Vault Law Firm Culture & Inclusion Questionnaire

Firm Information

- **Firm Name:** Please provide the full name of your firm.

Goulston & Storrs PC

Leadership

- **Head(s) of Firm:** Please provide the name and title of the head(s) of the firm (e.g., Chair, CEO, Managing Partner). Enter information for more than one individual, if applicable.

William Dillon, Co-Managing Director
Michelle Porter, Co-Managing Director

- **Inclusion Professional(s):** Does the firm have a Chief Diversity Officer, Director of Inclusion, or other professional(s) leading the firm's inclusion initiatives? If so, please provide the name and title of the inclusion professional. Enter information for more than one individual, if applicable.

Ayeshah Johnson, Senior Director of DEI
Channing Kelly, DEI Specialist

- **Ownership:** Is the firm women-owned, minority-owned, and/or LGBTQ+-owned? If so, please note any related certifications (e.g., NAMWOLF).

No

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Culture and Community

- **Affinity Groups:** Does the firm have internal affinity groups or networks (open to all employees)? What affinity groups or networks does the firm have? What kind of support does the firm provide for these affinity groups or networks?

To support and strengthen our inclusive workplace culture, Goulston & Storrs maintains seven Affinity Groups that are open to all: First Generation, Jewish Life, LGBTQ+, Parenting, Race/Ethnicity, Veterans & Allies, and Women. These groups play an important role in fostering connection, professional development, mentorship, and community across the firm.

Each Affinity Group receives financial support for programming, professional development opportunities, and conference attendance. The groups also work closely with the DEI team, which provides strategic guidance, administrative support, and collaboration opportunities. Over the past year, we have continued to see increased attorney ownership and engagement within our Affinity Groups, with members taking a more active role in developing programming and creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue and learning across the firm.

- **Culture and Inclusion Events:** Does the firm host culture and inclusion retreats or conferences? If so, please describe these events.

While we do not host a standalone inclusion retreat or conference, inclusion is embedded throughout the firm's programming and professional development efforts. Affinity Groups regularly sponsor educational programs, panel discussions, networking events, and community-building initiatives. The firm also partners with clients, professional organizations, and external speakers to facilitate conversations on topics that impact the legal profession and workplace culture. These efforts provide opportunities for learning, connection, and dialogue across the firm while reinforcing our commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace culture.

In October 2025, Goulston & Storrs hosted its seventh annual DEI presentation, The ART of Inclusive Communication. The presentation focused on practical tools for communicating with greater intention, empathy, and effectiveness, particularly during moments of tension, misunderstanding, or difference. Leading up to the event, the firm offered a series of workshops designed to introduce and reinforce key concepts explored during the presentation.

Additional programming throughout the year included heritage month events and discussions, affinity group networking and community-building opportunities, leadership development initiatives, speaker events, and the firm's inaugural Veterans Day celebration.

- **Cultural Awareness:** How does the firm commemorate important dates honoring different cultures of employees within the firm (e.g., Black History Month, Women's History Month, Pride Month, etc.)?

Goulston & Storrs recognizes and celebrates the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that contribute to our workplace culture. A cornerstone of these efforts is our Heritage Month Series, through which the DEI team develops educational content that highlights the history, experiences, contributions, and perspectives of diverse communities. To make the experience more personal, each Heritage Month Series includes a city-focused component that explores the history, communities, and cultural impact of Boston, New York, and Washington, DC through the lens of the heritage month being recognized. This approach allows employees to connect national themes to the communities in which we live and work while learning about the diverse histories that have shaped our office locations. In addition to the Heritage Month Series, we collaborate with Affinity Groups, attorneys, clients, and our Business Development team to create programs, discussions, and communications that recognize and celebrate the experiences and contributions of diverse communities.

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- **Inclusiveness:** Please describe steps the firm has taken to create an inclusive environment for women, people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and parents/caregivers.

Creating an inclusive workplace requires sustained effort across recruitment, professional development, advancement, workplace flexibility, and employee engagement. At Goulston & Storrs, inclusion considerations are embedded throughout the attorney lifecycle, from recruiting and onboarding to performance evaluations, career development, and advancement discussions. The DEI team works closely with Talent Development, Legal Recruiting, Affinity Groups, the Inclusion Advisory Committee, and firm leadership to help ensure attorneys have access to the resources, support networks, and opportunities they need to succeed.

We support attorneys and professional staff through Affinity Groups, mentoring opportunities, flexible work arrangements, parental leave programs, accessibility resources, and ongoing educational programming. Our Senior Director of DEI serves as a resource and bias interrupter during key talent discussions and helps facilitate conversations about equitable decision-making and professional growth. Through these efforts, we strive to foster a workplace culture where individuals feel supported, valued, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and talents.

Networking, Mentoring, and Professional Development

- **Mentoring & Sponsorship:** Does the firm offer a mentorship or sponsorship program that connects junior attorneys with senior leadership? If so, please describe.

The firm launched a mentoring initiative that connects newer associates with members of the Executive Committee. The program was designed to foster relationship-building, increase transparency around leadership and the business of law, and create opportunities for cross-identity conversations. Following a successful pilot, the initiative was expanded and continues to provide opportunities for relationship-building, career development, cross-identity conversations, and greater transparency around leadership and the business of law.

- **Reverse Mentoring:** Does the firm pair senior attorneys with junior attorneys to help bridge generational or cultural gaps, share perspectives and skills, and foster a more inclusive culture?

While the firm does not currently maintain a formal reverse mentoring program, we intentionally create opportunities for attorneys at different levels to engage in discussions around professional development, workplace culture, and inclusion. These interactions help promote mutual learning, broaden perspectives, and strengthen relationships across generations and backgrounds.

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- **Associate Committee:** Does the firm have an associate committee that consults with the partnership? If so, please describe how that committee engages with the partnership.

Our Associate Liaison Committee serves as an important channel for communication between associates and firm leadership. The Committee meets quarterly with the Co-Managing Directors and regularly engages with both the Co-Managing Directors and Executive Committee on matters affecting associates and the broader firm community. Through these discussions, associates have meaningful opportunities to share feedback, raise concerns, and contribute ideas that help shape the firm's culture and policies.

- **Professional Development:** Does the firm offer professional development programs specifically for junior attorneys? Please elaborate on the professional development programs available to junior attorneys.

Goulston & Storrs takes an intentional and comprehensive approach to attorney development, beginning at the earliest stages of an attorney's career. Junior associates benefit from a strong foundation of programming, including an eight-session coaching program to help build skills and set them up for success prior to joining the firm, a multi-day Starting Off Strong workshop, year-long Keys to Success mentoring program, and mid-year developmental check-ins with their mentor. These initiatives are designed to help associates build practical skills, understand firm expectations, develop meaningful professional relationships, and navigate their long-term career growth with confidence.

Beyond its internal programming, the firm supports junior attorneys in pursuing external leadership and professional development opportunities, including the Pathfinders program offered through the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD). These experiences help emerging attorneys strengthen their leadership skills, expand their professional networks, gain broader industry perspective, and develop the confidence and judgment needed to advance their careers.

Recruitment, Promotion, and Advancement

- **Recruitment Process:** What steps has the firm taken to build a more inclusive recruitment process (e.g., interview training, behavioral interview questions, blind resume review, etc.)?

The firm continually evaluates its recruiting practices to promote fairness, consistency, and broad access to opportunities. Members of the hiring committee receive annual implicit bias training before the screening and callback interview process begins. Legal recruitment professionals and hiring partners review application materials before interviews, and transcripts are not included in interviewer packets. The firm also participates in organizations and initiatives that help expand access to the legal profession and broaden candidate pipelines. The firm partners with organizations such as the Boston Lawyers Group, CLEO (Council on Legal Education Opportunity), and other legal and educational institutions to increase access to careers in the legal profession and strengthen the pipeline of future attorneys.

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- **Fellowship/Scholarship:** Does the firm offer any scholarships, fellowships, or internships? If so, describe those programs. How many of the law students who participated in the firm's most recent 2L summer associate program were hired through such a program?

The firm does not currently maintain a formal fellowship or scholarship program. However, we actively invest in recruiting initiatives, professional development opportunities, and partnerships that help expand access to legal careers and strengthen the pipeline of future attorneys.

- **Advancement:** Describe any firm initiatives to create equal opportunities for all attorneys with respect to work allocation, performance reviews and upward reviews, and/or promotions.

Creating equitable opportunities for advancement remains a key focus for the firm. Members of our Talent Development team participate in work allocation discussions, performance review processes, and the partnership elevation process to help ensure attorneys are evaluated using objective criteria and receive opportunities aligned with their professional goals. Our Senior Director of DEI participates in advancement discussions, serves as a bias interrupter, and facilitates educational sessions focused on mitigating bias in performance evaluations and decision-making. The firm also provides resources and tools designed to help evaluators recognize and address common forms of bias.

- **Multitiered Partnership:** Does the firm offer a multitiered partnership? If so, please describe.

The firm does not have a multitiered partnership structure.

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- **Alternatives to Partnership:** Does the firm offer a non-partner track alternative for attorneys? If so, please describe.

Attorneys whose career goals or professional paths differ from the traditional directorship track have opportunities to pursue alternative advancement paths. Depending on their circumstances and career objectives, attorneys may transition to Senior Attorney or Counsel roles, allowing them to continue developing meaningful careers and contributing to the firm in ways that align with their strengths and interests.

- **Reduced Hours and Flex-Time Options:** Does the firm offer reduced hours and/or flex-time options? If so, please describe and explain how working an alternative schedule might affect an associate's path to partnership.

The firm offers reduced-hours and flexible work arrangements designed to support attorneys in balancing professional development with personal responsibilities. Attorneys working schedules of 80% or more generally remain on the standard path toward partnership, with no expected impact on advancement due to participation in a formal flexible work arrangement. For schedules below 80%, the firm works collaboratively with attorneys to develop individualized arrangements, which may include adjustments to the timing of advancement milestones.

- **Credit for Work Other Than Client Billable:** Does the firm provide hours credit for work not pertaining to clients, such as recruiting, business development, knowledge management, or inclusion efforts? Note that this does not include pro bono projects. If so, describe the policy for such work.

While the firm does not maintain a formal billable-hour credit system for recruiting, business development, knowledge management, inclusion, or similar non-client activities, these contributions are valued as important components of firm citizenship. Attorneys are encouraged to participate in initiatives that strengthen the firm, support professional development, contribute to recruiting and retention efforts, and foster an inclusive culture. Engagement in these activities, along with being a collaborative and supportive colleague, is considered as part of the firm's broader evaluation of attorney contributions, including compensation and advancement decisions.

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Successes and Priorities

- What are the firm's top three accomplishments or areas in which the firm has had its greatest success with respect to fostering inclusion within the firm?

1. Increased attorney ownership and engagement within Affinity Groups and inclusion-related programming, resulting in more opportunities for connection, dialogue, and professional development.
2. Continue providing educational programming and opportunities for dialogue through the Inclusion Advisory Committee, Affinity Groups, and other firmwide initiatives.
3. Expanded educational and community-building programming through the Heritage Month Series, annual DEI presentation, affinity group events, and new initiatives such as the Veterans & Allies Affinity Group, creating more opportunities for learning, engagement, and connection across the firm.

- What are the firm's top three priorities for advancing inclusion within the firm?

1. Expand community engagement through partnerships with law schools, legal organizations, affinity bar associations, and community-based organizations.
2. Continue providing educational programming and opportunities for dialogue through the Inclusion Advisory Committee's Internal Subcommittee and the firm's Affinity Groups.
3. Strengthen attorney development by providing individualized coaching, mentoring, and professional growth opportunities that help attorneys build the skills needed to succeed and advance within the profession.

Advice to Candidates

- What advice do you have for candidates who are looking for an inclusive work environment? What questions should they ask when interviewing to help them assess the extent of a firm's commitment to inclusion?

Candidates seeking an inclusive workplace should look beyond statements and commitments and focus on how inclusion is integrated into a firm's day-to-day operations. Ask how the firm supports professional development, mentorship, work allocation, performance reviews, and career advancement. Inquire about Affinity Groups, leadership engagement, flexible work policies, and opportunities for feedback. An inclusive environment is one in which attorneys receive meaningful support, equitable opportunities, and a genuine sense of belonging while pursuing their professional goals.

Candidates should also ask how attorneys are encouraged to participate in affinity groups, mentoring programs, and firm initiatives beyond their billable work, as these opportunities can provide valuable insight into a firm's culture and commitment to professional growth.

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Additional Response Space

Please use this page for information that did not fit in the spaces provided. If this is a continuation of a prior answer, please indicate which question(s) are being addressed.

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