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Inaugural Women in Law Hackathon Generates Groundbreaking Ideas That Will Be Piloted by 36 Top Law Firms

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San Francisco—December 6, 2016—The inaugural Women in Law Hackathon – created by Diversity Lab in collaboration with Stanford Law School and Bloomberg Law – brought together 54 high-level partners from law firms across the country to increase gender parity in the top ranks of the legal profession. The partners worked together with industry experts and Stanford Law students for six months to create innovative solutions aimed at advancing and retaining experienced women lawyers in law firms.

The ideas presented at the conclusion of the Hackathon ranged from revamping the law firm reward/values system and creating a blind compensation process designed to close the pay gap to a team-based and technology-driven sponsorship initiative focused on supporting women associates' rise to partnership. Other ideas included an adapted version of the NFL's Rooney Rule to increase the number of qualified women considered for leadership roles in law firms.

Because of the overwhelming interest in the ideas presented at the Hackathon, Diversity Lab has organized a "Hackathon Alliance" to work with the law firms that want to implement and pilot the ideas.

To date, 36 law firms – nearly two-thirds of the participating Hackathon firms – have signed on to implement one or more of the ideas in 2017. Several legal departments have also agreed to partner with Diversity Lab

and the participating law firms to support the implementation of the ideas.

“The goal of the Hackathon Alliance is to help forward-thinking firms experiment with new ideas that have the potential to move the diversity needle forward. We are publicly sharing the Hackathon results now and going forward so that everyone can benefit from our combined efforts,” said Caren Ulrich Stacy, founder of Diversity Lab and creator of the Women in Law Hackathon.

“As a woman who came up through Gibson Dunn’s system, I’ve seen how hard our firm works to promote diversity and the advancement of women. But it is incredibly rewarding to know that we don’t have to work in isolation. Teaming up with partners from more than 50 different law firms to work alongside law students and diversity specialists to advance and promote women in law was incredibly rewarding,” said Gibson Dunn partner, Perlette Michèle Jura. “I can’t wait to see what we accomplish in 2017, as we implement the ground-breaking ideas that we developed during the Hackathon. I encourage the entire legal community to join us in finally doing away with this historic industry-wide problem.”

The ideas being developed by Diversity Lab and implemented at the Hackathon Alliance firms include:

- **Mansfield Rule** – The Mansfield Rule, named for the first woman to pass the bar exam in the United States, requires firms to interview and consider a certain percentage of qualified women candidates for key leadership roles in law firms, including managing partner, practice group leadership, and executive committee membership.
- **OnTrack for Partner, Sponsorship Team & App** – The OnTrack solution provides support to mid- and senior-level women associates to increase the number who advance into partnership. It involves a holistic approach comprised of four entities working in concert to support, guide, and develop partnership-ready associates, including: (1) a team of firm partners and management; (2) an external executive coach; (3) a legal department executive who will serve as a client coach; (4) and a peer network of similarly situated women lawyers. The solution also includes an app and dashboard designed to boost the results of sponsorship by gamifying these activities to encourage Millennials and Xers to take responsibility for their career planning and to create an accountability process to ensure sponsors follow through with their commitments.
- **Five Year Moment** – Applying metrics-driven and unique experiential solutions, the “Five Year Moment” program aims to eliminate systemic and individual barriers to business development success for women lawyers during the two to three years prior to promotion through the two to three years following elevation to partner.
- **CompFirmation** – This data-based compensation tool leverages language optimization and blind review technology to help firms disrupt systemic unconscious bias and ultimately close the law firm pay gap. Offering a menu of several customizable tools, the solution applies to both the front and back ends of partner compensation decisions, including a Blind Data

Optimizer that uses regression analysis to review compensation decisions and flag results that appear inconsistent with a firm's compensation values and guidelines.

- SMART Rewards/Values – SMART (Solutions to Measure, Advance and Reward Talent) is a gender-neutral reporting and evaluation system that promotes the retention and advancement of women by aligning firm values and culture with compensation and promotion. The goal of SMART is to balance contributions and credit, realign rewards with value systems, reward non-billable work that adds value to the firm, encourage sharing previously undervalued work, and promote transparency to help disrupt unconscious bias.
- Power Development Program – The PDP is an innovative and multidimensional twist on the traditional secondment concept. It immerses two generations of women lawyers – a partner and an associate – with clients for 12 months to learn their business, service their matters, and eventually gain economic credit for the relationship. The goal is to enlarge the women's economic influence at the firm and position them to become key relationship partners for the client, which will positively impact compensation and promotion considerations.

"I am thrilled that so many other firms are joining Weil to pilot the Hackathon ideas," said Anne Cappella, a patent litigation partner and member of the Women@Weil firmwide leadership board at Weil, Gotshal & Manges. "As a member of the team that developed the Mansfield Rule idea, I believe it can play a powerful role in diversifying law firm leadership and will create more opportunities for many qualified women lawyers."

"Joining the Hackathon Alliance was a very easy decision for us. Baker Botts has a long standing history as diversity trailblazers having been an inaugural participant in the OnRamp Fellowship and the Women in Law Hackathon — innovations created by Diversity Lab — and we are eager to implement the OnTrack for Partner solution as part of our robust initiatives to retain and advance women lawyers," said John Martin, partner in charge of the Palo Alto office and firmwide Technology Sector Chair at Baker Botts.

"The Hackathon has been among the most inspiring initiatives in which I have participated, and we were thrilled as a firm to participate," said Brett Bartlett, chair of Seyfarth Shaw's Labor & Employment Department in Atlanta. "By throwing lawyers together into a paradigm unfamiliar to most law firm partners, the Hackathon compiled some of the busiest and most innovative attorneys in leadership across BigLaw law firms and inspired them to identify and solve the challenges impeding female attorneys' success. The process was electric. The results were enlightening. And while we certainly still have a long way to go before we see a balanced number of women (versus men) leading and succeeding within our nation's top law firms, Phase II of the Hackathon will, I am convinced, illuminate our path towards fulfilling that ultimate vision."

"The Women in Law Hackathon has proven to be a powerful way to

improve the retention and advancement of women in the law. It clearly demonstrates that the challenge of creating a more diverse legal community can be met when the profession and our clients come together and embrace new ways of thinking,” said Tracey Cohen, Q.C., partner at Fasken Martineau. “We look forward to putting the knowledge and insight from the Hackathon into practice at Fasken Martineau.”

“O’Melveny was compelled to participate in the Women in Law Hackathon because we recognize that diversity in the legal profession is a business imperative for our firm and for our clients,” said Seth Aronson, partner at O’Melveny & Myers. “We are excited that the Hackathon ideas have the potential to create new approaches to advance women in the legal profession and we are working to identify those actions we can implement in our firm.”

“Bloomberg Law is excited to continue to support the groundbreaking work being done by the Hackathon Alliance,” said said Melanie Heller, Vice President and General Manager of Bloomberg Law. “The solutions developed are impressively inventive, and we are proud to have sponsored this initiative knowing that the firms will take action on these ideas, moving beyond simply talking about the lack of the women in law firm leadership.”

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