

# New York Law Journal

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LEGAL AWARDS  
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**DIVERSITY INITIATIVE:**  
**Mylan Denerstein, Partner,**  
**Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP**



**W**hat are your proudest accomplishments in the area of diversity and inclusion in law? As counsel to the governor, I was a part of passing marriage equality in New York state in 2011. This led several other states to act and paved the way for the U.S. Supreme Court to make marriage equality the law of the land. To be a part of creating equal rights for all people is the best accomplishment one can have.

As a Black partner at Gibson Dunn, to have the opportunity and support to create meaningful opportunities for other Black lawyers is simply the best. There is no greater achievement than to celebrate the accomplishments of other Black

# DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

lawyers. When I look around the room, not only am I not the only Black partner, but as a result of Gibson Dunn's efforts and commitments, other Black partners have leadership roles, including our chief diversity officer, Zakiyyah Salim-Williams who is now a partner!

**What are the greatest diversity and inclusion-related challenges today for New York lawyers and firms?** We now need to take our efforts to the next level and make sure that the foundations we have built can expand and are sustainable. We

must focus on the next generation of leadership and pass the baton.

**Who have you found to be particularly inspirational in implementing successful diversity initiatives?** Michele Coleman Mayes, vice president, general counsel, and secretary at The New York Public Library. She is a force for change and a trailblazer.

Wherever she is and whatever she is doing she is focused on diversity and inclusion and makes it happen. She gives great advice and always makes herself available.