Proskauer

Black Lawyer Affinity Group: Exploring Society's Most Complex Challenges

Fall 2016

In February 2016, Proskauer lawyers, staff and friends of the Firm gathered at our New York office for a thought-provoking panel discussion entitled, "Closing the Achievement Gap: How Do We Lead the Charge?" The achievement gap refers to disparities in academic performance among student groups, especially those defined by socioeconomic status, race and gender.

Hosted by the Black Lawyer Affinity Group (BLAG) as part of the Firm's celebration of Black History Month, the discussion was led by BLAG members and the event co-chair, Krista Whitaker.

Attendees heard from two prominent community leaders, Diahann Billings-Burford, executive director, cultural investments for Time Warner Inc.; and James O'Neal, co-founder and executive director of Legal Outreach, an early-intervention, college preparatory organization that uses instruction in law to inspire and prepare low-income minority youth to strive for academic excellence and higher education.

This dynamic event echoed the intensity of BLAG's February 2015 panel discussion, "Now What? The Aftermath of Ferguson and Eric Garner," which explored the implications of nationwide protests sparked by the decisions not to indict in the Michael Brown and Eric Garner cases. Moderated by BLAG co-chair Kevin Nolan, that panel featured: Janai Nelson, associate director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., and a former director of LDF's Political Participation Group, and Charles Blow, visual op-ed columnist for The New York Times.

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