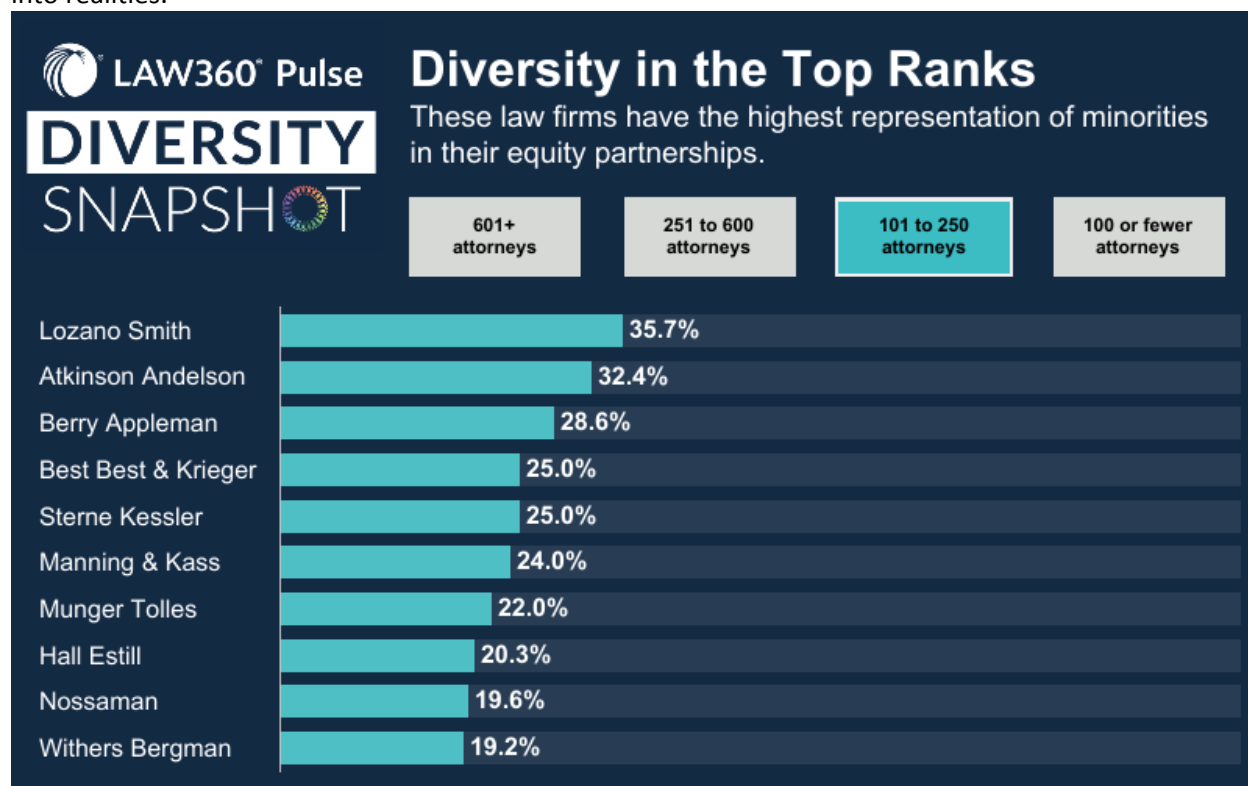


These Law Firms Have The Most Diverse Equity Partnerships

By Jacqueline Bell

Law360 (August 17, 2021, 3:02 PM EDT) -- After years of professing an unwavering dedication to promoting diversity in the legal industry, law firms have made only modest progress, particularly in their equity partnerships. But a handful of law firms are taking demonstrable steps to turn long-standing goals into realities.



At law firms that participated in Law360's most recent survey, the proportion of minority associates was close to 27%. But after years of professed effort to improve diversity at all levels of a typical law firm, the percentage of minority equity partners remains under 10%.

At law schools, the proportion of minority students has long been much higher. At least 20% of law students for the past 30 years have been people of color.

In 2020, more than 30% of law school graduates identified as members of a racial or ethnic minority. Yet overall the ranks of equity partners have remained overwhelmingly white.

Still, the firms on this list are proving that law firms can work towards building a partnership that is more diverse.

Morrison & Foerster LLP tops the list of the biggest law firms with the most diverse equity partners, reporting that more than 19% of their equity ranks are attorneys of color. Morrison & Foerster swapped places from last year with Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati PC. Wilson Sonsini came in a close second this year with more than 18% of their equity partners identifying as attorneys of color.

Among firms with between 251 and 600 attorneys, immigration boutique Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP again is dramatically outpacing its peers, with more than 29% equity partners of color.

Here are the firms outpacing their peers as the legal industry works towards increasing minority representation in its top ranks.

--Graphic by Jonathan Hayter and Chris Yates.

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