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Competitive Job Market Brings New Opportunities for Lawyers of Color

Hiring Scramble at Big Law Firms Leads to Increased Diversity, New Opportunities for Lawyers of Color

In the past year or two, as Big Law firms have faced a competitive hiring market for associates, they've cast their net wider, looking beyond the prestige law schools they typically draw from and also making more lateral hires, in which an associate moves from one firm to another. Whether by accident or by design, recent data suggests that these new approaches may also be helping to increase racial and ethnic diversity within many large firms. For example, according to data from Firm Prospects, lawyers of color accounted for 4.94% of all lateral hires made by the nation's top 100 firms last year—an increase of nearly 2% from 2019, when lawyers of color made up 3.14% of lateral hires. [Bloomberg Law](#) takes a closer look at this shift within Big Law, and at whether it's only a fleeting trend or a sign of more sustained change.

Oklahoma State Senate Resolution Calls for Sweeping Changes in District Judge Elections, Licensing for Some Lawyers

A state Senate resolution in Oklahoma, if eventually approved by voters, would mean partisan elections for district judges, the dissolution of the Judicial Nominating Commission, and a new system in which the state Legislature determines qualifications and credentialing for any lawyers who do not litigate in court. Senate Joint Resolution 43 was approved late last month by the state House and sent back to the state Senate, but even some House members who voted for it called it "atrocious" and said major changes are needed before it could be passed along to voters. What are some possible motivations for this resolution, how likely is it that it will be approved, and what did Oklahoma Bar Association Executive Director John Williams say about the ramifications of the proposed changes in licensing for many lawyers? Find out at [the Oklahoman](#).

Mound City Bar Foundation, Two St. Louis Law Schools Create Pipeline Initiative to Increase Diversity in Region's Law Firms

A new initiative led by the Mound City Bar Foundation aims to help promote diversity, equity, and inclusion among lawyers in its region by developing a strong pipeline of Black students at St. Louis law firms. Called the Equity Scholars Program, this initiative was created in connection with the 100th anniversary campaign for the Mound City Bar Association, the oldest affinity bar for Black lawyers west of the Mississippi River. Washington University and St. Louis University joined with the foundation to build this program, which will offer financial aid, mentorship, career development, and other support services for law students selected because of their academic achievement, connection to the St. Louis community, commitment to diversity, financial need, and interest in personal development. [St. Louis Business Journal](#) has more details, including how this initiative ties in with a larger goal to attract and retain talented professionals in the St. Louis region.

Colorado Court of Appeals: Disincentives Against

Departing Lawyers Taking Clients with Them May Violate Rule of Professional Conduct

Even if they can't outright prohibit departing lawyers from taking their clients with them, many law firms have in their contracts financial disincentives against doing so. A recent opinion from the Colorado Court of Appeals said that these attempts to discourage lawyers from continuing to represent clients after leaving a firm could violate Colorado Rule of Professional Conduct 5.6(a), which prohibits any "agreement that restricts the right of a lawyer to practice." The opinion pertains to a case in which a lawyer resigned, took 18 clients with him, and was asked to pay \$18,983 per the contract he had signed. [Law.com](#) has more information about this case and about what guidance from other jurisdictions helped the appellate court in drafting its opinion.



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