

Barnes & Thornburg Launches Racial and Social Justice Foundation

As part of the launch of the Barnes & Thornburg Racial and Social Justice Foundation, the firm's lawyers and staff have donated more than \$200,000 to promote, advocate and effect racial and social justice in the firm's local communities.

The foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 2020 with financial support coming entirely through personal donations from the lawyers and staff in each of the firm's 19 offices. To start, four organizations have received \$50,000 each in grants in four of Barnes & Thornburg's markets – Atlanta, Indianapolis, Los Angeles and Minneapolis. As the foundation continues to grow in 2021, additional nonprofits and markets will be added to the mix.

'No Gift Too Small'

The firm has undertaken fundraising efforts driven by the firm's employees to generate broad participation under the mantra "no gift is too small." The \$50,000 grants were presented this month to the following organizations:

- All Square, located in Minneapolis, provides individuals impacted by the criminal justice system with opportunities to become future leaders, business owners, legal practitioners and entrepreneurs. Barnes & Thornburg's donations will contribute to All Square's Prison-to-Law Pipeline program, which offers ABA-accredited and ABA-approved paralegal and legal degrees within Minnesota prisons. One of its unique fundraising and skills development vehicles is a grilled cheese restaurant in Minneapolis.
- Project Pinnacle, located in Atlanta, provides

nonviolent offenders under the age of 25 with life skills training, legal rights and responsibilities education, and career development opportunities. The 10-year-old organization is dedicated to restoring young people to respectful positions in the community.

- Social Justice Learning Institute, located in Los Angeles, is dedicated to improving the education, health and well-being of youth and communities of color by empowering them to enact social change through research, training and community mobilization. The institute partners with organizations and businesses to provide academic support services, transform neighborhood conditions, and rectify injustice.
- Public Advocates in Community re-Entry (PACE), located in Indianapolis, provides currently and previously incarcerated individuals and their family members with transitional and pre-release services, employment and job placement services, and addiction support services. PACE also provides care-coordinated case management to assist with family reunification, transitional housing, substance use disorder treatment groups, mental health treatment, recovery support services, and education.

In addition to Lahn, who serves as president, Barnes & Thornburg's Racial and Social Justice Foundation's board members are Allen Baum, partner-in-charge of the Raleigh office; Michael Carrillo, managing partner of the Chicago office; and Roscoe Howard, managing partner of the Washington, D.C., office. Ex officio members are Steven Merkel, chief operating officer and the foundation's treasurer, Robert Grand, firm managing partner, and Dawn Rosemond, firm diversity partner.

The foundation will work hand in hand with Barnes & Thornburg's Racial Justice Committee, which is tasked with continually looking at how the firm works to address racial justice, both externally and internally.

In addition to the foundation's grants, Barnes & Thornburg attorneys plan to contribute time and professional experience in support of the above organizations.

To choose grantees, the foundation employed a rigorous scoring system to vet charitable organizations against specific criteria that align with its mission and goals.