



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Barclay Damon Presented by *Barclay Damon Live*

Speakers: Connie Cahill, Kyra Ganswith, Sanjeev Devabhakthuni, Madonna Isaac, John Langan, Zach Forward, Leila Dwyer, Jen Leonardi, Naresh Kannan, and Sharon Brown, all of Barclay Damon

[Connie Cahill]: At Barclay Damon, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is part of our DNA—from our DEI lunch ‘n’ learns to our publication Voices of Excellence, our annual DEI State of the Firm, our award-winning pro bono program, and our community volunteer days. It’s how we show up in our offices and in our communities. It’s part of our culture—and it’s infused into everything we do. This decades-long commitment recognizes that diversity among our attorneys and our administrative team is critical not only to our culture but to meeting the needs of our clients in an increasingly diverse world. So what does DEI at Barclay Damon mean to some of our colleagues?

[Kyra Ganswith]: I accepted a position at Barclay Damon because I appreciated their commitment to DEI, and not only recruiting diverse individuals but making sure that they’re supporting diverse individuals once they’re also in the firm as well. We have affinity networks here at Barclay Damon. I’m a member of the Black Employee Affinity Network. We’re able to talk about current issues, whether that be in the firm or outside of the firm in society and maybe speak about some of those with management. So it’s nice to have a space like that to feel like people are listening, and you have a support system.

[Sanjeev Devabhakthuni]: I joined Barclay Damon and have been with the firm for over 11 years, in part because the firm has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Diversity Partner Committee is made up of partners in all of our main offices, including myself. We serve to oversee all of the firm’s diversity initiatives. Our firm has smaller Diversity Leadership Teams in each of our main offices, which are made up of both attorneys and non-attorney professionals.

[Madonna Isaac]: I’m super happy to be an employee because it does give me a balance of not feeling left out but always feeling included regardless of the fact that I am an immigrant, you know, or the fact that I am an immigrant from a country that is very small on the map, but I feel big at the firm because my culture is accepted. The partners, the associates, my peers, my legal assistants like me, my paralegals, they definitely make me embrace . . . more of me and be happy and walk and smile and really be genuinely “Madonna” at the firm.

[John Langan]: When the decision makers, when the stakeholders, when the CEOs, when the owners, when the general counsel are a wide group of people, it really helps to reflect that in the workforce that we’ve got at the firm. It’s very important to have the momentum and to keep it going.

[Zach Forward]: I think one of the great programs that we have as part of our DEI initiative is our community days, and seeing people connect in ways outside of the work setting is very impactful. It’s also very impactful for those who we’re connecting with.

[Leila Dwyer]: As a woman, and as a Latino woman, it’s important to see the acknowledgment of the firm, of the importance of diversity, and to know that I personally am welcomed and valued. I think it’s also really

incredible to see the number of women partners, including our managing partner, Connie Cahill. As a female attorney, it's so great to see that she's the one who's leading us through what's been a lot of change and growth.

[Jen Leonardi]: People are enthusiastic when they come in to see how many different types of pro bono opportunities there are. As we see new talent coming into the firm, you really do see a passion for doing that type of work, and not even something that has to be done, because we all know it should be done, but really a genuine willingness, a genuine desire to do that type of pro bono work.

[Naresh Kannan]: A diverse team is able to bring a range of viewpoints to a problem, and by taking that range of viewpoints and looking at a problem from all angles, you can actually develop superior results and superior service for the clients, and that is one of the key aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion. So not only do you end up achieving superior results for the client, you also end up having employees, attorneys, and staff who are actually achieving high work fulfillment. And that's really important in terms of building a sustainable firm for the future.

[Sharon Brown]: Thank you, everyone. And now we'd like to end with the introduction of our new Barclay Damon mission statement. "We at Barclay Damon value and embrace all identities and life experiences. We strive to cultivate an environment that provides everyone in our community with an equal opportunity to thrive. Our commitment to fostering a workplace that appreciates diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging informs two of our most important goals: providing the highest level of client service and achieving work fulfillment. Through mutual respect, collaboration, active engagement in education and dialog, and ongoing recruitment and retention efforts, we seek to realize a diverse firm community that empowers us to bring our authentic selves to work."

Learn more at [BarclayDamon.com/Diversity](https://www.barclydamon.com/Diversity).

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