

## South Asian Bar Association Names Haynes and Boone Diversity Champion

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The South Asian Bar Association of North America honored Haynes Boone with its Diversity Champion Award at the group's national convention in July in Washington, D.C.

The award goes to a corporation or law firm that "demonstrates a commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion in the legal profession." Criteria include internal and external efforts to increase diversity; innovative approaches used; percentage of minority partners and associates; types of diversity programs sponsored; and pro bono initiatives. The organization defines diversity as including race and ethnic origin, gender, physical abilities, religious beliefs, age, sexual orientation, and/or perceived differences.

The award was presented at a convention that attracted some 600 attendees. Haynes Boone Partner Whitney Remily, who practices Intellectual Property in Washington, D.C., and Associate Punam Kaji with the Houston office's Labor and Employment Practice Group accepted the award for the firm.

Haynes Boone's Attorney Diversity and Inclusion Committee, composed of partners, associates, counsel and key members of management, drives the firm's efforts to enact equality-related policies and programs; implement innovative initiatives to increase minority and female hiring and retention; and address issues affecting working parents, LGBT attorneys and other groups.

Among other efforts, the firm has doubled the size of its 1L Diversity Scholars Program, which provides stipends and firm clerkships to minority first-year law students, and hosts high school students for summer training sessions to get them interested in legal careers early. Haynes Boone also devotes considerable resources to retaining and promoting diverse lawyers, strives to include diverse lawyers in decision-making and has made implicit bias training mandatory for all partners and associates.

Kaji and Poorav Rohatgi, a Haynes Boone litigation associate in Houston, serve on the board of SABA's Houston chapter, which nominated the firm. "It speaks volumes that the SABA Houston board, including lawyers from other firms, thought of our firm as a leader in this area," Kaji said. "Our recent implicit bias training requirement for all lawyers is one example of how we continue to find proactive ways to value diversity and inclusion."

The firm's diversity leadership has been recognized by *Euromoney*, *Law360 Minority Report* and *Profiles in Diversity Journal*. Earlier in 2017, the *Vault* rankings put the firm in the Top 20 in the United States for diversity, and *The American Lawyer* named Haynes Boone the most diverse large firm in Texas in 2016.