

Driving Equality for Women of Color in Our Profession

UCLA Law Women LEAD
Summit '19

UCLA School of Law
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The current landscape in legal education and the legal profession

Women of color make up 18.65% of the fall 2018 entering class at American law schools. They outnumber men of color who make up 12.6% of the entering class.

In 2017, women of color accounted for 18.23% of summer associates, 12.86% of associates, and 2.9% of partners.

In 2017, 4.8% of the general counsel at Fortune 500 companies were women of color. The percentage is lower for the Fortune 501-1000 at 2.6%.

In 2017, 2.7% of federal judges and 8% of state court judges were women of color. Only 1% of prosecutors were women of color.

According to a January 2019 article, 10% of deans at American law schools are women of color. Based on Fall 2013 data, 7% of tenured faculty were women of color as were 17% of tenure-track faculty.

The barriers to inclusion in legal education

Women of color are least likely to give a positive rating to the state of race relations as well as to the state of gender relations in law school.

Women of color are most likely to report that they have experienced discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity as well as on the basis of gender while in law school.

Women of color are most likely to state that they have experienced comments or interactions that adversely affect their academic performance and learning. This is true of interactions with both faculty and students.

Women of color are most likely to report that they have experienced unwanted sexual advances at professional networking events outside of law school.



The barriers to inclusion in the legal profession

- **“I didn’t see a path for me to partnership at a large law firm. For women of color, there has to be a synergy for you to make partner. You have to have everything working in your favor at the time you go up for a vote: a practice group that is thriving, the billable hours, people singing your praises, a client base. That has to all come together for you in a way it doesn’t have to for other people.” --Tiffany Harper, an African American attorney who left a large law firm for an in-house position**
 - **Assumptions about ability**
 - **Double binds related to temperament**
 - **Doubts about fit**
 - **Intensified scrutiny of maternity leave**
 - **Sexual harassment**

Strategies for improvement

"People think because they're committed to diversity and inclusion that they are creating diversity and inclusion. But partners need to ask themselves: How am I mentoring women of color and how can I do so?" -- Arin Reeves, President, Nextions

A three-step solution from the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession and Minority Corporate Counsel Association

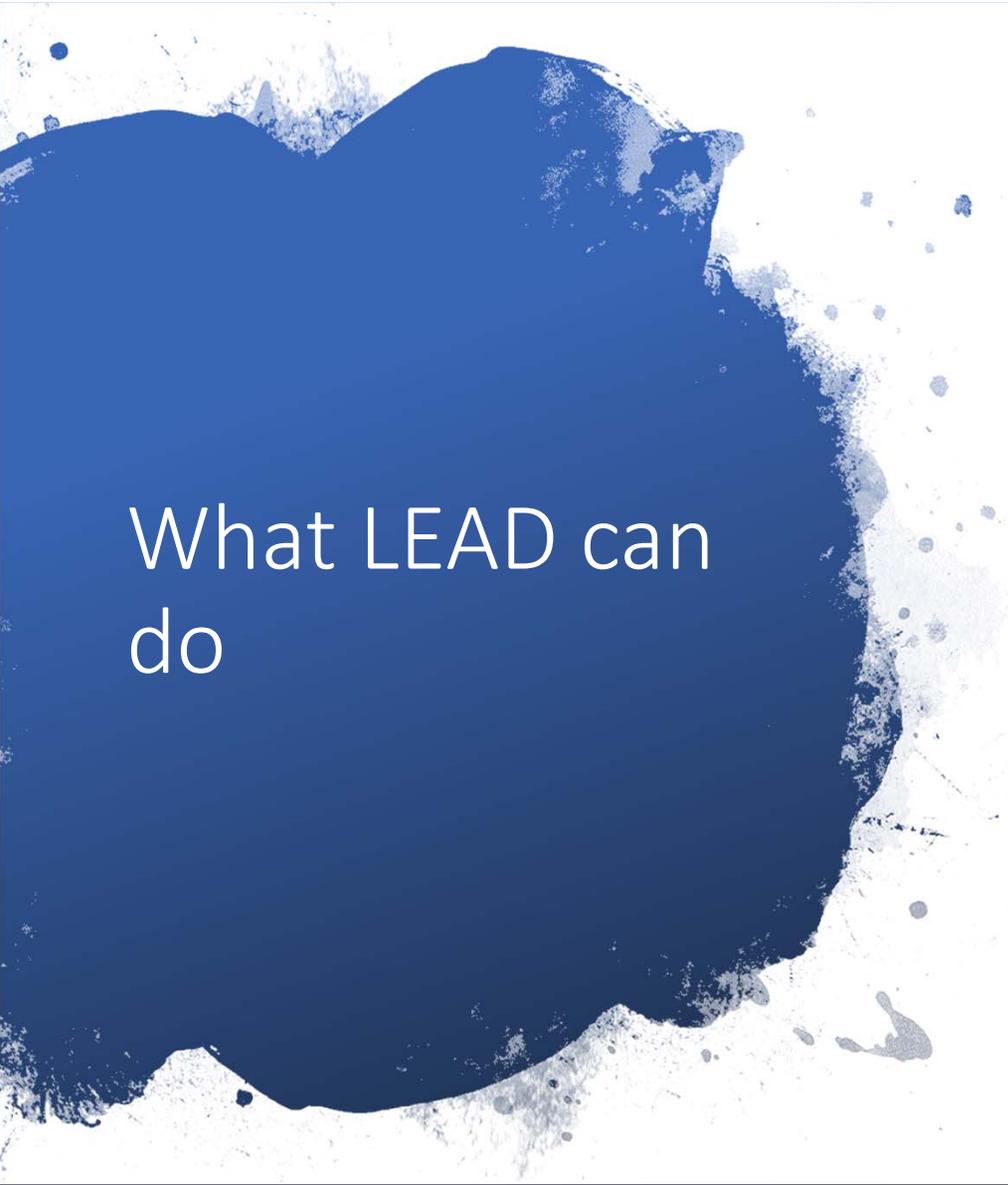
Many reports focus on the legal profession. But we welcome your suggestions for addressing these issues in both legal education and the legal profession.

What are some successful strategies for dealing with barriers to inclusion that you have observed during your time in law school or in law practice?

Use metrics

Implement bias interrupters

Repeat as needed



What LEAD can do

- **As we brainstorm about moving from recognizing issues that confront women of color to finding ways to address them effectively, we would like to consider what role LEAD can play in these efforts.**
- **LEAD has been dedicated to creating a strong network of support for UCLA Law women, whether students or alumnae.**
 - **We welcome your ideas about how LEAD can address dynamics that affect the law school experience for women of color as well as their experience in law practice.**
 - **How should we follow up on this conversation?**