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2009 New Partner Classes Stagnant for Women Lawyers

Women make up 40% or more of the new partner classes at 23 major law firms,
but 14 firms fail to make any female partners

San Francisco (February 23, 2009) –Law firms’ 2009 new partner classes show little progress for women lawyers. The good news is that at 23 of the 100 firms surveyed by the Project for Attorney Retention, the new partner classes were at least 40% female. The bad news is that the gain is offset by the failure of 14 firms to make any female partners.

The best: Cravath (67%), Dickstein Shapiro (67%), Wiley Rein (60%), Andrews Kurth (57%), Bryan Cave (56%), Arent Fox (50%), Baker & Daniels (50%), Hogan & Hartson (50%), Holland and Hart (50%), King and Spalding (50%), Luce Forward (50%), Simpson Thacher (50%), and Sullivan & Cromwell (50%). A special mention goes to Farella Braun, whose only new partner is female (100%).

Honorable mentions: Dorsey & Whitney (47%), Kilpatrick Stockton (44%), Seyfarth Shaw (44%), Crowell & Moring (43%), Jackson Lewis (43%), Cooley Godward (43%), Perkins Coie (42%), Arnold & Porter (40%), and WilmerHale (40%). Notable achievement: the following firms have promoted new partner classes that were 40% or more female for the past three years: Arnold & Porter, Crowell & Moring, Perkins Coie, and Sullivan and Cromwell.

The worst: None of the following firms made a female partner this year: Cadwalader, Cleary Gottlieb, Dechert, Foley Hoag, Kaye Scholer, Lowenstein Sandler, Milbank, Schulte Roth, Steptoe, Strook, Venable, Wachtell, White & Case, and Wilkie Farr.

Not much better: Pillsbury Winthrop (9%), Latham & Watkins (10%), O’Melveny (11%), Howrey (13%), Finnegan Henderson (13%), Morrison & Foerster (13%), Winston & Strawn (13%), Locke Lord (14%), Nixon Peabody (14%), DLA Piper (15%), Ropes (17%) and Akin Gump (17%).

The complete chart is included below.

“This year’s new partner classes are a mixed bag for women lawyers,” said Cynthia Calvert, Co-Director of the Project for Attorney Retention. “Many firms are promoting a significant number of women, which shows that firms can be successful in retaining and advancing their women lawyers. We are disheartened, though, by the large number of firms that did not make any women partners.”

Joan Williams, Co-Director of the Project for Attorney Retention, believes the firms that didn’t make female partners this year need to determine why they are not grooming female associates in equal

number with male associates. “These numbers show which firms need to work harder at promoting women lawyers,” she said. “They provide valuable information for women law students who are choosing their future employers and for clients who are interested in retaining law firms where women lawyers can succeed.”

Firms were chosen for this survey based on inclusion in prior years’ surveys, firm size, reputation and availability of information. Twenty-three new firms were added to those surveyed last year. The chart reflects information for past years for 100 firms, but 15 of those have not yet reported their 2009 partner classes. As in prior years, information is included only for the firms’ U.S. offices. Many of the firms that are noted as the best or as honorable mentions are members of the Project for Attorney Retention (Dickstein, Hogan, Andrews Kurth, Bryan Cave, Luce Forward, Farella Braun, Crowell & Moring, Jackson Lewis, Arnold & Porter, Arent Fox and WilmerHale); this reflects those firms’ commitment to advancing women lawyers rather than favoritism on our part.

A few observations: for most of the firms with the highest percentage of new female partners, this year is not an aberration but part of a pattern of promoting a significant proportion of women, as shown in the chart. The converse is not necessarily true. For many of the firms labeled “the worst,” this year does appear to be an aberration. Cadwalader, Cleary Gottlieb, Kaye Scholer, Lowenstein and Steptoe have been notably more successful in the past.

The Project for Attorney Retention, a nonprofit organization that studies the advancement of women lawyers and work/life issues for all lawyers, is headquartered at UC Hastings College of the Law. Its co-directors are Joan C. Williams, distinguished professor of law at Hastings, and Cynthia Thomas Calvert, a former law firm litigation partner. This research was spearheaded by Calvert and Linda Bray Chanow, PAR’s director of research. PAR is funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and other grantors, and by its law department and law firm members. For more information, visit PAR’s website at www.pardc.org.

Promotion of Women to Partnership in U.S. Law Firms 2005-2009

Firm	Women/Total for 2005 (%)	Women/Total for 2006 (%)	Women/Total for 2007 (%)	Women/Total for 2008 (%)	Women/Total for 2009 (%)
Akin Gump	1/16 (6%)	2/11 (18%)	2/15 (13%)	2/15 (13%)	2/12 (17%)
Andrews Kurth	2/4 (50%)	1/5 (20%)	2/8 (25%)	2/5 (40%)	4/7 (57%)
Arent Fox	2/5 (40%)	5/12 (42%)	6/12 (50%)	1/3 (33%)	3/6 (50%)
Arnold & Porter	0/5 (0%)	2/9 (22%)	4/7 (57%)	2/4 (50%)	2/5 (40%)
Baker Botts	2/14 (14%)	4/10 (40%)	2/17 (12%)	5/17 (29%)	2/11 (18%)
Baker & Daniels	N/A	N/A	4/9 (44%)	1/9 (11%)	4/8 (50%)
Baker Hostetler	N/A	9/22 (41%)	5/22 (23%)	8/17 (47%)	7/21 (33%)
Ballard Spahr	2/8 (25%)	4/8 (50%)	2/7 (29%)	4/10 (40%)	n/a
Bingham McCutcheon	5/17 (29%)	3/11 (27%)	4/11 (36%)	2/9 (22%)	4/15 (27%)
Bryan Cave	4/16 (25%)	4/10 (40%)	1/11 (9%)	6/13 (46%)	5/9 (56%)
Cadwalader	0/2 (0%)	2/5 (40%)	3/6 (50%)	1/2 (50%)	0/7 (0%)
Cleary Gottlieb	2/5 (40%)	2/5 (40%)	2/5 (40%)	3/8 (38%)	0/6 (0%)
Cooley Godward	1/8 (13%)	3/13 (23%)	2/13 (15%)	3/12 (25%)	3/7 (43%)

Covington & Burling	2/9 (22%)	2/7 (29%)	3/6 (50%)	1/10 (10%)	n/a
Cravath	3/8 (38%)	0/4 (0%)	1/4 (25%)	2/3 (67%)	2/3 (67%)
Crowell & Moring	2/3 (67%)	0/6 (0%)	1/2 (50%)	4/7 (57%)	3/7 (43%)
Davis Polk	0/4 (0%)	3/8 (38%)	4/13 (31%)	1/4 (25%)	n/a
Debevoise & Plimpton	2/5 (40%)	0/3 (0%)	0/4 (0%)	3/5 (60%)	n/a
Dechert	1/10 (10%)	2/12 (17%)	1/13 (8%)	2/8 (25%)	0/5 (0%)
Dewey & LeBoeuf	N/A	N/A	N/A	4/10 (40%)	3/14 (21%)
Dickstein Shapiro	1/4 (25%)	2/4 (50%)	2/9 (22%)	1/4 (25%)	2/3 (67%)
DLA Piper	10/34 (29%)	13/34 (38%)	11/38 (29%)	15/28 (54%)	2/13 (15%)
Dorsey & Whitney	2/13 (15%)	N/A	1/11 (9%)	10/14 (71%)	7/15 (47%)
Drinker Biddle	2/8 (25%)	1/7 (14%)	4/10 (40%)	3/9 (33%)	n/a
Duane Morris	4/12 (33%)	2/9 (22%)	5/13 (38%)	2/10 (20%)	3/12 (25%)
Edwards Angell	N/A	3/10 (30%)	2/10 (20%)	1/9 (11%)	2/6 (33%)
Epstein Becker	n/a	n/a	n/a	2/6 (33%)	2/6 (33%)
Farella Braun	4/6 (67%)	1/3 (33%)	0/1 (0%)	0/3 (0%)	1/1 (100%)
Fenwick & West	1/6 (17%)	0/3 (0%)	1/2 (50%)	1/6 (17%)	1/4 (25%)
Finnegan Henderson	0/5 (0%)	4/14 (29%)	0/9 (0%)	3/15 (20%)	1/8 (13%)
Fitzpatrick Cella	N/A	N/A	1/5 (20%)	0/3 (0%)	1/5 (20%)
Foley Hoag	N/A	N/A	1/5 (20%)	0/3 (0%)	0/4 (0%)
Foley & Lardner	4/24 (17%)	N/A	8/23 (35%)	7/24 (29%)	n/a
Fried Frank	2/9 (22%)	0/5 (0%)	1/7 (14%)	1/5 (20%)	n/a
Fulbright & Jaworski	1/9 (11%)	5/16 (31%)	2/12 (17%)	1/9 (11%)	n/a
Gibson Dunn	3/7 (43%)	4/6 (67%)	1/10 (10%)	2/13 (15%)	2/11 (18%)
Goodwin Procter	4/11 (36%)	7/25 (28%)	9/27 (33%)	7/17 (41%)	n/a
Greenberg Traurig	6/31 (19%)	7/38 (18%)	10/44 (23%)	19/52 (37%)	15/46 (33%)
Haynes & Boone	1/8 (13%)	2/8 (25%)	3/10 (30%)	2/10 (20%)	2/8 (25%)
Hogan & Hartson	5/21 (24%)	4/15 (27%)	9/17 (53%)	7/18 (39%)	3/6 (50%)
Holland and Hart	3/6 (50%)	0/4 (0%)	N/A	2/6 (33%)	3/6 (50%)
Holland & Knight	13/25 (52%)	7/28 (25%)	9/35 (26%)	6/18 (33%)	8/23 (35%)
Howrey	4/9 (44%)	5/13 (38%)	4/6 (67%)	3/14 (21%)	1/8 (13%)
Husch Blackwell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6/22 (27%)
Jackson Lewis	N/A	N/A	5/14 (36%)	N/A	10/23 (43%)
Jenner & Block	6/16 (38%)	6/14 (43%)	6/10 (60%)	4/10 (40%)	3/10 (30%)
Jones Day	N/A	11/37 (30%)	N/A	6/33 (18%)	8/32 (25%)
K&L Gates	4/17 (24%)	5/21 (24%)	6/17 (35%)	6/22 (27%)	7/26 (27%)
Kaye Scholer	2/4 (50%)	1/3 (33%)	2/4 (50%)	2/6 (33%)	0/1 (0%)
Kilpatrick Stockton	4/15 (27%)	4/13 (31%)	N/A	4/13 (31%)	4/9 (44%)
King & Spalding	4/20 (20%)	6/18 (33%)	4/12 (33%)	5/19 (26%)	4/8 (50%)
Kirkland & Ellis	16/61 (26%)	17/59 (29%)	21/56 (38%)	24/62 (39%)	n/a
Latham & Watkins	8/29 (28%)	5/21 (24%)	9/23 (39%)	3/20 (15%)	2/20 (10%)
Locke Lord	0/8 (0%)	2/11 (18%)	1/6 (17%)	5/14 (36%)	2/14 (14%)
Lowenstein Sandler	1/4 (25%)	3/7 (43%)	2/4 (50%)	0/2 (0%)	0/2 (0%)
Luce Forward	2/4 (50%)	N/A	2/3 (67%)	0/3 (0%)	2/4 (50%)
Mayer Brown	5/24 (21%)	N/A	3/26 (12%)	5/27 (19%)	5/16 (31%)
McDermott	8/28 (29%)	8/22 (36%)	11/32 (34%)	14/35 (40%)	7/27 (26%)

McGuire Woods	7/15 (47%)	4/13 (31%)	6/15 (40%)	4/15 (27%)	3/15 (20%)
Milbank	N/A	1/7 (14%)	1/4 (25%)	1/8 (13%)	0/1 (0%)
Morrison & Foerster	6/19 (32%)	3/14 (21%)	5/16 (31%)	7/20 (35%)	1/8 (13%)
Munger Tolles	N/A	N/A	0/2 (0%)	2/3 (67%)	2/6 (33%)
Nixon Peabody	2/11 (18%)	2/11 (18%)	4/13 (31%)	1/9 (11%)	1/7 (14%)
O'Melveny	4/15 (27%)	4/13 (31%)	6/15 (40%)	5/20 (25%)	1/9 (11%)
Orrick	2/10 (20%)	5/9 (56%)	4/16 (25%)	1/13 (8%)	3/12 (25%)
Parker Poe	N/A	1/7 (14%)	2/7 (28%)	0/8 (0%)	n/a
Patton Boggs	1/8 (13%)	3/12 (25%)	0/9 (0%)	4/9 (44%)	3/10 (30%)
Paul Hastings	5/13 (38%)	2/11 (18%)	3/13 (23%)	N/A	n/a
Paul Weiss	1/3 (33%)	1/5 (20%)	1/3 (33%)	1/4 (25%)	1/4 (25%)
Perkins Coie	N/A	N/A	8/17 (47%)	4/10 (40%)	5/12 (42%)
Phelps Dunbar	2/4 (50%)	1/2 (50%)	2/7 (29%)	1/4 (25%)	n/a
Pillsbury Winthrop	1/12 (8%)	3/18 (17%)	2/11 (18%)	1/11 (9%)	1/11 (9%)
Proskauer Rose	N/A	2/6 (33%)	2/14 (14%)	1/11 (9%)	3/8 (38%)
Reed Smith	N/A	10/24 (42%)	3/16 (19%)	14/26 (54%)	3/15 (20%)
Ropes & Gray	6/14 (43%)	1/7 (14%)	4/11 (36%)	7/10 (70%)	2/12 (17%)
Seyfarth Shaw	N/A	4/13 (31%)	5/20 (25%)	5/17 (29%)	8/18 (44%)
Schiff Hardin	N/A	4/8 (50%)	2/8 (25%)	2/6 (33%)	2/6 (33%)
Schulte Roth	N/A	N/A	0/2 (0%)	1/5 (20%)	0/3 (0%)
Shearman & Sterling	1/3 (33%)	0/4 (0%)	3/7 (43%)	3/6 (50%)	1/3 (33%)
Shook Hardy	N/A	1/12 (8%)	N/A	N/A	2/9 (22%)
Sidley Austin	11/26 (42%)	8/34 (24%)	9/29 (31%)	N/A	9/24 (38%)
Simpson Thacher	N/A	3/11 (27%)	2/11 (18%)	4/6 (67%)	1/2 (50%)
Skadden	N/A	6/28 (21%)	5/22 (23%)	3/19 (16%)	n/a
Sonnenschein	2/7 (29%)	10/17 (59%)	7/17 (41%)	3/11 (27%)	n/a
Squire Sanders	2/7 (29%)	N/A	2/8 (25%)	N/A	2/11 (18%)
Steptoe & Johnson	1/3 (33%)	1/4 (25%)	1/4 (25%)	N/A	0/2 (0%)
Stroock	0/4 (0%)	1/5 (20%)	0/3 (0%)	2/6 (33%)	0/3 (0%)
Sullivan & Cromwell	N/A	N/A	3/7 (43%)	2/3 (67%)	2/4 (50%)
Thompson Hine	3/9 (33%)	3/8 (38%)	2/5 (40%)	1/6 (17%)	4/13 (31%)
Troutman Sanders	5/14 (36%)	2/10 (20%)	4/16 (25%)	2/15 (13%)	3/9 (33%)
Venable	3/9 (33%)	5/12 (42%)	5/17 (29%)	4/9 (44%)	0/6 (0%)
Vinson & Elkins	N/A	2/11 (18%)	1/12 (8%)	1/9 (11%)	2/7 (29%)
Wachtell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0/6 (0%)
Weil, Gotshal	N/A	4/10 (40%)	10/13 (77%)	4/13 (31%)	1/3 (33%)
White & Case	2/11 (18%)	0/9 (0%)	2/16 (13%)	1/7 (14%)	0/3 (0%)
Wiley Rein	2/5 (40%)	2/6 (33%)	2/6 (33%)	3/6 (50%)	3/5 (60%)
Wilkie Farr	0/5 (0%)	n/a	4/14 (29%)	2/5 (40%)	0/3 (0%)
WilmerHale	N/A	5/15 (33%)	6/15 (40%)	7/22 (32%)	4/10 (40%)
Winston & Strawn	6/16 (38%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2/15 (13%)
Womble Carlyle	3/12 (25%)	0/9 (0%)	4/9 (44%)	4/8 (50%)	4/11 (36%)

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