



(L-R) Jennifer Newstead, CLO of Meta; Laurence Midler, GC of CBRE; and Craig Beazer, GC of Lincoln Financial. Courtesy photos

NEWS

## MCCA Adds Three Top Legal Executives to Its Board of Directors

The new members join from Meta, Lincoln Financial and CBRE.

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🕒 5 minute read

Diversity

[Trudy Knockless](#) →

Reporter

### What You Need to Know

- Jennifer Newstead is chief legal officer at Meta.
- Craig T. Beazer is executive vice president and general counsel at Lincoln Financial.
- Laurence Midler is executive vice president, general counsel and chief risk officer of CBRE.

The Minority Corporate Counsel Association has appointed three new members to its board of directors: Jennifer Newstead, chief legal officer of Meta; Craig T. Beazer, executive vice president and general counsel of Lincoln Financial; and Laurence Midler, executive vice president, general counsel and chief risk officer of CBRE.

With the appointments of Newstead, Beazer and Midler, MCCA's board consists of 17 members, including members from Bristol Myers Squibb, Vanguard, Tyson Foods and U.S. Steel.

"[Beazer, Midler and Newstead] are joining the MCCA board at a time when corporate America must ensure the longevity of its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. In addition to championing racial justice and equity as leaders in the legal field, they are guiding companies to know better, do better and lead better—to ultimately bring systemic change to the corporate landscape," Jean Lee, CEO of MCCA, said in a statement.

At Meta, Newstead oversees all global legal and corporate governance matters. Prior to joining Meta in 2019, she was a partner at Davis Polk & Wardwell. She has also served in senior roles in government, including as the Senate-confirmed legal adviser of the U.S. Department of State, as general counsel of the White House Office of Management and Budget, and as a senior official at the U.S. Department of Justice.

"I am thrilled to be joining MCCA's board," Newstead said. "The organization's mission is to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the legal profession, and I am deeply committed to this goal."

She added that, as a board member, she will have the opportunity "to work alongside other general counsels and legal leaders to explore ideas and solutions that hopefully will help us collectively make progress beyond stated goals and drive real cultural change."

Event

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As executive vice president and general counsel of Lincoln Financial, Beazer oversees all activities for the legal, compliance, government relations and corporate secretary functions of the company, and provides strategic counsel to the CEO, senior management team and board of directors.

"I have always felt a deep personal commitment to making the workplace more diverse and inclusive. I decided to join MCCA's board of directors in honor of this commitment, and I look forward to the work we will do to continue to transform the legal industry for the better," Beazer said in a statement.

Midler joined CBRE in April 2004 as executive vice president and general counsel and oversees the company's legal, compliance and risk management functions. He helped lead the firm through its IPO, as well as several transformational acquisitions.

In a statement, Midler said he can't wait to dive in and participate in MCCA's most key initiatives.

"As a general counsel, I feel the moral imperative to proactively work to improve diversity, equity and inclusion at law firms as well as corporate legal departments, and especially for women of color, who continue to face disproportionately more challenges in this profession," he said.

Lee told Corporate Counsel that the MCCA is beyond grateful to the new board members who have accepted the call to serve their community and for their commitment to realizing MCCA's mission and vision.

"They provide the hope and momentum for MCCA's work. Without them and our board, it would not be possible to achieve the important milestones we have established," she said.

She added that despite some companies reprioritizing DEI efforts, having leaders who are doubling down is inspirational for MCCA and the work ahead.

"Our strategy is to continue our drumbeat of the importance of disaggregated data, transparency and accountability to drive systemic changes to ensure diverse voices are heard and diverse lawyers are seen," Lee said.

She said the trio will bring a global perspective and how they are managing diverse talent, creating a culture of inclusion and ensuring equity for all.

"Their challenges and wins will be important for others who are starting out in their DEI journey," Lee said.

Lee said the challenge MCCA now faces is scaling its efforts to accelerate impact, but with the commitment of the new board members and its full board, she is confident that the organization will leverage their experience to deliver more results in improving DEI.

She added that no one person can solve MCCA's problems because they are multifaceted and extremely complicated.

"But we are heartened by their steadfast commitment and do expect that together we will see the greatest progress in our profession that we have in 25 years. I know that is a very tall order, but we are confident that it will be more than minimal and we expect to see improvements in accountability, data and driving change in recruiting, retention and promotion of women and diverse attorneys."

"While we've all been heartened by recent, widespread corporate commitments to advancing representation, we also know there's so much work ahead," Wanji Walcott, MCCA board chair and executive vice president, chief legal officer and general counsel at Discover Financial services, said in a statement.

She added that Beazer, Midler and Newstead are committed to helping corporate America stay the course.

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