

# DIVERSE BY DESIGN

A more just world happens only by design.

## Courageous Conversations Virtual Series

Greenberg Traurig's Courageous Conversations Virtual Series addresses timely issues of racial and social justice reform. We believe that our workplaces can be catalysts for change when leaders lend their company's support to organizations that promote equal rights and racial and social justice. Firm clients, alumni, and attorneys, as well as community leaders, who are on the cutting edge of racial and social equality efforts are invited to join us as guests and help keep these critical conversations going.

### Recent guests and topics include:

**NOV 30,  
2022**

**Neurodiversity & the Law**, addressed the tools that listeners can use to work alongside neurodiverse people, and the important legal components involved, including ADA accommodations. Neurodiversity, is a concept about differences in the brain, that cause people to interact with the world around them in a variety of ways including in the ways people socialize, learn, and perform various mental tasks. Speakers were **Gary Lesser**, *President, Florida Bar*; **Michael Alessandri, Ph.D.**, *Executive Director of the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities*; **Gary A. Costales**, *Costales Law, Labor and Employment Attorney*; **Raquel Regalado**, *Commissioner, Miami-Dade County District 7*, and **William E. Pelham, Jr., Ph.D.**, *Director of the Center for Children and Families at Florida International University*. From GT, GT Real Estate and Land Use Shareholder **Iris Escarra** and GT Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion **Debra Sydnor**.

**SEPT 15,  
2022**

**Fireside chat with Keynote speaker Michael Bornstein**, Holocaust Survivor and Author, who at four years old was one of the youngest children liberated from Auschwitz. Michael shared his inspirational journey of survival and perseverance—an experience that is sure to leave a lasting impression upon all of us. To read his incredibly moving story, *Survivors Club, The True Story of a Very Young Prisoner of Auschwitz*, [please click here](#) for the book. From GT, **Nikki Lewis Simon**, *Shareholder and Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer* and **Richard A. Rosenbaum**, *Executive Chairman*, and **Scott J. Bornstein**, *Co-Managing Shareholder of NY, and son of Michael Bornstein*, introduced and moderated the program.

**AUG 11,  
2022**

**How Equal Justice Works Fellows Transform the Legal System for Marginalized Communities – Part two**. Attendees were invited to hear from former and current EJW Fellows about how they have turned their passion for community change and empowerment into successful careers advocating for the marginalized and underserved. Program two focused on how poverty and marginalization result in the criminalization of communities, and how public interest law attorneys and supporters can advocate on behalf of those affected. Speakers were **Annie Kurtz** *Attorney & current EJW Fellow*; **Tracie Johnson** *Staff Attorney, Community Legal Services, former EJW Fellow*; and **Sean Hill** *Assistant Professor of Law, Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, former EJW Fellow*. From GT, Pro Bono Chair **Caroline J. Heller** provided introductions and Global Pro Bono Program Manager **Elba B. Gutiérrez**, and Manager of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion **Rita M. Treadwell** co-moderated.

**AUG 4,  
2022**

**How Equal Justice Works Fellows Transform the Legal System for Marginalized Communities – Part one**. Attendees were invited to hear from former and current EJW Fellows about how they have turned their passion for community change and empowerment into successful careers advocating for the marginalized and underserved. Program one focused on the laws meant to educate and protect students with disabilities;

how and why some states and localities at times fail to comply with these laws; and how non-profit lawyers advocate for this vulnerable population. Speakers were **Matthew Lenaghan** Deputy Director, Advocates for Children of New York; former EJW Fellow; **Ericka Sanchez** Executive Director, Foundation for Those with Special Needs, former EJW Fellow; and **Claire Nilsen Blumenson** Executive Director & Co-Founder, School Justice Project, former EJW Fellow. From GT, Pro Bono Chair **Caroline J. Heller** provided introductions and Global Pro Bono Program Manager **Elba B. Gutiérrez**, and Manager of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion **Rita M. Treadwell** co-moderated.

**MAY 25,**  
**2022**

**“China Initiative”:** Will anything change? As we celebrated Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month, attendees joined a Courageous Conversation addressing the impact of legal issues and criminal justice disparities faced by these communities, as well as the positive impact of community advocacy. They learned how to be allies and, if qualified, how to use their legal backgrounds to support Asian communities on difficult issues such as racial profiling, violence, and discrimination. Speakers were **Gisela Perez Kusakawa**, Assistant Director of the Anti-Racial Profiling Project at Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and **Dr. Anming Hu**, Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. From GT we had **Andrew Chongseh Kim**, Litigation Associate and **Daniel Taylor**, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager.

**FEB 16,**  
**2022**

**Black History Month Fireside Chat with Keynote Speaker Dr. Ashley D. Farmer**, Associate Professor of History and African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She shared her journey and passion for African American history. She discussed the origins of the civil rights movement, provided important details about well-and lesser-known activists, delved into key historic moments, and addressed how that history relates to racial justice issues today. Dr. Farmer also offered insights into how you can close the gap between your values and your contributions to social justice efforts today. From GT, **Rita M. Treadwell**, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager, moderated and **Debra Sydnor**, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, provided opening remarks.

**NOV 18,**  
**2021**

**Fireside chat with Erika Alexander**, Actress, Writer, Producer, Entrepreneur, and Activist, who shared her journey, why she decided to become a producer, and why representation matters. She discussed her current work developing a social science study, which will measure the impact her Maxine Shaw character from *Living Single* had on inspiring a generation of Black girls and women to pursue a legal career. From GT, **Ryan Porter** IT User Support Specialist and **Nikki Lewis Simon**, Shareholder and Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer.

**NOV 10,**  
**2021**

**Keynote speaker Congresswoman Lauren Underwood** shared her inspiring journey including insights on what led her to public service and a run for Congress; what motivated her to develop the Black Maternal Health Caucus; and why she developed the current series of bills that elevate the Black maternal health crisis in our legislative and policy dialogue. From GT, **Frank Citera** Litigation Shareholder and **Nikki Lewis Simon**, Shareholder and Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer.

**OCT 11,**  
**2021**

**Honoring National Hispanic Heritage Month** with keynote speaker **Elisa D. Garcia**, Chief Legal Officer of *Macy’s Inc.* She will share the insight and wisdom she has gained during her 30+ years of experience as a Latina corporate executive and attorney. Named one of the “50 Most Powerful Latinas in Business” by the Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA), she has been instrumental in paving the way for minorities and women, including members of the LGBT community. From GT, **Sandra D. Gonzalez** White Collar Defense & Special Investigations Shareholder; **Yosbel A. Ibarra** Miami Co-Managing Shareholder; and **Nikki Lewis Simon**, Shareholder and Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer.

**SEPT 30,**  
**2021**

**W. E. B. Du Bois: Agent of Change – His Relevance Today**, the first in a series of roundtable discussions about Dr. Du Bois and his impact. Featured speakers include **Arthur McFarlane II**, the great grandson of Dr. Du Bois; **Whitney Battle-Baptiste**, Director of the W. E. B. Du Bois Center and Professor for the Department of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; and **Adam Holmes**, Assistant Director of the W. E. B. Du Bois Center. From GT **David Dykeman**, Co-Managing Shareholder Boston Office & Patent Attorney; **Nikki Lewis Simon**, Shareholder and Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer; **Mistie Weishaar**, Marketing Manager; and **Alex Longoria**, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coordinator.

**JUNE 23,**  
**2021**

**Allyship in Color: Moving to Action** the third in a multi-part series. This program focused on social currency, how and when to use it effectively. Moderator **Charlton Copeland**, Professor of Law at the University of Miami School of Law, and GT attorneys **Sandra Gonzalez**, Shareholder White Collar & Special Investigations; **Alexander Kim**, Shareholder Intellectual Property & Technology; **Deepi Miller**, Of Counsel Litigation; **Philip**

**Person**, Shareholder Labor & Employment; **John Richards**, Shareholder Labor & Employment; and **Debra Sydnor**, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

**JUNE 2, 2021**

**A “Look Back”: A Year Since George Floyd** with keynote speaker **Juliette Pryor**, *Executive Vice President, Corporate Secretary and General Counsel, Albertsons Companies*, talked about her experiences individually and as a leader in the past year since George Floyd’s death in the midst of a pandemic, where we “go” from here to achieve equity, and discuss what challenges might lay ahead.

**MAY 27, 2021**

**The Rise of Anti-Asian Sentiment and How to Impact Change**, an Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month Conversation with special guests **Congresswoman Grace Meng** (D-NY 6th District); and **A.B. Cruz, III**, *President of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)*; and GT attorneys **Chinh H. Pham**, Shareholder and Co-Chair, Asian American Affinity Group; and **Sandy Chiu**, Law Clerk/JD Intellectual Property & Technology, addressed the rise of Anti-Asian sentiment, how to impact change, and the importance of participation from Asian Americans in government.

**APRIL 28, 2021**

**A Covid Equity & Inclusion Discussion** with **Dr. Regan Marsh**, *Senior Technical Lead, COVID-19 Response, U.S. Public Health Accompaniment Unit at Partners In Health*; and **Dr. Sonya Shin**, *Founding Director of Community Outreach & Patient Empowerment (COPE) Program*; and GT attorneys, **John Voorhees**, Shareholder Environmental Law; and **Troy Eid**, Shareholder & Co-Chair American Indian Law Practice Group, discussed the issues surrounding healthcare equity and inclusion, COVID-19 and the economic issues impacting underserved communities’ access to healthcare revealed by the pandemic.

**APRIL 7, 2021**

**Allyship in Color** moderated by **Charlton Copeland**, *Professor of Law at the University of Miami School of Law*, with GT attorneys, **Sandra Gonzalez**, Shareholder White Collar & Special Investigations; **Alexander Kim**, Shareholder Intellectual Property & Technology; **Deepi Miller**, Of Counsel Litigation; **Philip Person**, Shareholder Labor & Employment; **John Richards**, Shareholder Labor & Employment; and **Debra Sydnor**, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, shared personal experiences of allyship, and discussed how individuals from historically underrepresented groups can be effective allies to each other despite vast differences in culture and societal needs.

**MAR 3, 2021**

**How Inclusion Powers the Economy** with **Raphael Bostic**, *President & CEO, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta* shared how organizations and their leaders can participate in the betterment of communities and businesses through the promotion of equality and opportunity. Attendees gained a deeper understanding of how inclusion impacts the economy and why it is good for business.

**FEB 25, 2021**

**Black History Month Fireside Chat** with keynote Speaker, **Chaka M. Patterson**, *Adtalem Global Education’s Senior Vice President, General Counsel, and Corporate Secretary*. Chaka presented his experiences as a leader in law and business and his thoughts on “belonging, managing up, and showing up” as a professional. He also focused on how corporations can be catalysts for change when leaders personally and actively support Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

**FEB 10, 2021**

**Allyship in Black and White** moderated by **Charlton Copeland**, *Professor of Law & Dean’s Distinguished Scholar at the University of Miami School of Law*. From GT, **Laurie Gildan**, Shareholder Real Estate; **Glenn Meier**, Of Counsel Litigation; **Michael Nicodema**, Shareholder Litigation, and **Rita Treadwell**, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager, shared personal experiences of allyship and discussed how individuals from majority groups can be allies for marginalized or underrepresented persons.

**JAN 14, 2021**

**Taking Action on Criminal Justice Reform** a follow up to GT’s earlier program in which GT attorney, **Karen Kennard**. Speakers **Bobby Harris**, *President/CEO Unincarcerated Minds Inc.*; and **Caroline Heller**, Shareholder and Global Pro Bono Program Chair Litigation, joined Karen for a roundtable discussion on criminal justice reform and actions anyone can take to create lasting impact, regardless of their background.

**OCT 27,  
2020**

Austin Shareholder **Karen M. Kennard** discussed Criminal Justice reform and the profound impact it has had on her and her family. Her oldest brother, Tim Cole, was the first person in Texas to receive a posthumous exoneration and posthumous pardon. The Texas exoneration compensation system and the Texas Innocence Commission are named in his honor. Karen was previously City Attorney for the City of Austin, Texas and General Counsel for the Texas Municipal League, the largest municipal league in the U.S.

**JULY 28,  
2020**

**Marc Morial**, *President & CEO of the National Urban League and former Mayor of New Orleans*, discussed how corporations can assist in healing by supporting organizations that advance social justice and racial equity, while achieving their underlying business goals.

**JULY 16,  
2020**

Philadelphia Shareholder **A. Michael Pratt** discussed a recent ALM Op-Ed, "[A Black Father's Letter to His Black Son: 'My Mission is to Keep You Safe'](#)", which captured the inescapable duality of celebrating his son's college graduation marked by the pain and sadness of grieving the death of George Floyd and so many others. Michael previously served as chief deputy city solicitor charged in the commercial litigation division for the City of Philadelphia Law Department.

We invite members of the firm and alumni, as well as business leaders, in-house counsel, and others to participate. We also share these important conversations on social media, and on the "GTDRIVES: Dynamic Dialogues" podcast, part of our [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative](#).

For more information or if you would like to be a guest, please contact: [GTDiversityEquity&Inclusion@gtlaw.com](mailto:GTDiversityEquity&Inclusion@gtlaw.com).