



The Virginia State Bar's Diversity Conference presents
4th Annual Forum on Diversity in the Legal Profession
Friday, March 15, 2024
Jepson Alumni Executive Center, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg
6 hours CLE (Pending)

7:30 a.m. Registration

Continental Breakfast will be served

8:30 a.m. Introductions and Welcome

Candace Blydenburgh, Esq., *Chair, Virginia State Bar Diversity Conference*

Alicia Johnson, Esq., *Immediate Past Chair and Annual Forum Chair Virginia State Bar Diversity Conference*

8:45 a.m. Keynote Address

Chidi I. James, Esq., *President, Virginia State Bar, Blankingship & Keith*

9:00 a.m. Best Practices and Encouraging a Culture of Improving Diversity in the Legal Profession

(1.5 CLE hours)

The year of 2023 proved to be a challenging year for those seeking to advance DE&I efforts. This panel will provide an overview of the legal and practical issues that impact diversity in the legal profession and will discuss best practices for employers to improve diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and workforce. This panel will also discuss timely topics such as recognizing micro-aggressions and implicit bias.

Moderator: **Alicia Roberts Johnson, Esq.**, *Counsel, Ogletree Deakins*

Speakers:

Latoya Asia, Esq., *Vice President, Employee Engagement and Talent Strategy, Dominion Energy*

Courtney Frazier, Esq., *Senior Trial Attorney, Allstate*

Rudene Mercer Haynes, Esq., *Partner, Hunton Andrews & Kurth*

Chidi James, Esq., *President, Virginia State Bar, Partner, Blankingship & Keith*

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. The Impact of the U.S. Supreme Court's Affirmative Action Ruling on Employers, DEI Initiatives and What's Next

(1.5 hours CLE)

On June 29, 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a long-awaited decision that ended affirmative action in higher education. In fear of potential lawsuits and to ensure compliance with the recent Supreme Court decision, many academic institutions and employers began immediately revisiting their affirmative action and diversity, equity and inclusion policies. This panel will discuss the Supreme Court's decision and ways that academic institutions and employers can continue promoting DE&I initiatives and remain compliant with this new legal precedent.

Moderator: **Jimmy F. Robinson, Esq.**, *Founder and Office Managing Shareholder, Ogletree Deakins*

Speakers:

A. Benjamin Spencer, Esq., *Dean, The College of William & Mary Law School*
Jim Stuckey, Esq., *Vice President and General Counsel, Dominion Energy*

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. Recognizing Generational, Cultural, and Gender Differences and How They Impact the Workforce (1.0 hours CLE)

The workforce is currently more diverse than ever before in age, culture and gender. This panel will explore the impact of a diverse workforce, the challenges employers and employees face in navigating this new landscape and ways in which we can all learn to appreciate our diversity for a more inclusive and effective workforce.

Moderator: Candace Blydenburgh, Esq., *Partner, McGuireWoods*

Speakers:

Brian Buniva, Esq., *B.L. Buniva Strategic Advisor, PLLC*

Jamie Jackson, MPA, *Director, Public Transit, City of Fredericksburg*

The Honorable Stacy Lee, *Judge, Henrico Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court*

The Honorable Lorrie Sinclair Taylor, *Chief Judge, Loudoun County General District Court*

2:00 p.m. Implicit Bias, Voir Dire, and Batson Reprised (2.0 hours CLE)

Implicit bias in the courtroom is an apparent issue within the legal realm. Both attorneys and judges must be vigilant in discerning when true biased motivations are driving certain decisions before and during a trial. Being aware and retraining one's subconscious is not an easy task, and it does take work. This panel will explore implicit bias and the impact it has in the legal field, especially in the Courtroom, and will discuss ways to recognize implicit bias and overcome to ensure justice always prevails.

Moderator: Bryan Kennedy, Esq., *Senior Assistant Public Defender, Fairfax County Public Defender*

Speakers:

The Honorable Rossie Alston, *Judge, Eastern Virginia U.S. District Court*

Nina Ginsberg, Esq., *Partner, DiMuroGinsberg, PC*

The Honorable Judith Wheat, *Chief Judge, Arlington County Circuit Court*

4:00 p.m. Concluding Remarks

4:15 p.m. Diversity Conference Reception