



Contact: Manar Morales
manar@dfalliance.com

[202-957-9650](tel:202-957-9650)

Diversity & Flexibility Alliance to Honor Attorney/Client Partnerships That Support Flexible Schedules

2020 Flex Success® Awards to Be Presented to Dickinson Wright, Schiff Hardin & Seyfarth Shaw Partners & Clients on November 5

Washington, DC – October 21, 2020 – Today the Diversity and Flexibility Alliance announced that its **2020 Flex Success® Award** honorees will be: Sharon Newlon, Member, [Dickinson Wright](#) and her client Sara von Bernthal, Senior Counsel, Real Estate, Office of the General Counsel, [FCA USA LLC](#); Lucy Bickford, Partner, [Schiff Hardin LLP](#) and her client Andrea Coloff, Regional Fiduciary Officer, [Bank of America Private Bank](#); and, Emma Mata, Partner, [Seyfarth Shaw LLP](#) and her client Suzanne Davies, Vice President, Legal & Corporate Secretary, [Ensign Energy Services Inc.](#)

The **Flex Success® Award** recognizes Partners at Diversity & Flexibility Alliance member law firms who have achieved success while working a reduced hours schedule as well as a client who has been integral to making workplace flexibility so successful. The Awards will be presented on November 5, 2020 during the Alliance's virtual annual conference, ***Moments of Impact: Transforming Organizational Culture***. Registration is available here.

"With support from their firms, these exceptional attorneys honored with our Flex Success® award have risen to Partnership levels and provided excellent client service while working a reduced hours schedule," said Manar Morales, President and CEO of the Alliance. "The clients we are recognizing have demonstrated their belief that success can be achieved outside the confines of a traditional work schedule. Together, these attorney/client pairs are perfect examples of how leadership, collaboration, and clear flex policies can lead to the achievement of both professional and personal goals."

Sharon Newlon and Sara von Bernthal

Sharon Newlon, Member and Practice Group Co-Chair for Environmental, Energy & Sustainability in Dickinson Wright's Detroit office, has been working a reduced hour schedule since the birth of her son twenty-two years ago and currently works a 75% reduced hour schedule. Recognized as a leader in her field by Best Lawyers in America, Sharon was instrumental in creating an initiative that allowed income members the option to become

consulting members, with a negotiable billable hour requirement, in an effort to introduce flexibility into their careers. Sharon's longtime client, Sara von Bernthal, Senior Counsel, Real Estate, Office of the General Counsel, FCA USA LLC, will also be honored for her ongoing support of Sharon and her schedule.

"I'm honored to receive the Flex Success® Award alongside Sara von Bernthal from FCA," said Sharon Newlon. "Throughout my career, flexibility has been a cornerstone of building a rewarding practice within the legal industry. I'm grateful to Dickinson Wright, my colleagues and clients for being such great partners with me to create relationships that helped us attain our professional and personal goals," she added.

"I'm honored to receive the Flex Success® Award alongside Sharon," said Sara von Bernthal. "I've worked with Sharon for many years and we both know how important a flexible workplace is to female lawyers, especially working moms. I hope that promoting flexibility within our respective companies will lead to younger generations, especially women, realizing that they can have rewarding, successful careers that achieve their professional and personal goals."

"Dickinson Wright congratulates Sharon Newlon and Sara von Bernthal on their well-deserved Flex Success® Award," said Michael C. Hammer, CEO of Dickinson Wright. "Dickinson Wright is committed to working with our lawyers and clients to develop initiatives that promote flexibility within the workplace. We recognize that these important initiatives allow talented lawyers, like Sharon, to do their best work while assisting clients, like Sara, in furthering their diversity objectives while receiving the highest quality legal services. We look forward to working with them to build on their successful partnership."

Lucy Bickford and Andrea Coloff

Also being honored with the 2020 Flex Success® Award are Lucy Bickford, Partner, Schiff Hardin LLP and her client Andrea Coloff, Regional Fiduciary Officer, Bank of America Private Bank. Lucy has been working a reduced hours schedule for more than seven years and currently works an 85% reduced hours arrangement. Lucy became a partner in January 2019 and credits her advancement to her reduced hours schedule that allowed her to cultivate a sustainable long-term path for her career at Schiff Hardin.

In 2014, Lucy co-founded Schiff Hardin's New Moms Group, a go-to network for women returning to work after having a child and advocates on behalf of all attorney parents at the firm, regardless of gender. In 2017, Lucy was chosen as one of the firm's participants in the LCLD Pathfinder Program, designed for diverse, high-potential, early-career attorneys at LCLD Member organizations.

"Far from being a detriment to my career, my part-time arrangement is the key to having a sustainable long-term path at Schiff," said Lucy Bickford. "By continuing to strengthen our firm's flex policies, we will enhance our inclusive culture and solidify realistic and preferable career paths for a broader group of attorneys," she added. "Andi helps to support my arrangement by setting reasonable and flexible deadlines, even when the matter is time

sensitive. Additionally, she is responsive and inclusive in her communications, so our team can rely on her to help us move matters forward efficiently.”

“Lucy’s work product and advice are always excellent. As a working parent myself, I appreciate the importance of flexibility and balance, but I was not even aware of Lucy’s flexible work schedule when we first began working together because it is imperceptible to me as a client. I am so glad that Schiff has made this commitment to diversity and inclusion and that I am able to benefit from and support it,” said Andi Coloff.

“Lucy has proven that you can be a great mom and a great lawyer at the same time,” said Marci Eisenstein, Managing Partner, Schiff Hardin, LLP. “I know that over her years of parenting and working, Lucy has juggled her responsibilities and found ways to balance work and home life. She has shown that you can work a flexible schedule and still be fully committed to your clients and the firm. We are very proud of her,” she added.

Emma Mata and Suzanne Davies

Emma Mata, Partner, Seyfarth Shaw LLP and her client Suzanne Davies, Vice President, Legal & Corporate Secretary, Ensign Energy Services Inc. will also be honored with the 2020 Flex Success Award on November 5. Emma has been working a reduced hours arrangement of 10% below the annual requirement since she was an Associate in 2011. While on this reduced hours schedule, Emma has been able to make Partner and develop and grow her book of business to yearly receivables of over \$1 million. Emma is the Houston office leader of Seyfarth’s Inclusion and Diversity team, former Houston office leader of the Seyfarth Women’s Network, and co-leader of the Houston office Pro Bono team.

Emma and Suzanne have been working together since 2009 and Suzanne has continuously relied on Emma in legal work for Ensign and its subsidiary and affiliate companies contributing to Emma’s continued success at Seyfarth. “The ability to balance my most important role at home and the legal career that I love so much has made me a better mom, a better lawyer, and a happier person,” said Emma Mata.

“As a mom to 8-year old twin boys, flexibility in my career is essential. It requires planning and no small amount of juggling as well. Partnering with external service providers who understand and support that flexibility, such as Emma, help to make my work flow seamless and manageable,” said Suzanne Davies

“We’re so proud of Emma and the impressive career she has established here at Seyfarth,” said Ellen McLaughlin, chair of Seyfarth Women’s Network. “Her own path exemplifies why supporting flexibility is key to gender advancement and talent development.”

The **Diversity and Flexibility Alliance** is a think tank that collaborates with organizations to develop non-stigmatized flexible work policies that promote inclusive work cultures for all and help to advance more women into leadership positions. The Alliance provides practical research-based solutions, training workshops, and strategic advisory services that increase organizational effectiveness through diversity and flexibility.