Sutherland is proud of its record on diversity and inclusion. Many of our efforts are described in this report. We are delighted to highlight a few of the many clients who encourage and partner with us in diversity efforts and to describe in some detail our Sutherland Scholars program which, since its inception ten years ago, has inspired and served as a model for similar programs throughout the country.

Surveys and studies by the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) and the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) Foundation for Law Career Research and Education indicate that progress for large law firms on gender and diversity in the lawyer ranks plateaued around 2008. We are pleased that in the environment for large law firms that has existed since 2008 (and is often referred to as the “new normal”), Sutherland continues to make progress in growing the ranks of our diverse attorneys and improving diversity in leadership positions within the firm.

Satisfaction and complacency, however, are not called for, and Sutherland has certainly not yet “arrived.” To ensure that we recruit, retain and help diverse attorneys to succeed will require diligence, hard work, innovation and a constant examination of “the way things are done.” During 2013, Sutherland engaged in developing the firm’s updated strategic plan for the next five years. The plan outlines five specific goals, each goal accompanied by specific strategies, and one of those five goals specifically addresses diversity. In it, we commit to promote awareness of diversity and inclusion through firmwide programming and training; address diversity and inclusiveness in our practice group business plans; be among the leading law firms for diversity and women; engage female and diverse attorneys in client relationships; and ensure that our leadership positions reflect our firm’s diversity.

We welcome your input, constructive criticism, advice and opportunities to partner with you in new initiatives.
Our work to ensure a diverse and inclusive firm is aided by prodding from, and partnerships with, a substantial number of clients, service to affinity bar and related organizations, financial support of organizations working to strengthen the profession’s diversity and participation in various bar-sponsored programs designed to foster and advance the careers of diverse attorneys. A few highlights are set forth herein.

**Words From a Few Clients**

**April Savoy**  
*VP, Associate General Counsel, P&C Product and Service Leader at Nationwide Insurance*

*What is the state of diversity for the legal industry?*

*What trends/opportunities/challenges are you still seeing with law firm diversity?*

My sense from my research and my work here at Nationwide is that I see a lot of promising activity. However, the numbers suggest there are still opportunities out there to strengthen efforts. We need to increase the pipeline of law school candidates and young lawyers, as well as the number of opportunities for diverse attorneys in leadership roles and roles of influence in both law firms and in-house corporate settings.

*What diversity efforts are being pursued by your legal department?*

*What expectations do you have with regard to diversity for the law firms with whom you partner?*

There are six efforts we would highlight with the hope that they paint a broad picture of our commitment: law firm diversity awards, dedicated legal spend, CLEs with diverse firms, succession planning, street law programs and a diversity inclusion council.

Before Nationwide had a diversity awards program, we were using broad measurements to evaluate our spending with minorities in our partner organizations. We have now integrated our approach to minority spend in conjunction with all outside counsel spending. We joined the Association of Corporate Counsel in committing to increase our overall outside counsel spend with women and diverse attorneys at major law firms. We added a secondary focus on firm members of the National Association of Minority & Women Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF). We are pleased to say that we are achieving promising results in this effort.

*Do you have a program that recognizes the diversity efforts of your partner law firms?*  
*If so, can you please elaborate on the program?*

We have found that often the best ideas are seeded from others. When Nationwide won the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) diversity award through the Midwest chapter, we had the opportunity to see the different diversity initiatives of other legal counsel award winners. We decided thereafter to change a key program of our legal department. Previously, we had issued firms a rating for their diversity efforts, which had the feel of giving them a grade and which did not foster the relationship. The MCCA experience taught us to turn the stick into a carrot. We wanted to honor and reward those that were doing great things. We set out to develop a recognition program with a best-in-class approach that rigorously used both objective and subjective metrics gathered from our outside partners. Our goal was to identify the best candidates and to honor those who really commit to diversity in their firms. The end result is more than just an award; these honorees receive personalized access to our legal department leaders, Nationwide-provided marketing and advertising in national and local publications, an opportunity to speak at Nationwide’s biannual outside counsel conference, and consideration in future legal work with our office.

*Can you describe Sutherland’s participation in your recognition program?*  
*In what way does it share the same values of diversity on which your company focuses?*

When we conducted the in-person interview with Sutherland regarding their diversity program, its commitment to the interview was underscored by the senior leadership representatives that attended. Sutherland included partners who were leading the firm’s committees in our process—people who had real heft at the firm. Involvement from firm leadership is critical to change related to diversity.
Edward Duch, III
Assistant Vice President and Counsel at MassMutual

What is the state of diversity for the legal industry?
What trends/opportunities/challenges are you still seeing with law firm diversity?
Diversity is not just where you’re from; it is different people from different points of view. It means flexible work arrangements and single parents, not just race and gender. If you have the same people together with similar points of view, this could potentially hinder your creative momentum.

In order for law firms to remain competitive, they need to fully embrace these different worldviews and structure their professional development, leadership and partner initiatives in new ways. It doesn’t have to be a colossal feat. It could be as simple as getting more associates in front of their clients by having partners relinquish some “face time,” so that relationships engender more work and all of us win.

There is certainly more talk and attention to diversity within law firms these days, but all that action needs to translate into results. I would like to see more diverse, qualified attorneys achieve partnership at law firms. Law firms need to recognize that it isn’t enough to get these attorneys in the door; they need to find ways to retain and promote their diverse talent by providing an inclusive environment.

What diversity efforts are being pursued by your legal department?
What expectations do you have with regard to diversity for the law firms with whom you partner?
We have had tremendous transformation over the last four to six years under the leadership of our Diversity Committee. That success can be attributed to our diversity initiatives coming from the top down. Our General Counsel believes in this; he “talks the talk and walks the walk.”

We host diversity dinners to pair senior leaders from our organization with women and minority attorneys at partner law firms. We hope to get to know them and send them more of our assignments, which will help them achieve promotions in their respective firms.

Do you have a program that recognizes the diversity efforts of your partner law firms?
If so, can you please elaborate on the program?
We want individuals with different points of view to solve the matters assigned to them. If you have the same people handling cases every time, their point of view on possible solutions just isn’t going to be that different or creative.

Therefore, we have an evaluation process that our partner law firms participate in. We have built some metrics around tracking who is working on what matters and evaluating our partner firms’ diversity programs as a part of our selection process. We require our partner firms to report their use of women and minority attorneys every quarter. We report back to our partner firms whether or not they are meeting our diversity expectations. By tracking our cases, we help drive the diversity initiative and increase the use of diverse outside counsel. Just like law firms, we are seeking to improve our efforts. We are moving now from data collection to information sharing, so all can benefit.

Can you describe Sutherland’s participation in your recognition program?
In what way does it share the same values of diversity on which your company focuses?
We participate in a dynamic, 1L summer program where we hire minority first-year law students to intern part-time with us and part-time with a law firm, including Sutherland this summer. This opportunity helps students gain experience to apply toward their 2L job search, and it gives law firms time to network with our interns. We sincerely appreciate how Sutherland seeks creative ways to partner with us.
Russell Bonds  
Senior Managing Counsel - Litigation at The Coca-Cola Company

What is the state of diversity for the legal industry?  
What trends/opportunities/challenges are you still seeing with law firm diversity?  
Many law firms are playing the good game. Many still have difficulty bringing their diversity initiatives to fruition. I’ve witnessed law firms that have a diverse group of attorneys, but they are involved in only one aspect of the law firm’s legal business. Or, the firm might have many diverse associates without having diversity in leadership. That being said, the needle is moving in the right direction. Creating a culture of diversity is a “journey”—to make a Coca-Cola reference—of many steps and not a leap. Some firms are further than others, which is fine. The object of the game is to keep moving forward and understand that having diversity initiatives in the law firm setting is just good business, especially in our global economy.

What diversity efforts are being pursued by your legal department?  
What expectations do you have with regard to diversity for the law firms with whom you partner?  
At Coca-Cola, we aim to be as inclusive in our diversity business practices as the markets we serve. We have a very diverse consumer base and it is important that we work with entities that share those values—as an extension of our brand. Through Coca-Cola’s Legal Division Diversity Council, our in-house legal team supports programs to work with law firms who have the same priorities in achieving diversity. This includes, for example, the promotion of women and minorities into leadership positions at law firms, as well as recruitment and retention initiatives.

Do you have a program that recognizes the diversity efforts of your partner law firms?  
If so, can you please elaborate on the program?  
Our “Living the Values” Award specifically focuses on diversity-related initiatives and their progress within U.S.-based law firms. It is given to the law firm that best demonstrates a commitment to diversity with creative and innovative solutions that align with Coca-Cola’s diversity values. The survey and overall process for nomination is a good educational experience for our partner law firms. Our program asks the hard questions and encourages critical thinking, which hopefully motivates firms to recognize opportunities for improvement, in addition to celebrating their strengths. We recognize that all firms are unique and face different challenges, based on practice or geography. And while we are glad that diversity has become something that everyone thinks about, we are excited it’s becoming easier to not think about as law firms build it into their structures.

Can you describe Sutherland’s participation in your recognition program?  
In what way does it share the same values of diversity on which your company focuses?  
Sutherland has reached the stage of refining their existing programs, which in and of itself is a measure of progress. I am proud to call myself an alumnus of the firm. While they have a superb reputation for top-notch lawyering and client service, they also have an ever-improving diversity focus. They have innovative, strong and unique diversity initiatives like their Sutherland Scholars program and their diverse attorneys working group, which I have had a chance to speak to. Sutherland has already been recognized by Coca-Cola for their innovative diversity programs; I look forward to someday presenting them with our prestigious Living the Values award.
Shaney Lokken
Assistant General Counsel at Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta

What is the state of diversity for the legal industry?
What trends/opportunities/challenges are you still seeing with law firm diversity?
As a member and past president of the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association and a member of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, I am pleased to see that diversity is becoming more of a focus. I notice that diversity is becoming a more substantial practice for law firms and in-house legal departments alike, but there remains a challenge in the numbers. As the number of diverse attorneys grows, the challenge of funneling these individuals into higher levels in the organization remains to be seen, as well as retaining the diverse talent that these organizations have. Many companies are pushing the law firms that they partner with toward a focus on diversity at many levels in the relationship.

Importantly, diversity is not just about the numbers but investing in people and their careers. It’s a question of how you feel. Are you challenged? Are you comfortable? We try to be realistic in recognizing incremental progress in retention and promotion of women and minorities, because it doesn’t happen overnight. We care about our partner firms’ associates because they are the next generation to work on our organization’s matters.

What diversity efforts are being pursued by your legal department?
What expectations do you have with regard to diversity for the law firms with whom you partner?
The Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta is part of a system of 12 banks, each a separate legal entity chartered under the Federal Home Loan Bank Act but with a similar housing and community development mission and a similar business model. FHLBank Atlanta is taking the lead on implementing a System-wide working group for all FHLBanks’ legal departments to pool our collective knowledge regarding the contacts we have with outside law firms. By creating this directory, we are able to identify women and minority contacts so that the entire FHLBank System can share and expand our pool of diverse resources.

Additionally, we are increasing the participation of women and minorities to speak on particular matters at our System-wide bank counsel meetings during the year. We’ve had conversations with some of our outside law firms to determine whether inviting minority and women associates to join our System meetings would help advance their careers by giving them increased networking opportunities with our System lawyers. We are looking for ways to increase our diversity partnerships with outside law firms.

Do you have a program that recognizes the diversity efforts of your partner law firms?
If so, can you please elaborate on the program?
The FHLBank Atlanta has a diversity survey that is meant to be a dialogue with our firms. We gain ideas from their programs and give feedback. This year we gave feedback highlighting or acknowledging things our partner firms were doing well along with feedback on how they compared to other firms, in a confidential manner.

Can you describe Sutherland’s participation in your recognition program?
In what way does it share the same values of diversity on which your company focuses?
Sutherland gets its associates out front and center with its clients, which I don’t see as much in other firms. Sutherland’s utilization of affinity programs, a diversity officer, committees and mentoring programs, such as Sutherland Scholars, gives more focus to their diversity program as a part of their overall culture. Sutherland clearly has a long-term view of its role in improving diversity in the legal industry.
Service to Diversity Within the Profession

Christopher J. Chan, Partner
President, Georgia Asian Pacific Bar Association

Daniella Landers, Partner
Chair, Racial Diversity in the Profession Committee, State Bar of Texas
Chair, Gender Fairness Committee, Houston Bar Association

Cynthia R. Shoss, Partner
YWCA-NYC Academy of Women Leaders
Board of Governors and Co-Chair of Diversity Committee, the Association of Life Insurance Counsel
Featured Speaker, “Pioneering Women of Tulane Law School”

James H. Johnson, Counsel
Member, State Bar of Georgia Diversity Committee

Marc A. Rawls, Partner
Program Moderator, American Bar Association Business Law Diversity Committee for 2014 Annual Meeting

A. Rian Perry, Associate
Co-Chair, University of Pennsylvania Annual Alumni Diversity Conference “Penn Spectrum”

Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy, Partner
President, Atlanta Legal Diversity Consortium (ALDC)
Member, Board of Directors, Leadership Institute for Women of Color in Law and Business
Past President, Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (GABWA)

Rachel Giesber Clingman, Partner
Women’s Energy Network Steering Committee

Juan C. Garcia, Partner
President-elect, Hispanic Bar Association of Houston

Cheryl L. Aaron, Associate
Treasurer, Women’s Bar Association of the District of Columbia
Board Chair, Anti-Defamation League Young Professionals Division
Associate Trustee, Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs

Ellen M. Dunn, Partner
YWCA Academy of Women Leaders
Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) is a national organization made up of top legal professionals. The group focuses on developing strategies to increase diversity in the legal profession. Sutherland’s Managing Partner Mark Wasserman is an active member and, in 2013, Sutherland partner Juan Garcia was selected for the Fellows Program. The Fellows Program is designed to connect high-potential attorneys with general counsel and managing partners from preeminent organizations for year-long professional development. Through the program, a class of approximately 120 attorneys attends a range of training meetings and receives the opportunity to learn from top leaders in the legal field. LCLD also sponsors a 1L Summer Associate Program. In 2013, Emerson Girardeau from the University of Michigan Law School participated in the program; he has received, and accepted, both an offer from the firm to return next summer and a permanent offer upon graduation.

Proud Supporter of the Following Organizations

- Asian American Bar Association of New York
- Association of Women Attorneys-Houston
- Atlanta Bar Association
- Atlanta Legal Diversity Consortium, Inc.
- Corporate Counsel Women of Color
- Corporate Liberty Circle Sponsor for Lambda Legal
- Gate City Bar Association
- Georgia Association for Women Lawyers
- Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys
- Georgia Diversity Program, State Bar of Georgia
- Harvard Law School Southern Legal Society
- Hispanic National Bar Association
- Lambda Legal
- Mexican American Bar Association of Houston
- Minority Corporate Counsel Association
- Minority In-House Counsel Association
- NALP Foundation
- National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Convention
- National Association of Women Lawyers
- National Bar Association Corporate Counsel Conference
- National LGBT Bar Foundation
- Southeastern Minority Job Fair
- State Bar of Georgia Diversity Program Annual CLE and Luncheon
- State Bar of Texas – Minority Affairs
- Stonewall Bar Association of Georgia, Inc.
- Vault/MCCA Guide to Law Firm Diversity Programs
- Women in Law Empowerment Forum
- Women, Influence & Power in Law
- Women’s Energy Network of Houston

Awards and Recognition

During 2013, Sutherland received a Programming Excellence Award for its innovative diversity programs from The Coca-Cola Company. And in 2013, the firm was a finalist for Nationwide’s ACP Diversity Award and received recognition from Morgan Stanley for its diversity efforts.

For the fifth consecutive year, Sutherland was named a “Best Place to Work for LGBT Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign, America’s largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality. Sutherland once again earned a perfect 100% score on the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s Corporate Equality Index. The survey rates businesses on a scale from zero to 100% on their treatment of LGBT employees, consumers and investors.

After surveying thousands of associates, Vault has ranked Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP among the top 25 law firms in the following categories:

- No. 21 Law Firm for Diversity
- No. 25 Law Firm to Work For
- No. 16 Summer Associate Program
- No. 13 Informal Training
- No. 9 Formal Training
- No. 16 Diversity for Minorities
- No. 19 Diversity for Individuals With Disabilities
- No. 22 Diversity for Women
Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Since 2003, Sutherland’s diversity efforts have been led by a 34-member, cross-office Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Partner members of the Committee include the firm’s Managing Partner, the Chief Diversity Officer, another member of the firm’s Executive Committee, a partner from each practice group (including current or former practice group leaders) and a diversity partner for each office. Diverse associates and counsel as well as majority associates and counsel are also members of the Committee. The Committee as a whole meets monthly, and the partners on the Committee also meet monthly.

A principal focus of the Committee’s work is to ensure that our diverse associates and counsel are given the opportunities, training and attention needed to succeed in the profession—both within our firm and in the client communities we serve. Specifically, we assign a mentor to each new associate (in addition to the associate’s practice group mentor) to be certain he or she has a resource who can coach, advise, keep confidences and provide feedback to the firm about the needs of diverse associates. The partners on the Committee review monthly work reports for diverse counsel and associates in order to ensure that work is equitably allocated, any red flags are identified early, retention plans are developed and corrective action, if any needed, is taken. These actions may include additional training, coaching, advice or discussions with the practice group leader about creating opportunities for work and advancement.

The 2013 Numbers

- 14% attorneys of color firmwide
- 7% of all partners are of color
- 35% women attorneys firmwide
- 18% of all partners are women
- 2% LGBT attorneys firmwide
- 1% of all partners are LGBT

Thirteen women or minorities serve as one of the primary contacts or relationship partners for the firm’s top 20 clients (by billings) for 2013. The primary relationship partner for five of Sutherland’s top 20 clients in 2013 is a diverse attorney. We have strong relationships with clients that are not in the top 20 and have women and/or minority attorneys who serve as relationship partners for those clients as well.

Diverse Attorneys Working Group

Sutherland created the Diverse Attorneys Working Group in 2011, which consists of senior associates, counsel and partners focused specifically on fostering business development opportunities through client presentations and visits, speaking opportunities, and other networking events. The Group has its own budget, independent of the practice group budgets, to support its business and client development initiatives. The members meet monthly to discuss new business development opportunities and share best practices, which has led to the retention of the firm by several new clients. The group members are actively involved in organizations such as the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) and the National Bar Association.
Diverse Attorneys Conference

The 2013 Sutherland Diverse Attorneys Conference is a bi-annual event for all firm attorneys of color and LGBT attorneys. In 2013 it was held October 17-18 in Atlanta, Georgia and brought together firm management, partners, associates and clients to initiate thought-provoking conversations on topics that impact diverse attorneys.

This year’s conference featured John Lewis, head of global diversity at The Coca-Cola Company, in an address entitled “Tough Love for Diverse Associates” and an interactive program led by Duane Hughes, a Managing Director at Morgan Stanley, around issues raised from the book The Good Black: A True Story of Race in America by Paul Barrett, which was required reading.

Affinity Groups

Sutherland’s five affinity groups serve as a platform to create an inclusive environment and bring together subgroups of attorneys within the firm to provide opportunities for support, networking, philanthropy and professional growth.

The following affinity groups were established in 2006:

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Affinity Group
- Asian Attorneys Affinity Group
- African-American Attorneys Affinity Group
- Latino-American Affinity Group
- Sutherland Women Attorneys Group

Interview With Newly Promoted Partner, Christina Rissler

Christina B. Rissler
Partner
Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP

What was it that attracted you to Sutherland?
I came to Sutherland as a flextime lateral from another AmLaw 200 firm. Sutherland’s leadership was immediately open to reduced hours, and it was clear from the beginning they were willing to be supportive. But the difference at this firm, and the key to success in my arrangement here, is the communication, awareness and understanding with regard to the expectations of time by every member of my practice group. Whether full-hour or reduced time, we like, respect and take care of each other. I am very grateful for helpful colleagues who are also my friends.

How have your previous—or current—experiences shaped you into the attorney you are today? How has it shaped the way you view diversity in law?
I was excited and pleased that the firm promoted me to partner. In addition to working reduced hours for seven years, I am also a cancer survivor who had significant medical leave hours in 2012. Despite all this, Sutherland looked at me as a whole person and acknowledged my contribution throughout my time at the firm.

As an aside, classmates of mine who have gone in-house seeking flexibility interestingly are not finding what they thought would be there. I understand that many people say there is a lack of diversity in some law firms, but when it comes to flextime, private practice is ahead of the curve in comparison.

What advice do you have for women interested in the law?
Do not try to do it all. Identify what success in your career and your personal life means to you, and prioritize accordingly. If having family dinner time is one of your priorities, build your schedule around that, and let someone else cover carpool. It is also important to be flexible with yourself. If you do not make it home in time for dinner tonight, that does not mean you will not be there tomorrow night. If balance in your career and personal life is one of your priorities, measure your success on a six-month or yearly basis, not on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis.
At Sutherland, we pride ourselves on the career advancement of women. Sutherland women are leaders within the firm and the profession. They strive not only to enhance their skills and profiles within their chosen fields, but also to contribute to their communities. They are leaders, mentors and trusted advisers.

**Executive Committee Member: Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy**

The youngest member ever of the firm’s Executive Committee, Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy is Deputy Team Leader of Sutherland’s Business and Commercial Litigation Team and its Labor and Employment Team. She focuses her practice on multi-party and multi-jurisdictional litigation and labor and employment law, representing companies throughout the United States and abroad in trials and other proceedings.

Through roles on Sutherland’s Executive Committee, Hiring Committee, and Diversity and Inclusion Committee (which she organized and led in its formative years), Allegra has aggressively pursued diversity initiatives within the firm. Most notably, she designed the firm’s nationally recognized Sutherland Scholars program, and she spearheaded recruitment and retention efforts that resulted in Sutherland being ranked among the top 25 firms in the country by Vault and earning a perfect score in the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s Corporate Equality Index. Through Allegra’s efforts, the firm appointed its first Chief Diversity Officer.

**Executive Committee Member: Beverly J. Rudy**

When Beverly J. Rudy joined Sutherland 20 years ago, she was looking for a firm that would allow her to grow her energy trading practice. Beverly—now a partner in the Energy and Environmental Practice Group, a member of the firm’s Executive Committee, Deputy Practice Group Leader–Energy and Environmental and Co-Team Leader–Energy Trading—was also attracted by the firm’s culture. “Sutherland is well-managed, economically conservative and true to its mission of not trying to be all things to all clients in every location,” says Beverly, who is based in the Washington, D.C., office. “The firm also fosters an atmosphere that is collegial and respectful, and is full of attorneys who are smart and nimble.”

Over the years Beverly has met her goal of growing her practice, which involves advising oil trading companies and focusing on commercial, international trade, regulatory and transaction tax matters that affect the global trading of oil, petrochemicals and other energy commodities. She points to Sutherland’s commitment to diversity and inclusion as one factor that has made her practice flourish. By nurturing the talent of women attorneys and those from diverse backgrounds, Sutherland is able to be more responsive to its clients, which have become more diverse in recent years. Training and mentoring represent important aspects of Sutherland’s success as well, she says. “We encourage young lawyers to maximize their particular talents and strengths, to be as excellent as they are and to never settle for less.”

### 2013 Firm Leadership

- Rachel G. Clingman, Executive Committee; Partner-in-Charge of Houston Office
- Jennifer W. Fletcher, Co-Practice Group Leader – Litigation
- Ann G. Fort, Team Leader – Intellectual Property Litigation
- Dorothy B. Franzoni, Team Leader – Renewable and Alternative Energy
- Susan S. Krawczyk, Team Leader – Broker-Dealer/Investment Adviser
- Catherine M. Krupka, Team Leader – Electric Regulatory
- Cynthia M. Krus, Practice Group Vice-Chair – Corporate and Financial Services
- Susan G. Lafferty, Team Leader – Fuels
- Daniella Landers, Team Leader – Environmental
- Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy, Executive Committee; Deputy Team Leader – Business and Commercial Litigation
- Carley A. Roberts, Partner-in-Charge of Sacramento Office
- Lisa A. Rosen, Team Leader – Real Estate Finance, Capital Markets and Commercial Mortgage Servicing
- Beverly J. Rudy, Executive Committee; Deputy Practice Group Leader – Energy and Environmental, Co-Team Leader – Energy Trading
- Cynthia R. Shoss, Co-Team Leader – Insurance Transactions and Products
Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF) Gold Standard

For the second year in a row, Sutherland was given the “Gold Standard” recognition by the Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF). WILEF is the premier forum for women in law firms with more than 200 lawyers practicing in the United States. Only 53 law firms nationwide received this year’s award, which requires achievement of four or more of the six following criteria:

- 10% of firm chairs and managing partners firmwide, U.S. or North American Regional and U.S. branch offices, are female
- 20% of the firm’s primary governance committee is female
- 20% of the firm’s compensation committee or its equivalent is female
- 25% of the firm’s practice group leaders and/or department heads are female
- 10% of the top half of the most highly compensated equity partners in the firm are female
- 20% of the equity partners are female or alternatively 25% of the attorneys becoming equity partners during the past 12 months are female

2013 Achievement within the Partnership

- 19% of the equity partners are women
- 20% of the non-lateral promotions from non-equity to equity partnership are women
- One-third of the office heads are women
- One-third of practice group or department heads are women
- 17.4% of the firm’s top half most highly compensated partners are women

Sutherland Women Stepping Up® Program

Sutherland Women Stepping Up® is a philanthropic initiative founded in 2012 by a group of women attorneys who are dedicated to empowering women’s social and financial independence through impactful philanthropy. The initiative offers collective philanthropy projects and educational opportunities to instill a sense of power, confidence and unity among women attorneys, provide opportunities to build client relationships, and enhance recruitment and retention of women attorneys.

In 2013, the Sutherland Women Stepping Up initiative raised $50,000 for Families First—an organization devoted to supporting and creating communities where children and families can flourish in stable, structured environments—bringing the total amount raised for the organization to $100,000. The initiative also continues to raise additional funds to grow the principal of its donor-advised fund held by the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta. In the coming year, the Sutherland Women Stepping Up initiative will partner with Community Advanced Practice Nurses, which provides health care services free-of-charge to Atlanta’s homeless and economically disadvantaged population.
Involvement of Diversity and Inclusion Committee With Hiring Committee

A number of members of the firm’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Chief Diversity Officer serve on the firm’s Hiring Committee. Our recruiting efforts include reviewing each diverse candidate résumé and all diverse student evaluations as we make offers during the fall recruiting season and at the conclusion of our summer program. During the course of the firm’s summer program, we mentor and monitor the diverse summer associates in much the same way as we do our permanent associates and counsel.

Special Efforts

Sutherland continues to look for innovative ways to augment our traditional 2L on-campus and call-back interviews at 10 to 12 law schools. We participate in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity 1L Program and various 1L programs sponsored by clients. In addition, our own Sutherland Scholars program has afforded us an opportunity to meet students of color heading to law school and to remain in contact with them during their law school careers.

Finally, Sutherland has expanded our recruiting efforts at notably diverse law schools and career fairs, hosted events for attorneys and summer associates, and sponsored various associations for individuals of diverse backgrounds.

During 2013 Sutherland participated in diverse attorney recruiting events hosted by:

- George Washington University Black Law Student Association
- Harvard Black Law Students Association
- Houston Bar Association
- Lavender Law Job Fair
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity 1L Summer Associates Program
- Southeastern Minority Job Fair
- Vault MCCA Legal Diversity Career Fair
- Washington Area Legal Recruitment Administrators Association

2013 Hires

- 10 women and 5 LGBT or persons of color were in the 2013 summer class of 20
- 11 women and 7 LGBT or persons of color were in the 2013 Fall starting class of 18
- 14 of our 34 lateral hires (partners, counsel, associates) were women, and 9 were LGBT or persons of color
Meet Some of Sutherland’s Diverse Talent

Raymond A. Ramirez
Associate
Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP

What was it that attracted you to Sutherland?
One of the things I noticed the first time I visited Sutherland was that people had their doors open and seemed to genuinely enjoy working together. I was attracted by the idea of working at a firm with a collaborative environment, which Sutherland seemed to offer. I also appreciated the firm’s intellectual culture. The Sutherland attorneys I met were bright people who described taking constructive and creative approaches to their work. Moreover, they were open to having conversations about diversity. My experience at Sutherland thus far has validated these initial impressions. The quality of the people at Sutherland is exceptional, the work I am given is challenging, and the partners I work with have faith in my ability to handle complex matters and give me ownership of my work. Moreover, the firm emphasizes the need for, and values, diversity.

How have your previous experiences shaped you into the attorney you are today? How has it shaped the way you view diversity in law?
I was a public school teacher for six years after college and attended law school part-time at night. Although there are many differences between teaching students and working with clients, I have been able to apply some of my prior experiences to my work at Sutherland. For example, I spend a large portion of my time guiding clients through derivatives regulations, with the ultimate goal of leading them to complex solutions. There are a lot of similarities between this and what teachers do in the classroom.

My role on the firm’s Diversity Committee is also about shaping the conversation to help people at the firm, and beyond, find new ways to talk about race and other forms of diversity. I am proud to be at a firm that is committed to bringing people from all backgrounds to the table to have what can be uncomfortable conversations.

What advice do you have for minority associates?
First, you have to work very hard and ensure that the quality of your work speaks for itself. This is the case for anyone, but it is particularly important for diverse attorneys because there are misperceptions you may have to overcome with time. Second, seek out mentors. The people with whom you establish relationships, who know you and trust your work, will “go to bat” for you.

Evie M. Hightower
Associate
Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP

What was it that attracted you to Sutherland?
I began my relationship with Sutherland as a Sutherland Scholar during the summer between my junior and senior years of college. The program introduced me to a lot of information regarding law school and the practice of law. I was introduced to attorneys in different practice areas and they gave honest insight and advice. Afterwards, Sutherland kept in touch with its former scholars regularly. And when I reached out to Sutherland once I was in law school, everyone was receptive. During the summer between my second and third years of law school, I was offered a summer associate position with Sutherland, which led me to practice law here, in the Real Estate group.
How have your previous experiences shaped you into the attorney you are today? How has it shaped the way you view diversity in law?
The summer after my first year of law school, I interned for the Office of the Prosecutor for the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania. It was an incredible experience, which opened my eyes to international criminal law.

My time in Arusha reaffirmed my understanding that diversity could be viewed in many other ways than traditionally thought. I was immersed in different cultures, religions and experiences, which truly impacted my work, especially in consideration of the setting and focus of the Tribunal. When my colleagues and I brought our own experiences and perspectives to the table, we worked better together as a team.

What advice do you have for women interested in the law?
I constantly hear that the real estate industry is male-dominated, though the numbers of women in my area of law are increasing. I understand that it may pose a challenge for some, but I have kept in mind that I can still do incredible work without the focus being my gender.

My advice for a woman entering the field of law is that excellence and hard work will outshine anything. If you remember to let your work speak for itself and always build relationships, success will be around the corner.

Emerson W. Girardeau III
University of Michigan 3rd Year Law Student
Joining Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP Upon Graduation

What was it that attracted you to Sutherland?
I performed a great deal of research on law firms, created a matrix, and Sutherland was on my list of the top five law firms I hoped to join. As a summer associate, I experienced a warm, welcoming environment, and the culture reminded me of my time at a leading wealth management firm, where I worked for three years. From the beginning, partners and associates were in my corner and working to help me achieve my goals. This feeling resonated with my cohorts in the program and confirmed my desire to join Sutherland.

As a summer associate, what was your experience with Sutherland’s diversity program? How has it shaped the way you view diversity in the law?
There is a sense of importance and even urgency at Sutherland regarding the positive impact that different viewpoints from diverse attorneys can provide to clients. Sutherland sent me to the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity’s 1L Scholars Program in Denver. The three-day program is designed to bolster opportunities for diverse first-year associates by offering them the chance to meet corporate counsel from across the country. I also attended Sutherland’s summer diversity luncheons, which featured top-notch speakers on a wide range of issues. At my request, Sutherland is also supporting the University of Michigan Law School Black Law Student Alliance banquet this coming March. I see this as not only supportive of me as a part of the firm, but also as significant in expanding their support of minorities outside of the firm’s traditional markets.

What advice do you have for minority law students who are about to graduate?
Graduating law students should take steps to support diversity recruitment efforts by helping their firms identify promising students of color. African Americans represent only about 5% of practicing attorneys nationally. It can be difficult to find other people at large firms from a similar background. This challenge is more profound in some markets than others, as law firm brands have not crossed certain geographic boundaries. Many law firms are taking proactive measures to increase those numbers through a variety of diversity programs. Minority law students can add value and help ensure these programs are successful.
Sutherland Scholars

Established in 2005, Sutherland Scholars is an intensive, three-week, 40 hour program for rising college seniors and graduates headed to law school. It is designed to introduce students to the rigors of such a course of study, what to expect, how to navigate admission, the first year and getting a job. The program, which is competitive and recruits primarily from historically black colleges, engages a professor to teach a mini-course (with exam) and provides the scholars with a chance to hear from and visit with a variety of judges and lawyers. In anticipation of our tenth anniversary, the program was enhanced in 2013 by the inclusion of a modest stipend upon successful completion of the program, a tightening of the curriculum and an additional writing component. The Sutherland Scholars program is the first program of its kind and has served as a model and inspiration for other programs throughout the country.

Faculty, Speakers, Panelists

- Isaac Bowers, Senior Program Manager, Educational/Debt & Outreach, Equal Justice Works, Washington, D.C.
- Patty Butler, Turner Broadcasting Legal Division
- Adam Cohen, Sutherland Partner
- Michele Booth Cole, Executive Director, Safe Shores-The DC Children's Advocacy Center
- Melissa Conrad-Alam, Sutherland Summer Associate
- John Cooper, Turner Broadcasting Legal Division
- Caroline Crenshaw, Sutherland Associate
- Whiting Dimock, Senior Assistant Dean of Students, University of Colorado Law School
- Lia Dorsey, Sutherland Client & Practice Development Manager
- Gabrielle Eshun, Sutherland Executive Assistant
- Jessica Felfoldi, Equal Justice Works Fellow, Atlanta Legal Aid
- Marielena Fina, Sutherland Research Librarian
- Irene Firippis, Sutherland Summer Associate
- Judge Leslye M. Fraser, Environmental Appeals Board, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Daphne Frydman, Sutherland Partner
- Ruth Fuller, Sutherland Senior Research Librarian
- Michael Gabriel, Pre-Law Advisor, George Washington University
- Emerson Girardeau, Sutherland Summer Associate
- James L. Henderson III, Sutherland Partner, Chief Diversity Officer
- Heather Howdeshell, Sutherland Associate
- Scott Johnson, PCT Law Group LLC
- Mira Koplovsky, Turner Broadcasting Legal Division
- Allegra Lawrence-Hardy, Sutherland Partner and Executive Committee Member, former President of Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys
- Nicole Lim, Sutherland Summer Associate
- Ryan Locke, Locke Law Firm
- Jade A. Logan, Sutherland Staff Attorney
- Mark McGlone, Vice-President, Elite Parking Services of America
- Jamala McFadden, McFadden, White, Sprattlin & Davis
- The Honorable Judge Harold D. Melton, State of Georgia Supreme Court
- Alexia Noble, Sutherland Diversity Intern, Washington University School of Law, St. Louis
- Emily Plocki, Sutherland Associate
- Amanda Powell, Sutherland Associate
- Louella Randall, Sutherland Manager of Library Services
- Ray Ramirez, Sutherland Associate
- Marc Rawls, Sutherland Partner
- Eric Reicin, Sallie Mae
- Ethan Rosenzweig, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, Emory University Law School
- Beverly Rudy, Sutherland Partner and Executive Committee Member
- Melissa Siegelman, Turner Broadcasting Legal Division
- Christopher Snell, Professor, Introduction to Socratic Method and Contracts
- Virginia Vance, U.S. Government Attorney
- Kristy Weathers, Sutherland Professional Development Partner
- Lew Weiner, Sutherland Partner and Executive Committee Member
- R. Javoyne Hicks White, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Chief of Staff, Region 4
- Todd Williams, Turner Broadcasting Legal Division
- Yvonne Williams-Wass, Sutherland Associate
- David Zimmerman, Sutherland Partner and Hiring Chair
I am proud to announce that I have completed my first semester at DePaul College of Law. I am currently a 1L Family Law Scholar and have already secured a summer internship with the local domestic violence courts. The information and insight gained from having participated in the Sutherland Scholars program made for a smoother transition from undergraduate studies to a rigorous law school environment. The program equipped me with the knowledge and preparatory skills that were vital to my survival this past semester. By using the advice provided to me by the panelists I encountered during the course of the program, I was able to avoid some of the hurdles and challenges faced by some of my peers. For this I thank you.

P.S. The Bluebook was a life saver!!
Many thanks.

Precious Allen
J.D. Candidate, DePaul University College of Law
Schiller DuCanto & Fleck Family Law Center 1L Scholar
2013 Sutherland Scholar Graduate

Sutherland Scholar Graduates Enrolling Fall 2013
- Precious Allen - DePaul University College of Law
- Gerald Chichester - University of Georgia School of Law
- Deshon Jones - University of California at Berkeley School of Law
- Diana King - Wake Forest School of Law
- Monica Martinez - American University Washington College of Law

I wanted to give you an update on my law school application journey and also thank you for reviewing my personal statement. You are truly appreciated! So far I’ve received good news from Emory University, William and Mary, University of Georgia, Howard and George Washington. I’m still waiting to hear back from several other schools as well…..
Thank you again!

Dion Robbins
2013 Sutherland Scholar Graduate

Law Internship

Sutherland participates in the Atlanta Bar Association’s Summer Law Internship Program. High school students in this program have the opportunity to work at Sutherland during the summer and are paid for their hard work and dedication. The summer interns work firsthand with Sutherland attorneys, obtaining a thorough understanding and appreciation of the law. Graduates of the Summer Law Internship Program have pursued careers as attorneys and other positions in the legal field.
Sutherland Junior College

Sutherland Junior College (SJC) is a college preparatory program the firm developed in 2006 to mentor students at Bell Multicultural High School in Washington DC. SJC is Sutherland’s way of participating in the DC Schools Partnership initiative of the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs. With more than 600 students from approximately 30 countries around the world, Bell students face a number of challenges: the vast majority live below the poverty line, most are not native English speakers and many have arrived in the United States within the last few years. Through SJC, Sutherland seeks to help the students apply to and be admitted to four-year colleges or universities.

Sutherland selects several rising seniors from Bell each year to participate in SJC. The program starts with an eight-week paid summer internship at Sutherland’s Washington DC office. Students work with various departments in the firm five days per week and attend an SAT/ACT prep course once per week. The program continues in the fall with an after-school SAT/ACT prep course once per week and periodic meetings with attorney-mentors during the fall and winter to help students write their personal statements and complete college applications. After college applications are submitted, students continue to meet with their attorney-mentors to work on financial aid and scholarship applications. In the spring, the students are each awarded a $1,000 scholarship from Sutherland for successfully completing the SJC program. Sutherland attorneys and staff build relationships with the Bell students, making every effort to remain available and offer encouragement both during and after the SJC program.

SJC is not just an internship, it’s opportunities within opportunities. In this program, you are offered a lot, from having great mentors, to a class that prepares you for SAT/ACT, to having a long-term friendship with people who are always willing to help you through both good and bad times. This internship makes you look at college and life differently. You may come to the program not knowing what college you want to attend, but I promise you will know what college you are attending and what you plan on doing with the rest of your life before the end of the program. This is a great opportunity; don’t let it pass by you.

Tonnisha Morris
SJC class of 2013

SJC welcomed us with open arms. From day one of the program, the supervisors and program leaders were always there to help any one of us if we had a problem. One big take-away was the information that was instilled in us during the program—so many words of advice from people that we now look up to and appreciate.

Teara Peeples
SJC class of 2013
As part of Sutherland’s pro bono, public service and outreach efforts to dozens of organizations with a mission to create a more diverse and inclusive community, the firm supports, among others:
For more information about diversity and inclusion at Sutherland, please contact:

Dorothy Black Franzoni at 404.853.8489 or dorothy.franzoni@sutherland.com
Juan C. Garcia at 713.470.6157 or juan.garcia@sutherland.com
James L. Henderson III at 212.389.5013 or jim.henderson@sutherland.com
Mark D. Herlach at 202.383.0172 or mark.herlach@sutherland.com
Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy at 404.853.8497 or allegra.lawrence-hardy@sutherland.com
Cynthia R. Shoss at 212.389.5012 or cynthia.shoss@sutherland.com

ABOUT SUTHERLAND Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP is a law firm with global reach known for solving challenging business problems and resolving sophisticated legal issues for many of the world’s largest companies. Founded in 1924, the firm handles matters throughout the United States and worldwide. Seven major practice areas—corporate, energy and environmental, financial services, intellectual property, litigation, real estate, and tax—provide the framework for an extensive range of focus areas, allowing Sutherland attorneys to serve a diverse client base that ranges from small and medium-sized start-up businesses to a significant number of Fortune 100 companies.