SpencerFane®

Three New Members Named to Spencer Fane DEI Committee

Spencer Fane is pleased to announce it has named attorneys Melinda Bowen and Brittainy Joyner, and treasury operations manager **Erika Howard** as new members of the firm's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, effective February 1, 2025.

"Improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal industry as well as creating a culture of belonging inside our firm cannot be taken lightly, and with Melinda, Brittainy, and Erika assuming these new roles, we have three great leaders to help us work toward our ongoing goals," DEI Committee Chair James Crumlin said. "I'm proud of the work we have accomplished, and of the plans we have to continue this great work in the future."

In their new roles as committee members, Melinda, Brittainy, and Erika will serve as part of the insightful team that collaborates with firm leadership, including Connect Groups, to drive meaningful engagement, programming and communications, ensuring workforce well-being and inclusivity of the firm, fostering a true culture of belonging.

"It's incredibly important to us that we demonstrate our high standard as an inclusive workforce. To that effect, we are very excited to welcome our second staff member to the committee, Erika. The insight she brings to the table is invaluable," Chief Talent & Diversity Officer **Latricia Shepard** said.

In her legal practice, Melinda loves collaborating with clients to address complex issues at the most difficult times of life. Her experience ranges from guiding families through difficult personal matters, to defending those facing criminal charges and related civil liability, to leading organizational clients through high-stakes disputes. Melinda has consulted with individuals attempting to rebuild after divorce and other

family challenges. She has represented white-collar criminal defendants accused of various charges, such as tax offenses, trade secret violations, and bribery.

At Spencer Fane, Brittainy provides strong and detailed advocacy for her clients, managing complex litigation matters with a focus on commercial and business disputes, employment litigation, data privacy, and financial services. She has extensive experience representing clients in both federal and state courts, navigating all phases of litigation, including advocating and defending in depositions, mediations, arbitrations, and settlement negotiations. Brittainy also serves on the leadership committee for the firm connect group, Spencer Fane BOND (Black Opportunities to Network and Discover).

In her role as treasury operations manager on the firm's accounting team, Erika leads a team of nine and oversees key financial functions for the firm. She is responsible for managing firm banking relationships, trust accounting, cash operations, cash applications, treasury products, and corporate card processes. Erika works closely with attorneys and staff to ensure seamless accounting practices across the organization.

The Spencer Fane Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, working in collaboration with the Executive Committee and other firm leadership, assists firm efforts by providing educational opportunities for attorneys and professional staff, measuring and monitoring each success and challenge, investing in formal and informal mentorship, and supporting attorneys and professional staff with a dedicated budget. The committee breathes life into fundamental principles that make our law firm strong, and a better place to work.

Learn more about the firm's DEI efforts here.