

Littler Names Paul Bateman Chief Inclusion, Equity and Diversity Officer

Littler, the world's largest employment and labor law practice representing management, has named shareholder Paul Bateman the firm's first Chief Inclusion, Equity & Diversity Officer. The appointment of Bateman, who has served in a variety of leadership roles since joining the firm more than two decades ago, is one of the first actions taken by Erin Webber as Littler's new managing director.

In his new position, Bateman will be responsible for the strategic direction of the firm's inclusion, equity and diversity programs and initiatives. That includes the recently unveiled Breaking Through: Littler's D&I Comp Initiative, which aims to double the number of attorneys of color, women and LGBTQ+ shareholders in the top quartile of the firm's compensation system within five years.

Bateman will report directly to Webber and will also work with Littler's management committee, office managing shareholders, practice group leadership, affinity groups, committees, corporate staff and administrative professionals. In collaboration with the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Council, which is comprised of more than 20 lawyers and professional staff, Bateman will advance the firm's inclusion and equity strategy and its focus on recruiting, developing, retaining and promoting diverse talent at all levels.

Bateman joined Littler in 2000 and served as a member of the firm's Management Committee from 2006 to 2014. He has been an active member of Littler's Diversity & Inclusion Council since it was formed in 2003 and hosted the firm's first meeting for Bollo, an affinity group for Black/African American attorneys.

Bateman also has been active with the United Way and has served on the board of the Coordinated Advice & Referral Program for Legal Services (CARPLS) , a not-for-profit agency that provides those in need with legal advice in the areas of employment, housing, family and health.

With Webber's appointment and Kate Mrkonich Wilson's re-election on January 15 as Chair of the Board of Directors, Littler's top two leadership positions are now held by women. In addition, diverse members – attorneys that identify as women, of color and/or LGBTQ – comprise 67% of Littler's board and more than half of the management committee. Of the 26 attorneys elevated to shareholder and principal status in 2021, nearly 50% identify as of color and more than 60% identify as women.