

Study: Biglaw Firms Must Do More for Diversity



A new study by the Minority Corporate Council Association says biglaw firms must do more to ensure that minority, female and LGBT attorneys have the same career opportunities as their white male counterparts.

The study, entitled "Sustaining Pathways To Diversity: The Next Steps in Understanding and Increasing Diversity & Inclusion in Large Law Firms," is based on questionnaires completed by more than 4,000 attorneys at 124 different large firms.

Some findings:

- The study found that fitting in with the majority culture at a firm is actually a better indicator of long-term success than top-tier law school credentials.
- When it comes to professional development, landing plum assignments, and receiving satisfactory coaching and feedback, whites enjoy a significant advantage over all minorities.
- There is a feeling among white men that minorities hired at firms are less qualified, even if they graduated from top law schools, because they were admitted through affirmative action programs.
- The women and minority lawyers surveyed were less likely than their white male counterparts to feel that they are treated as equals by their peers. Also, 75% of white attorneys perceived that they had access to the training and development they needed, compared to 59% of minorities.
- But the majority of minorities and women surveyed said they don't think they are victims of race or gender discrimination.