



Dear Penn Law Alumni,

We are pleased to announce that we have successfully launched our new Office of Inclusion and Engagement (I&E). The office was created in May 2019 to cultivate greater diversity, equity, and inclusion at Penn Law and in the legal profession. Among I&E's core priorities are to: promote a robust exchange of ideas and deep respect for the value of difference; support members of historically underrepresented communities in the law and legal profession; and support students and other members of our community in understanding and addressing racial, ethnic, gender, and other forms of bias and discrimination in their lives and careers.

The Office is directed by

- Arlene Rivera Finkelstein, Associate Dean for Justice & Inclusion Initiatives, and Executive Director of the Toll Public Interest Center
- Monica Monroe, Associate Dean for Inclusion & Engagement, and
- Tobias Wolff, Jefferson B. Fordham Professor of Law and Deputy Dean for Alumni Engagement & Inclusion.

In the first four months since I&E launched, this leadership team has spearheaded a number of key foundational initiatives:

- Launched a "Shared Spaces" training program for incoming 1L students focused on understanding bias, and to cultivate inclusive classroom conversations and interactions with classmates throughout their time at Penn Law.
- Met with affinity group leaders to discuss ways in which I&E can offer specific support to their members in law school and in the marketplace. As a result, we are collaborating with colleagues in Career Planning, the Center on Professionalism, and with leading employers in the public and private sectors to develop a "Success Series" focused on addressing professional challenges and opportunities for students historically underrepresented in the legal profession.
- Launched a new Student Advisory Board for Inclusion & Engagement, as we seek to institutionalize a vehicle for student partnership on pursuing inclusive excellence. We are currently accepting student applications for this new board, and plan to convene the student board later this semester.
- Established a Staff Inclusion Team and held three different staff training sessions around implicit bias and engaging in meaningful dialogue about diversity and inclusion. The Staff Inclusion Team will launch a series of staff-facilitated Diversity Dialogues throughout the 2019-20 academic year.

- Laid the foundation for a new Alumni Advisory Board for Inclusion & Engagement by selecting five exceptional alumni co-chairs and developing a structure for alumni engagement on matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion at Penn Law and in the legal profession.

Now, we need you. I&E is issuing a call for applications for our new Alumni Advisory Board. The Board will work with I&E to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at Penn Law and in the legal profession.

The Alumni Advisory Board will be comprised of 20 alumni: five co-chairs appointed by the Dean, and 15 additional members selected through the application process.

The inaugural group of co-chairs represents a range of backgrounds, perspectives, and professional experiences. The co-chairs are: Lou Feldman, L'92, Chief Tax Counsel at Standard Industries; Omar Gonzalez-Pagan, L'10, Senior Attorney at Lambda Legal; Kalpana Kotagal L'05, Civil Rights & Employment law partner at Cohen Milstein, Chair of the firm's Hiring and Diversity Committee, and co-author of the Hollywood Inclusion Rider; Ayana Lewis, L'12, Assistant Director of the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Strategic Partnerships; and Pilar Ramos, L'97, General Counsel, North America, at Mastercard, and member of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity. Their full bios can be found [here](#).

The application and additional information about the structure of the Alumni Advisory Board may be found [here](#). Applications are **due on or before Monday, October 14th at 12:00PM (Eastern Standard Time)**. Alumni from all years and all programs are welcome to apply.

We are very excited to launch our Student and Alumni Advisory Boards concurrently, and we look forward to bringing these entities together formally and informally on a regular basis in order to nurture robust dialogue and cultivate the best opportunities for guidance on critical issues of equity and inclusion, that is both student-centered and well-grounded in the practice of law in an increasingly complex and diverse legal profession.

We have had numerous conversations with our Alumni Advisory Board Co-Chairs and are grateful for their vision and leadership. We are confident that they will lead a productive Alumni Board that will offer strong guidance to us as we move forward with the important work that remains in furthering our commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion at Penn Law and in the profession.

More information about I&E can be found [here](#). Questions may be directed to Associate Deans [Arlene Rivera Finkelstein](#) or [Monica Monroe](#).

We look forward to partnering with all of you to create a more diverse and inclusive learning environment and professional community at Penn Law.

Sincerely,

Ted, Arlene, Monica, Tobias