

Sidley Names María D. Meléndez Chief Diversity Officer

Sidley Austin LLP is pleased to announce that it has named María D. Meléndez its new chief diversity officer. She will replace Sally Olson who has served as chief diversity officer at Sidley since 2011 and will be retiring from the firm May 1, 2020.

Previously a partner in Sidley's Commercial Litigation and Disputes practice, Meléndez has more than 25 years of experience in the litigation and arbitration of a broad range of high-stakes commercial disputes. From 2017 through 2019, Meléndez was named one of the "Top 250 Women in Litigation" by Benchmark Litigation. She served as a member of the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, including as New York chair from 2002 to 2016. Additionally, she was a member of the Recruiting of Associates Committee and the New York co-chair of the Summer Associate Program Committee. As chief diversity officer, Meléndez will devote all of her time to leading the firm's efforts to further advance and increase diversity and inclusion at the firm and beyond.

Meléndez's commitment to diversity and inclusion extends well beyond her work at Sidley. She is chair of the board of directors of LatinoJustice PRLDEF, a national civil rights organization using the power of the law, advocacy and education to advance and protect the rights of Latinos in the U.S. She also serves as the firm's representative to Her Justice, a provider of legal services on matters of domestic abuse and child custody to disadvantaged women in New York. Meléndez is a recipient of the Puerto Rican Bar Association's Flor de Maga award that is given to trailblazing women who have demonstrated leadership skills in their fields of

expertise, who have been models to other women and girls, and who have advocated for a more equitable society.