



Angela Reddock-Wright, founder and managing partner of the Reddock Law Group of Los Angeles and a neutral with Judicate West. Courtesy photo

COMMENTARY

# The Future of Workplace Equality

The workplace of the future will be unlike what we've known before. In the post-pandemic world, workers are open to changing jobs and finding companies that align with their personal values systems.

February 15, 2022 at 03:25 PM

🕒 5 minute read

[Diversity](#)

By Angela Reddock-Wright

Black History Month is a good time to look at what has happened in the American workplace in the last year. Many businesses put into practice commitments made following George Floyd's death and subsequent protests. Diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) programs have made a meaningful difference in many workplaces. Companies have started listening to workers, hoping to stanch the COVID "[great resignation](#)" we've all read about.

The pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement challenged employers in ways never seen before. They forced businesses to elevate the ways in which they viewed and addressed equality in the workplace. Despite significant changes over the past year, we still have a long way to go before equality is truly universal. This month, Brian Flores, former coach of the Miami Dolphins, charged the [National Football League](#) and team owners with fostering a racially biased work environment, and his lawsuit has shined a spotlight on alleged continued disparities in the NFL as well as other major employers.

The 1964 [Civil Rights Act](#) expressly outlawed discrimination on the basis of race in American workplaces. But statistics show that [Black Americans](#) account for just 5% of manager positions in the 80 Fortune 500 companies for which data were available, compared with a 13% share of the U.S. population. Hispanics and Latinos represent 6% of manager positions versus an 18.4% share of the population.

The good news is that companies across the country have embraced Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) programs, which can help identify disparities in recruiting, hiring, pay and promotion. But these programs are only as good as the processes and guidelines companies adopt to ensure their success, and they should be part of a larger corporate commitment to diversity. There is a need not only to increase the percentage of people of color among the rank and file workforce, but also in the C-suite and on corporate boards of directors. California [Senate Bill 826](#) and [Assembly Bill 979](#), along with similar laws in [ten other states](#), are tools to help create gender and ethnic diversity on publicly traded corporate boards.

## Diversity Matters to Clients

How does your firm compare on diversity? Where are your competitors' strengths and weaknesses with Diversity? Use Legal Compass to compare firms on key metrics of race and gender diversity, and find out which firms are Mansfield Certified.

[Get More Information](#)

As companies have honed their approaches to DEI, many have become outspoken on issues concerning the fight for social justice. A recent panel of the [Forbes Business Development Council](#) highlighted some key benefits of strong DEI programs, including increased sales, greater employee loyalty, and lower turnover. These companies include such well-known brands as Facebook, Zoho and Werkz.

Yet even when companies take steps to eliminate overt bias, unconscious bias can be present. Many jobs result from word-of-mouth among people who are demographically alike, often leaving minorities in the cold. [Black workers](#) often report that they've been rated lower than their white counterparts, and [many minorities](#) perceive themselves to be subject to greater scrutiny than their white counterparts and at greater risk of being fired.

This is where COVID, despite its devastating impact on people's health, has provided a silver lining. The pandemic has fundamentally changed attitudes about work. Employees have raised the bar in terms of what they expect from their employers, as evidenced by the "great resignation" as well as protests, internal complaints, and lawsuits alleging race discrimination, failure to promote and other violations.

Over the past year, workers have [openly challenged](#) employers to address issues of race and DEI in the workplace. Although worker activism is nothing new, this new activism is not simply about wages and working conditions. Workers have come to understand the impact corporations have on society, and they now realize the power they themselves wield. Employers are increasingly expected to be good corporate citizens, and those who fail to respond could see lower employee morale and higher rates of attrition.

As companies have implemented DEI programs to broaden the look and feel of their workforces, they are also being challenged by their workers to open the channels for dialogue and action on a broad range of social, cultural, and moral issues. Those who are unable to do this risk losing not just their workers and revenue, but also their standing in the global business community.

For an increasingly vocal and activist contingent of workers, the question ultimately boils down to whether they can feel good about the companies where they work. Is their workplace truly welcoming to minorities? Can they speak their minds without fear of retaliation or retribution? Does their work help make the world a better place?

Finally, and in growing numbers, workers are unashamedly demanding what they want from companies. They are signaling a desire to hold employers to a [higher standard](#). More and more employees want to work for companies where they are valued and where they feel an alignment with their own personal [mission and values](#).

The workplace of the future will be unlike what we've known before. In the post-pandemic world, workers are open to changing jobs and finding companies that align with their personal values systems. In order to succeed, employers and employees alike must join forces together and have a meeting of the minds to achieve their common goals—great, healthy, and thriving workplaces that provide growth and opportunity for all.

***[Angela Reddock-Wright](#)** is founder and managing partner of the Reddock Law Group of Los Angeles and a neutral with Judicate West. She is an employment and labor law attorney, mediator, arbitrator, and workplace and Title IX investigator.*

---

## You Might Like

February 11, 2022

### **Broadening the Pipeline: How Reed Smith's New LA Leader Is Creating a Landing Pad for Attorneys**

By [Jessie Yount](#)

🕒 7 minute read

February 15, 2022

### **Building Community: Nixon Peabody's New California Leaders on Growth for a Younger Partnership**

By [Jessie Yount](#)

🕒 6 minute read

February 09, 2022

### **The Art and Science of Jury Selection in California**

By Kevin Mayer and Jackie Karama

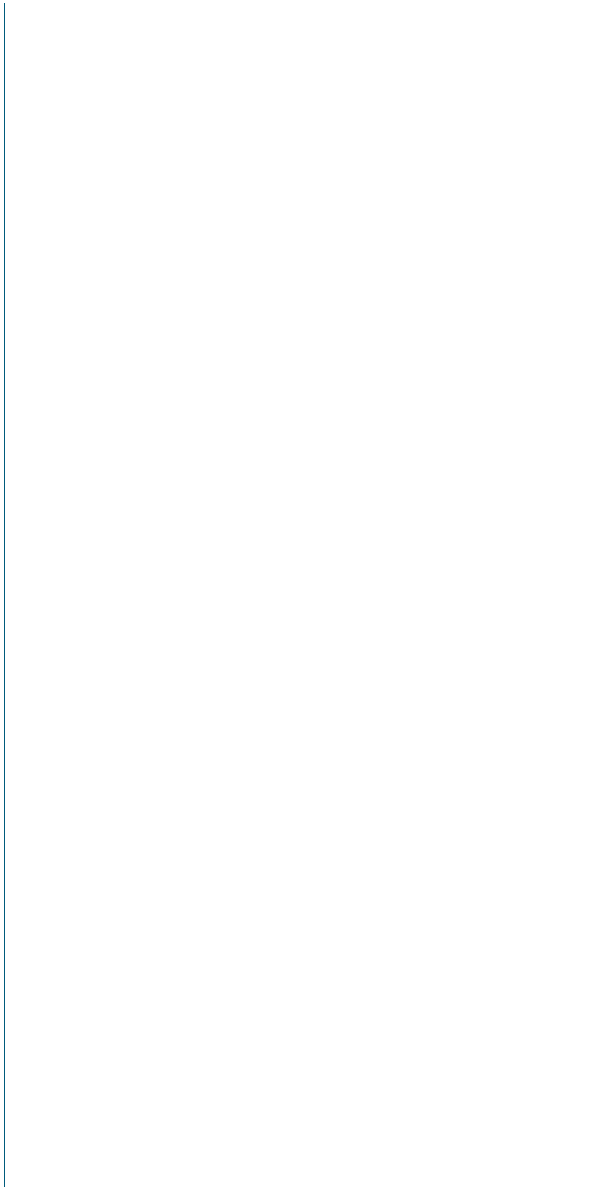
🕒 13 minute read

February 02, 2022

### **Disney Fights Shareholder Push for Transparency on Race, Gender Pay Disparities**

By [Phillip Bantz](#)

🕒 3 minute read



TRENDING STORIES

**Arent Fox Buys Property in the Metaverse, Becoming First Big Law Firm With Serious Presence in the Virtual World**

THE AMERICAN LAWYER

**Fourth-Year Associates on Cravath Scale Earned \$400K.**



TRENDING LAW FIRMS THIS WEEK

[On My Radar](#) [All Law.com](#) ▼

- 1 . Morgan & Morgan  
38 new blips
- 2 . Latham & Watkins  
25 new blips
- 3 . Kirkland & Ellis  
20 new blips
- 4 . Jackson Lewis  
12 new blips
- 5 . Littler Mendelson  
10 new blips

[Open Law.com Radar](#)

LAW.COM | PRO

**Law Firm Life Amid Omicron: Clients’ New RFP Question, Making Offices Attractive and Monitoring Productivity**

**Our 2022 Watch List: Law.com**

**How Can Other Firms Respond?**

[THE AMERICAN LAWYER](#)

**More Big Law Partners Are Heading to Virtual Law Firms**

[THE AMERICAN LAWYER](#)

**'They're Passing the Blame': Associates Hit Back at Partner Complaints About Salaries**

[INTERNATIONAL EDITION](#)

**Law Firm Expenses Surge,**

**Dampening Outlook for 2022**

[THE AMERICAN LAWYER](#)

**Pro's Global Team Highlights**

**Key Trends to Keep an Eye on This Year**

**Hiring & Expansion: Navigating the Opportunities and Risk**



**Mentioned in a Law.com story?**

License our industry-leading legal content to extend your thought leadership and build your brand.

**LEARN MORE**

**FEATURED FIRMS**

**Law Offices of Gary Martin  
Hays & Associates P.C.**  
(470) 294-1674

**Law Offices of Mark E.  
Salomone**  
(857) 444-6468

**Smith & Hassler**  
(713) 739-1250

**More From ALM**

**CLE Center**



**Premium Subscription**

**Team Accounts**

**Bundle Subscriptions**

With this subscription you will receive unlimited access to high quality, online, on-demand premium content from well-respected faculty in the legal industry. This is perfect for attorneys licensed in multiple jurisdictions or for attorneys that have fulfilled their CLE requirement but need to access resourceful information for their practice areas.

[View Now](#)

Our Team Account subscription service is for legal teams of four or more attorneys. Each attorney is granted unlimited access to high quality, on-demand premium content from well-respected faculty in the legal industry along with administrative access to easily manage CLE for the entire team.

[View Now](#)

Gain access to some of the most knowledgeable and experienced attorneys with our 2 bundle options! Our Compliance bundles are curated by CLE Counselors and include current legal topics and challenges within the industry. Our second option allows you to build your bundle and strategically select the content that pertains to your needs. Both options are priced the same.

[View Now](#)

[Go to CLE Center](#)

Legal Newswire

World Services Group Announces Network Rebrand with Launch of New Website

Legal Scholars Debate First Amendment Issues

ELMS ALERT: The Klein Law Firm Announces a Lead Plaintiff Deadline of April 4, 2...

Stoneweg US Announces Pam Linden as EVP, Chief Legal Officer, and Key Member of ...

[Submit a press release](#)



# Sign Up Today and Never Miss Another Story

As a part of your digital membership, you can sign up for an unlimited number of a wide range of complimentary newsletters. Visit your My Account page to make your selections. Get the timely legal news and critical analysis you cannot afford to miss. Tailored just for you. In your inbox. Every day.

[Subscribe to ALM Legal Publications Newsletters](#)



## LAW.COM

The industry-leading media platform offering competitive intelligence to prepare for today and anticipate opportunities for future success.

[About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)



 Copyright © 2022 ALM Media Properties, LLC. All Rights Reserved