



## **Hard Roads Require Will of Steel: The Obstacles Black Women Face in Law Firms and How to Be a Champion and an Ally.**

### Description:

Progress to increase diversity in the legal profession has been slow, with only small gains for women and almost none for women of color over the last decade. Women of color continue to be significantly underrepresented in equity partnership ranks at majority owned law firms. According to our 2020 Vault/MCCA Law Firm Diversity Survey Report, women of color comprised 3.3% of equity partners, up from 3.1% in 2018. Black/African American women have seen the least gains and continue to represent less than 1% of equity partners. These numbers are even more disappointing when we look deeper into our longitudinal data where progress has essentially been flat the last twelve years. Our research shows in 2007 (before the 2008 recession) Black/African American women comprised less than .5% of equity partners at majority owned firms.

John Lewis stated, “Ours is not the struggle of one day, one week or one year. Ours is the struggle of a lifetime, or maybe even many lifetimes, and each one of us in every generation must do our part.”

This panel will discuss what clients can do to amplify their efforts to ensure their women of color outside counsel have an equal chance to develop and succeed. This outstanding panel of Black/African American women partners will share their professional journeys, the obstacles they have faced and how clients can be their champions and allies.

### Reference Materials:

- [2020 Vault/MCCA Law Firm Diversity Survey Report](#)
- [New Millennium, Same Glass Ceiling? The Impact of Law Firm Compensation Systems on Women](#)
- [The Challenges Of Being A Black Female Lawyer In America](#)
- [Women, Minorities Make Few Law Partnership Gains, Report Says](#)
- [Why Women and People of Color in Law Still Hear “You Don’t Look Like a Lawyer”](#)
- [Black, Female Lawyer Team Led Adtalem’s \\$1.48B Walden Deal \(1\)](#)
- [Left Behind Left Out and The Hurdles, Hassles, and Heartaches of Achieving Long-Term Legal Careers for Women of Color](#)
- [Why Black Women Are Leaving Big Law \(And What Firms Can Do About It\)](#)
- [Intersectionality and the Careers of Black Women Lawyers](#)
- [Law-Firm Clients Demand More Black Attorneys](#)
- [A black partner’s perspective on why law firms are failing at diversity](#)
- [“Talent Is Everywhere, Opportunity Is Not” - Two Black Female Lawyers On The Importance of Education for All](#)