

## [Stoll Keenon Ogden names new partners; represents push to advance diversity in legal industry](#)

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### **Body**

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Eight associates of Stoll Keenon Ogden PLLC are **now** partners of the Louisville-based law firm.

The firm announced Kathryn Beck, Will Cartwright, Kaitlyn George, Chad Hardin, Lindsey Howard, Emily Mattingly, Amy Miles and Joel Nagle as its newest partners. All the promotions were for Louisville-based attorneys, aside from Cartwright, who works in the Evansville, Indiana, office and Nagle, who works in the Indianapolis office of the firm.

The promotions come across a variety of **industry** practice groups and reflect the firm's push to advance women and other minorities in the legal **industry**. Earlier this year, Stoll Keenon Ogden additionally promoted two more female partners, Katie Langan of the Louisville office and Krista Lockyear, who joined the Evansville office as an equity partner of the firm.

In September, Stoll Keenon Ogden was [one of 100 firms across the country recognized with a Mansfield 3.0 Certification in 2020](#). The Mansfield Rule, named after Arabella Mansfield, the first woman named to the United States bar in 1869, looks to give law firms a framework for increasing the amount of women and underrepresented groups in the legal **industry**.

Dana Howard, a partner in the firm's Lexington office and leader of its Mansfield Certification effort, explained the certification is not a quota system or even mandatory, but instead it looks to set goals for law firms to consider.

Under Mansfield, as the firm looks to promote or hire any position, she said Stoll Keenon Ogden has an obligation that at least 30% of the candidates up for consideration either be women, attorneys of color, LGBTQ, or lawyers with disabilities, among other underrepresented groups.

The Mansfield Certification itself is issued from Diversity Lab, an incubator for innovative ideas and solutions that boost diversity and inclusion in law. Diversity Lab measures whether firms have effectively considered at least 30% of its candidates for leadership and governance roles, equity partner promotions, formal client pitch opportunities and senior lateral positions came from underrepresented groups.

"While it doesn't require you to do so, in order to correspond with that, our firm has taken initiatives in our diversity and inclusion committees to have our own strategic goals that complement the Mansfield program," Dana Howard said in an interview. "We are looking at revamping our recruiting and hiring processes to better conform with best practices for diversity and inclusion, we have engaged a consultant on diversity and inclusion issues, we are looking into an allyship program and trying to pilot other programs and initiatives that will help the inclusive-equity part of diversity and inclusion."

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Of Stoll Keenon Ogden's 138 attorneys, 37 of those partners and associates are women and five more partners and associates are from minority groups. Female and minority partners additionally make up 33% of the firm's equity membership and 38% of the firm's leadership positions. The same group additionally comprises 100% of the firm's nonattorney, senior staff leadership.

Stoll Keenon Ogden, **Louisville's sixth-largest** law firm, is headquartered locally at 500 W. Jefferson St. It also has regional offices in Lexington, Frankfort and Hodgenville, Kentucky, as well as two offices in Indiana - Evansville and Indianapolis.

Doug Barr, managing partner for the firm, said the Mansfield Certification program is meant to create opportunities more so than guarantee outcomes, but the elevation of women and underrepresented groups is just part of what the firm does, he said.

"The fact that seven of the last 10 (partners) were women is just part of our plan," Barr said in an interview. "We highly value diversity, because it adds to diversity of thought, diversity of approach to how to solve our clients' problems, and I couldn't be happier about it."

Barr said many firms are on the precipice of a generational turnover as many older partners at firms around the country retire every day, which is why it's important to the firm to be intentional in how it recruits and promotes its next generation of leaders.

The only hitch in that preparation has been Covid-19, he said. Where young lawyers could sit beside their more experienced colleagues and learn by example as they take a deposition or present a case, he said the firm is putting extra emphasis into solving that challenge.

In fact, with many legal proceedings happening over Zoom **now** or other video conferencing technologies, it's actually easier to include younger associates in on these learning experiences.

"You just have to be mindful of making sure that you present opportunities for people to participate that way," Barr said.

Lindsey Howard, **one** of the new partners promoted, said moving up the ladder in this way means everything to her. When she was in law school, she said the economy wasn't great and hiring prospects weren't either, which gave her a lot of anxiety when she entered into the field until she landed at SKO.

Lindsey Howard has been with the firm since 2016 and in addition to her practice groups which focus on business and commercial disputes, she also serves on both the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Personnel Committee at Stoll Keenon Ogden.

She said a goal of hers, alongside two of the other new partners, George and Miles, is to revise the interview and hiring processes to make them fairer, by asking the same set of standardized questions to each candidate and going off their resume experience alone.

"When the firm made all of us partner on Saturday, it felt like the membership at SKO was literally putting their money where their mouth is. To make five women partner at the same time says, 'We're not just saying things, we're actually going to do it,'" she said in an interview. "I think the most important thing I want to emphasize is the need for young diverse or young female attorneys to seek out a mentor, to seek out a place that sets you up with mentorship opportunities.

"It's really the only way to maneuver the legal field with any kind of speed. The most important thing for professional development is to make sure you land somewhere that's invested in your personal and professional development."

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