WOMEN’S INITIATIVES

San Francisco and Palo Alto Committees on Retention and Promotion of Women
Sidley’s Women in Leadership program has a long-standing tradition of bringing together women business and professional leaders for networking events in the San Francisco Bay Area. Recently, the San Francisco Committee on Retention and Promotion of Women (CRPW) hosted their 10th annual event where Sidley lawyers and guests learned to improve negotiation skills by learning poker, while the Palo Alto CRPW hosted a book discussion with Kim Azzarelli, co-author of the book “Fast Forward: How Women Can Achieve Power and Purpose.”

These committees also hold periodic educational and mentoring events. In 2015, the Palo Alto CRPW hosted “Pathways to Partnership,” a breakfast discussion with partner and Executive Committee member Anne Rea. The event featured a conversation about the process and factors considered for promotion to partnership at Sidley. Monthly lunches, mentoring sessions and local gatherings for women in both the San Francisco and Palo Alto offices provide formal and informal channels for communicating about diversity and inclusion.

Los Angeles-area Committee on Retention and Promotion of Women
The Los Angeles-area CRPW hosts a number of events to help our female lawyers achieve greater success, including panels and dinners highlighting the women in the office who hold management positions and panels of in-house counsel. The committee also hosts quarterly women’s lunches that provide educational and networking opportunities. Topics for these events include promoting one’s practice, building visibility inside and outside the firm, speed networking and “real questions, real answers” about law firm life and careers. Over the years, the committee has hosted various client events. In 2015, the CRPW hosted networking events with Sidley women lawyers and their banking and finance, real estate and fashion and beauty clients.

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Building Connections
The Los Angeles-area, Palo Alto and San Francisco Diversity Committees help facilitate new diverse lawyers’ integration into firm life through meaningful connections with colleagues. Each June, the San Francisco Diversity Committee hosts a two-day event for all West Coast summer associates, often held in conjunction with Pride Month.

Diversity Mentorship Program
Sidley’s 1L Diversity Mentorship Program supports diverse, rising second-year law students who have secured summer employment or internships in Los Angeles and the Bay Area by providing career development strategies and an understanding of law firms and the local legal market. Mentors and mentees meet informally to discuss fall on-campus recruiting and summer associate programs, interviewing
best practices and questions related to practice area selection. Program participants are invited to attend formal workshops conducted by Sidley lawyers and recruiting staff and to participate in events with our summer associates.

University of Southern California Fellowship
Sidley is proud to sponsor the USC Fellowship Program, which is designed in part to help facilitate the shrinking pipeline of diverse students into prestigious law schools and law firms. This program offers promising rising 2L students an opportunity to split their summer work between a law firm, including Sidley, and a participating company.

Appellate Courts Experience (ACE)
ACE aims to spur the interest of minority high school students in the legal profession. In conjunction with the Los Angeles County Bar Association Appellate Courts Experience, members of the Los Angeles-area Diversity Committee teach the basics of the state court appellate process to high school students from underprivileged and/or minority neighborhoods. ACE students take part in classroom sessions that delve into discussions of a current appellate case that semester.

Dorsey High School Law and Public Service Magnet Program
Sidley has partnered with the Law and Public Service Magnet Program at Dorsey High School for a number of years. This program provides a school-within-a-school curriculum for students interested in careers in law and public service. The program is designed to expose students to career options in the legal profession, as well as volunteer opportunities throughout the community.

Promoting a Diverse Legal Profession
Sidley partners with diverse student organizations at many California law schools. Programs have included resume tips, how to impress on-campus recruiters, how to master the initial screening and call-back phases of the interview process, maximizing opportunities as a summer associate and information on the clerkship process. The firm also sponsors various events hosted by law school affinity groups and minority bar associations, including the 16th Annual Bay Area APALSA Conference and the USC BALSA 2015 Annual Alumni Banquet.

Sidley also supports diverse bar associations throughout California and beyond. Sidley partners in our California offices serve on boards of the Mexican American Legal and Education Defense Fund, the International Association of Korean Lawyers and the California Minority Counsel Program. The firm is active in a wide range of other local, state and national bar organizations. Sidley received the 2015 State Bar of California Diversity Award in recognition of the firm's ongoing commitment and progress toward increased diversity in the legal profession.