



## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

At Cox Castle, we believe our greatest asset is our people. Individuals with diverse backgrounds enrich our work environment, add value to the legal services we provide, enhance our culture and connect us to our clients and communities. We strive to create a positive work environment that encourages awareness and understanding of our differences so that we can cultivate and preserve a culture of inclusion. Through the efforts of all our people, we endeavor to cultivate an environment focused on equality, empowerment and respect, in service of our shared commitment to client service.

### We strive to:

- Build an inclusive and welcoming culture that encourages, supports and celebrates our diverse voices
- Provide training and tools to build the skills and capacity to work together in an inclusive manner
- Recruit and retain a diverse workforce
- Equitably advance individuals within the firm and its leadership
- Continuously grow and learn from each other

### A Culture of Inclusion

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is deeply ingrained in the fabric of the firm. In 1987, Cox Castle became the first Top 50 Los Angeles County law firm to have a managing partner of Hispanic heritage, Mario Camara. Today, the firm's leadership continues to prioritize achieving diversity and inclusivity throughout the firm. In collaboration with the firm's other committees, Cox Castle's leadership promotes an environment where all team members can flourish.

Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee consists of partners, associates and staff who are passionate about creating a welcoming workplace. The DEI Committee works closely with our management, professional development and recruiting committees to ensure that the firm's policies, programs and recruiting efforts support diversity within the firm and the legal community at large. DEI Committee members also participate in numerous external events and programs, ensuring both active involvement as well as sponsorship by the firm.

Cox Castle has achieved **certification** in the Diversity Lab's Midsize Mansfield Rule. As explained by Diversity Lab, the "overall goal of the Midsize Mansfield Rule is to increase the representation of diverse lawyers in leadership by broadening the pool of women, LGBTQ+ lawyers, lawyers with disabilities and/or racial/ethnic minority lawyers who are considered for entry-level and lateral attorney job openings, leadership opportunities, equity partner promotions and



opportunities to connect with clients.”

Cox Castle is currently participating in the 2021-2023 cohort of the Midsize Mansfield Rule certification process. Our participation in this program builds upon Cox Castle’s continued commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion within the firm and its leadership and adds accountability and benchmarks to measure our progress.

## **Scholarships and Legal Pipeline Programs**

In addition to our internal efforts, Cox Castle promotes efforts to build a pipeline of diverse future lawyers. Over a decade ago, Cox Castle was instrumental in establishing the Diversity Scholarship program of California ChangeLawyers (formerly California Bar Foundation), a statewide foundation that works to empower the next generation of diverse lawyers, judges and activists. Cox Castle annually sponsors a 1L Diversity Scholarship for first-year law students and actively mentors its scholarship recipients through law school and beyond.

By honoring these future lawyers and the potential transformative changes they represent, Cox Castle invests not just in each individual law student, but also in the profession’s ability to build a better justice system for all Californians. Alicia Vaz currently serves on the ChangeLawyers Board and is the Chair of its scholarships committee.

In 2017, Cox Castle launched the Phillip R. Nicholson Memorial Scholarship Fund for Real Estate Excellence at USC Gould School of Law. The fund awards annual scholarships to second- and third-year USC law students who have a strong interest in pursuing a career in real estate law, with specific consideration given to those who are the first in their families to attend college or law school.

In 2020, Cox Castle created the Cox Castle & Nicholson LLP Endowed Scholarship in Law at UCLA, which awards scholarships to incoming law students who demonstrate significant financial need and have confronted considerable obstacles in life, such as socio-economic disadvantages, disability, being the first in their family to attend college, attending under-resourced schools or other notable hardships or challenges.

## **Organizations and Community Outreach**

We are proud to be involved with several leading organizations and events committed to diversity in the legal profession, including:

- Alliance “Leaders of Change” Sponsorship
- American Indian Cultural Center
- Asia Society of Southern California Annual Gala
- Asian Pacific American Bar Association (APABA)
- Asian Pacific American Women Lawyers Alliance (APAWLA)
- Berkeley La Raza Law Students Association



- Berkeley Law Cruz Reynoso Fellowship
- Berkeley Law Foundation
- Berkeley Law Women's Association
- BIA's Annual Women's Leadership Conference
- California ChangeLawyers 1L Diversity Scholarship
- California Lawyers Foundation Diversity and Inclusion Environmental Fellowship Program
- LACBA Diversity + Inclusion Conference
- LACBA Diversity Task Force Sponsorship
- LACBA Color of Law Sponsorship
- Latina Lawyers Bar Association
- Orange County Asian American Bar Association (OCAABA)
- UCLA Asian Pacific American Law Journal (APALJ)
- UCLA Asian Pacific Islander Law Student Association (APILSA)
- UCLA Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
- UCLA Law Firm Diversity Reception
- USC First Generation Scholarship Program
- USC Latino Law Students Association: Judges and Lawyers Night
- USC Ross Minority Program in Real Estate Gala