Vault Law Firm Culture & Inclusion Questionnaire

Firm Information

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

Knobbe, Martens, Olson & Bear, LLP.

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.

Steven J. Nataupsky, Managing Partner

- **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.

Yes, Terra Davis, Chief Diversity & Talent Development Officer

- **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?

Yes, the Firm has the following Affinity Groups, which have a budget supported by the firm's Diversity Committee. These groups also meet monthly and host programs and events throughout the year.

-Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
-Black/African American
-Hispanic and Latinx
-Jewish
-Muslim
-LGBTQ+
-South Asian
-Women
-Middle Eastern and North African

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

Yes, the Firm-Wide Retreat and the Diversity Summit are hosted annually (Summer and Fall).

- **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.)?

The Firm recognizes and commemorates dates honoring diversity through internal and external efforts, including inclusion in its monthly newsletter, social media posts and campaigns, and internal social and educational events throughout the year such as Juneteenth, Pride, AANHPI Heritage Month, etc.

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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.

-We offer health insurance plans that provide equitable benefits for employees and dependents.
-We provide an opportunity for employees to share their pronouns.
-We offer gender-neutral terminology in our policies and procedures.
-We offer a non-discrimination policy that explicitly includes identity and expression as a protected category.
-We offer parental mentorship following parental leave.

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 pairs Associates with both junior and senior-level Partner mentors to support their professional development and long-term career goals. The Firm's Mentor Committee, in collaboration with the Chief Diversity & Talent Development Officer, oversees these mentoring relationships to help ensure they are effective and successful.

- **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?

No

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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.

Yes, the Firm has a Women Associates Advisory Committee that provides a forum to discuss topics of interest for our Associates. This is also a way for Associates to engage with other women partners at the firm. The Firm also has a Litigation Associates Advisory Committee focused on our litigation Associates, and led by our litigation partners.

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

Yes, the Firm hosts several professional development programs internally and externally throughout the year. These include:

-Monthly educational lunches where Associates gain skills presenting case law.
-The Fall Associate Academy, a week-long orientation for our first-year Associates.
-Practice Group Boot Camps, practice-based skills training throughout the year for all first-year Associates.
-The Litigation Associate Advisory Committee meetings are monthly meetings focused on education and training for all Associates in the litigation practice group or interested in learning more about patent litigation.
-Monthly practice group education lunches focused on practice-based skills training throughout the year for all Associates.

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 is actively involved in partnerships with several organizations and career conferences focused on building a pipeline of underrepresented lawyers in the IP field. For example, the Firm participates in Barrier Breakers (focused on first-generation law school students), the Lavender Law Conference & Career Fair (focused on the LGBTQ+ community), and the Patent Pathways program (focused on first-generation and underrepresented students interested in pursuing a career in IP law).

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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?

Yes, 1L & 2L Diversity & Inclusion Fellowship Program. Each year, the Firm awards the Fellowship along with an opportunity to join as a Summer Associate. These Summer Associates are then reviewed and considered for full-time employment following the completion of law school.

- **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.

Yes, the Firm, through its Mentor Committee, assesses each Associate's performance review alongside the Chief Diversity & Talent Development Officer. Together, they review feedback provided for biases and inequities. The Firm also monitors and tracks the work allocation of all Associates, including supporting the workload distribution of its first-year Associates through a specialized committee including Partners representing each practice group and the Chief Diversity & Talent Development Officer.

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

No

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

Yes, reduced hours/quota program for Associate and Patent Counsel, as well as off-track counsel program for Associates who do not want to become Partners.

- **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.

Yes, working reduced hours may extend the time for an Associate's eligibility for partnership. Otherwise, alternative schedules and work arrangements do not affect their eligibility.

- **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.

Yes, full-time Associates can earn credit towards activities related to business development, pro bono matters, DEI internal and external activities, and serving on a Firm committee.

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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) Conducted an inclusion assessment and implementation of recommendations, which included hiring the Firm's inaugural Chief Diversity & Talent Development Officer.
2) Adopted a gender-neutral parental leave policy.
3) Increased circulation of training and education material on inclusion.

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

1) Expanding our recruiting efforts to reach more colleges and universities through pipeline program partnerships and on-campus sponsorships, events, and interviews.
2) Increasing focus on inclusion, education, and training opportunities.
3) Adopting strategic efforts to retain historically underrepresented attorneys in the IP space.

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?

To remain curious and follow what you love. If you are interested in a career in IP or Trademark Law, take a few courses and join your school's IP clinic, if one is available. If you are curious about the Firm's commitment to inclusion, ask thoughtful questions about the Firm's efforts and initiatives, and whether there are any networks or groups available to join.

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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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