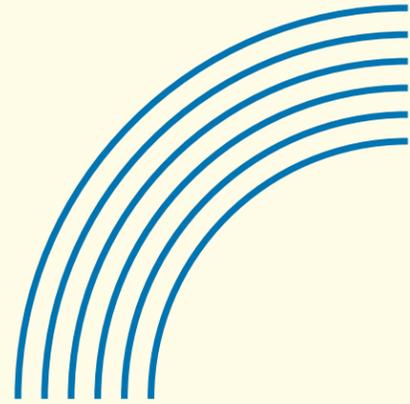


*"I appreciate kicking off with a courageous discussion about race and its impact to professionals of color in West Michigan."*

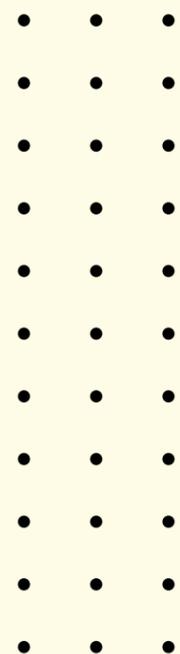


*"The D&I piece was moving and heartfelt."*

You can watch the Race and Diversity in the Workplace discussion, on our YouTube page here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE3BcYCdCRU>



# PARTNERSHIPS



## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL ON LEGAL DIVERSITY

The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) comprises corporate chief legal officers, law firm managing partners, and representative attorneys working together on initiatives to increase minority presence in the legal profession. Miller Johnson has been a member firm of LCLD since 2016.



LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL  
ON LEGAL  
DIVERSITY



**Shoran Reid Williams** served as the firm's LCLD Fellow in 2020. Ms. Williams participated in work groups and learning experiences that focused on recruitment, mentoring, and retention.

*"The importance of our Fellow programs were evident as conversations shaped by events around the world brought into view the critical need for the legal industry to see, and better reflect, the needs of our entire society."*

### Miller Johnson's Past LCLD Fellows:

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Brittany Harden | 2019 |
| Dustin Jackson  | 2018 |
| Cathy Tracey    | 2017 |
| Rebecca Strauss | 2015 |
| Raj Malviya     | 2014 |
| Sarah Willey    | 2013 |
| Sara Lachman    | 2012 |
| Bob Wolford     | 2011 |



**Anne Marie Carson** represented Miller Johnson in the LCLD Pathfinder Program designed for diverse, high-potential, early-career attorneys. Pathfinders are provided practical tools for developing and leveraging professional networks through relationship-building skills, foundational leadership skills, and an understanding of career development strategies.

*“The Pathfinder program was of tremendous value during this unprecedented year in my career. The LCLD pivoted to a virtual platform that delivered valuable substantive content and meaningful connections with similarly situated professionals. The person to person connections were invaluable as I reframed my perspective around work / life integration and the future of the legal profession amidst a global pandemic.”*

**Miller Johnson’s Past LCLD Pathfinders:**

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Loic Dimithe | 2019 |
| Kevin Battle | 2018 |

**Tahany Alsabahi** represented Miller Johnson in the LCLD 1L Scholars Program. Tahany attends the University of Southern California Gould School of Law in Los Angeles and was set to participate in our summer clerk program when COVID-19 interrupted the in-person programming. Tahany participated in a multi-day virtual summit with law students from around the country. The program strengthens the legal pipeline by expanding the number of opportunities for diverse first-year law students.

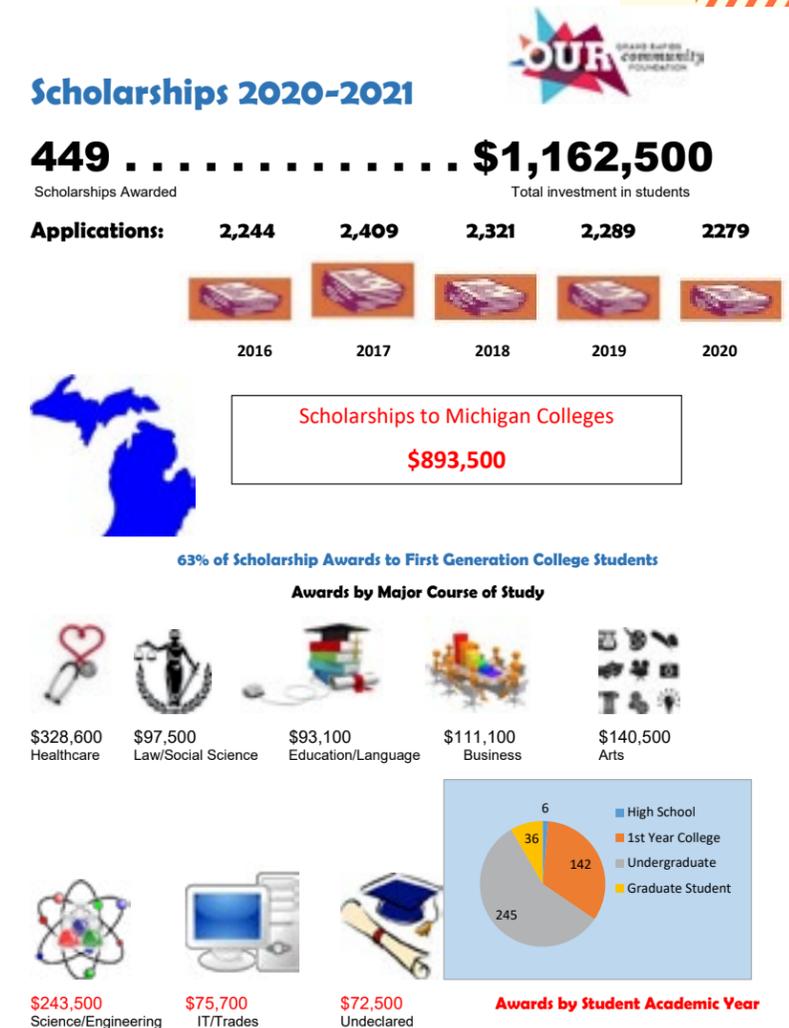
# MILLER JOHNSON MICHIGAN LAW SCHOOL DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

The Grand Rapids Community Foundation is now accepting applications for our Miller Johnson Michigan Law School Diversity Scholarship.

As part of the firm’s Diversity + Inclusion initiatives, the scholarship is available to students of color accepted to or attending law school within the U.S. who are U.S. permanent residents, refugees, asylees, or DACA recipients, demonstrate financial need, and have a minimum 3.0 GPA.

**Those interested in being considered must submit all application materials before the deadline of March 1, 2021.**

Complete application and details are at [www.grfoundation.org](http://www.grfoundation.org)

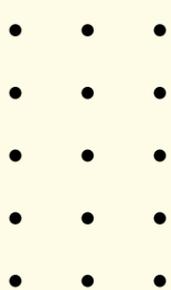


**2020 Recipient**

**Olivia Varnado** is the 2020 recipient of the Miller Johnson Michigan Law School Scholarship. Ms. Varnado studies at Washington University in St. Louis School of Law.

*“To say I’m excited would be an understatement. The hard work paid off, but I certainly couldn’t have done it alone. I’m headed to STL with scholarship funding thanks to Miller Johnson and the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, along with a very generous Scholar of Law award from WashULaw. Thank you to everyone who has invested in my next chapter.”*

- Olivia Varnado, 2020 scholarship recipient



Activities being enjoyed at the Boys & Girls Clubs



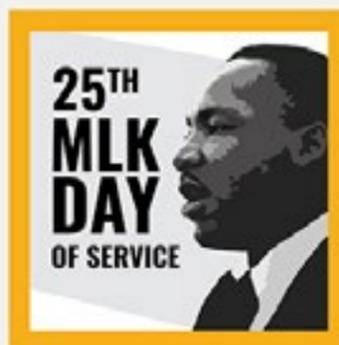
## DAY OF SERVICE

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on January 20, 2020, marked the 25th anniversary of the day of service that celebrates the Civil Rights leader's life and legacy. This year we positioned 141 volunteers at 16 locations for the firm's eleventh consecutive year of participation in the day of service.

The Corporation for National and Community Service leads the annual efforts working with the King Center in Atlanta and thousands of nonprofit groups, faith-based organizations, and schools and businesses nationwide.

### In 2020, our partner organizations were:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Grand Rapids
- Northeastern Elementary
- Meals on Wheels of Western Michigan
- UCOM (United Church Outreach Ministry)
- Great Start Parent Coalition
- SECOM Resource Center
- Grand Rapids Children's Museum
- Comprenew
- Kent Conservation District
- MRC Industries
- Pine Rest Christian Mental Health
- American Red Cross
- In The Image
- Kalamazoo Animal Rescue



**MAKE IT A DAY ON,  
NOT A DAY OFF**

JANUARY 20, 2020

Volunteer at [MLKDay.gov](http://MLKDay.gov)



Recycling materials being worked on at Comprenew



Sanitation supplies being sorted at the Grand Rapids Children's Museum



invasive species being removed at Kent Conservation District



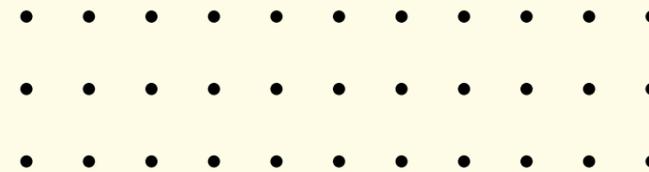
Care kits being assembled at the American Red Cross

Non-perishables being boxed at Meals on Wheels



DIVERSITY + INCLUSION

MILLER JOHNSON ATTORNEYS



## A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

An important element of our Day of Service is the Moment of Reflection we use to think about service as a vital aspect of our role as a law firm.

This year we were fortunate to have an exceptional presentation of the life and impact of Dr. King and reading his “I Have a Dream” speech performed by **Shoran Reid Williams, Mary Bauman, Jon March, Chelsea Austin** and **Alan Schwartz** (pictured left to right).



## LEGACY LUNCHEONS

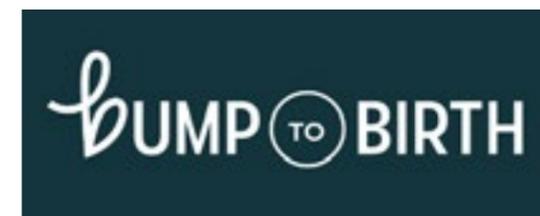
February is National Black History Month, and our firm has been a Lead Sponsor of the Legacy events in Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo since 2015.

This year we were thrilled to join the backing of entrepreneurs by contributing to their participation in “The Legacy Black Business Pitch” competition.

**Mary Bauman** and **Rebecca Strauss** helped lead our support of the civic affairs which bring together community leaders, corporate officers, school administrators, and individuals to support student scholarships & funding to black non-profit organizations.

The Legacy Committee is a diverse group of business professionals who volunteer their time each year to help achieve a common set of goals:

- To promote through scholarships positive examples in our state’s African American community
- To educate our youth on using African American history as a platform for growth





## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In March, just as the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted much of our normal routines, we were celebrating the contributions of exceptional women throughout Michigan as part of a Salute to Women social media push.



## PRIDE MONTH

In June, we thought it meant as much to show it as to say it. So we displayed our support of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer pride with a social media presence marking the 50th Anniversary of LGBTQ+ traditions.



MILLER JOHNSON ATTORNEYS

## APPRECIATION FOR A LEADER



We are thankful and forever grateful for the visionary guidance **Mary Bauman** provided our firm. A distinguished lawyer for many years, Mary was the firm's first, and most important, chair of our Diversity + Inclusion Committee. Mary served as the moral compass of the firm involving Diversity + Inclusion. She served on numerous community boards, planning committees, and fundraising ventures.

Mary retired from the practice of law in July 2020. We wish her a wonderful retirement and know she will put her energies and actions to work in ways we will all be hard-pressed to match.

Our challenge is to keep Mary's spirit active in our continued efforts to better ourselves through recruitment, retention, and broadening of opportunities for women and people of color.

Thank you Mary.

### Mary crafted our firm Diversity Vision and Mission Statements:

#### Diversity Vision

At Miller Johnson, we dedicate our skills and energies to promoting a climate where diversity of thought, background and culture thrives in our workplace and in our community, ensuring the success of our clients and enriching our lives.

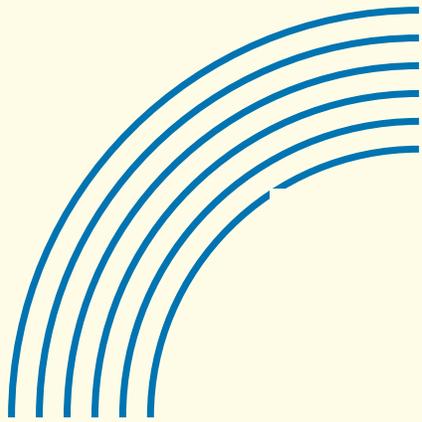
#### Diversity Mission

By cultivating a diverse and inclusive culture, we seek to reflect those we serve and engage the perspectives, ideas and innovative thoughts that inspire outstanding legal solutions and exceptional service.



DIVERSITY + INCLUSION





# Down to Earth, Down to Business.



## **GRAND RAPIDS**

Arena Place  
45 Ottawa Ave SW  
Suite 1100  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

616.831.1700

## **KALAMAZOO**

Radisson Plaza Hotel  
100 West Michigan Avenue  
Suite 200  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

269.226.2950

## **DETROIT**

DuMouchelles Building  
409 E. Jefferson Avenue  
Fifth Floor  
Detroit, MI 48226

248.258.2850

[millerjohnson.com](http://millerjohnson.com)

