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# FOCUS

## A Message From the President

Michael Eckhardt



Michael J. Eckhardt  
SVP, Chief Risk Officer,  
General Counsel &  
Secretary  
Wawa, Inc.

Dear ACC Greater Philadelphia Members and Friends:

Happy New Year! As we start the new year and turn the page on the challenges and uncertainties of 2020, I would first like to thank you all for your support of our Chapter as we

navigated through the last nine months. Our Immediate Past President, Jackie Meredith-Batchelor, led our Chapter with a calm and steady resolve, with a focus on providing you, our members, with best-in-class substantive programming while maintaining many of our social events in the “new” (and temporary) normal of virtual gatherings. This year will begin much the way last year ended in terms of our programming and social events—we will spend time engaging and learning via Zoom with an optimism that we will be able to host in-person events as early as the end of the second quarter.

Despite all of last year’s challenges, your Chapter remains in a healthy place. Our membership has grown to a new high of over 1,700 members. We continue to enjoy overwhelming support from our Sponsors. **Cozen O’Connor** is our top Diamond Sponsor while **Faegre Drinker** and **Dechert** take up the Emerald sponsorships. **Armstrong Teasdale** and **Morgan**

**Lewis** are the Chapter’s new Platinum sponsors. In total, we have 26 sustaining sponsors who will provide over 60 CLE credits this year, at 14 Institutes (with at least one Institute every month except for April) and our **13<sup>th</sup> annual In-House Counsel Conference** over two days in April. In addition to the **IHCC** and our **CLE Institutes**, we are excited to launch our first ever **Women Lawyers Summit**. The **Women Lawyers Summit** will be a full-day program, consisting of substantive programming, and career and development workshops with a focus on issues unique to women in-house counsel. We were disappointed to postpone this Summit last year but we remain committed to providing cutting-edge, relevant programming to our members. Our 2021 programming calendar can be found [HERE](#) and is frequently updated.

As our profession and our companies reflect on the racial injustice in our country, the Chapter’s vision for 2021 is to utilize the programming, events and thought leadership of our Chapter’s members to continue a dialogue on how we can move forward to create a more inclusive, equal and diverse profession. Our Chapter will work with our members and Sponsors to establish opportunities for the in-house community to discuss and develop best practices and resources to promote racial understanding and diversity.

In early January, our Chapter’s Board started this journey with a conversation on

## In-Transition Membership

If you are a member who is in transition, take advantage of the opportunity to continue your membership **AT NO COST**. ACC will waive dues for existing members for up to one year, and offer a reduced membership rate for up to an additional two years if you are displaced but actively seeking a new in-house position. [[In-Transition/Retired Application](#)] For more information about In-Transition Membership, please visit: <https://www.acc.com/membership/become-a-member/in-transition-member>.

## Retired Membership

Recently retired ACC members may continue their membership at a **reduced rate of \$95 annually**. You can email [membership@acc.com](mailto:membership@acc.com) to request an invoice for this great rate, or submit the [In-Transition/Retired Application](#), and be sure to select the RETIRED option. For more information about Retired Membership, please visit: <https://www.acc.com/membership/become-a-member/retired-member>.

If you have questions, please contact ACC’s membership department at 202.293.4103, ext. 360 or [membership@acc.com](mailto:membership@acc.com).

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unconscious bias and a working session to develop the Chapter's mission, vision and aspirational goals for this journey over the next three to five years. We will share the results of this important work with you later in the first quarter. In December, the Chapter will host its first ever **Diversity Summit** providing substantive and thought-provoking programming for our members and our Chapter companies' Chief Human Resource Officers and Diversity and Inclusion professionals. We will continue with our flagship **Diversity Summer Internship Program** now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year. For the past thirteen years, this program has provided summer employment to law students who have overcome substantial obstacles in the pursuit of a legal career or who are members of groups traditionally underrepresented in the legal profession.

On the strategic planning front, the Chapter's Board has created a roadmap for 2021. Our areas of focus for 2021 include: (1) creating and launching a new Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee; (2) developing and cultivating a pipeline of talent for our Committees and for our Board; (3) engaging with and developing deeper relationships with our Sponsors; and (4) improving upon our virtual event platforms for both substantive programming and social events.

Our officer leadership team is humbled to help lead ACC Greater Philadelphia. The passion, dedication and professionalism of all those who **volunteer** to this Chapter are truly unrivaled. We are a **volunteer organization** and we deeply admire and thank all those who give so much of their time to make our Chapter one of

the premier chapters in all of ACC. Our Board of Directors and Officers are here to serve you—we welcome your feedback, your ideas, your input, and most of all your involvement. You can reach me directly at [michael.eckhardt@wawa.com](mailto:michael.eckhardt@wawa.com) or 610.358.8044. We look forward to seeing you (virtually and in-person) in the coming year, and we sincerely hope you will take full advantage of the many benefits and become actively engaged in the wonderful opportunities that our Chapter has planned in 2021!

Warmest regards,  
Michael Eckhardt  
President  
ACC Greater Philadelphia

## CMI is Not TMI: A Case for Layering Protection for Increased Damages

By *Armstrong Teasdale Partner, Edward F. Behm, Jr., and Patent Scientist, Benjamin A. Ailes*

When many of us hear of “copyright protection,” our thoughts turn to music and manuscripts. Yet copyright law is much more expansive and very much underutilized by almost all industries. At its core, copyright law allows authors of an original work to obtain legal protection and exclusive rights over their creations. But it's not just for those seeking to entertain or educate. Copyright can be obtained on household items, clothing, toys, tools or any tangible item having any degree of creativity. Copyright enjoys strong protection in the United States and further includes the rights and protections provided by the relatively new Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA). The DMCA provides a whole basket of rights, including the often overlooked rights afforded by using Copyright Management Information (CMI). CMI provides an additional layer of rights to copyrighted works by simply adding identifying information to the work. As some recent court cases have demonstrated, the use of CMI can be a powerful enforcement and damages tool across a number of industries when used properly.

### Copyright Management Information and Violation Standard Defined

Although there are splits among various district courts, CMI should be considered to be any information included on, or conveyed in connection with a copyright work, including digital information such as the title, author names and any other identifying information about the work. CMI may also include copyright owner information, information identifying the performer(s) of a work, the terms and conditions of use of the work, and/or any links or directions to find such information. A violation of CMI may occur under the DMCA when an individual, without authority, intentionally removes or alters any CMI. To prove CMI was removed or altered, the copyright owner must show “(1) the existence of CMI connected with the work, (2) that the individual distributed, (3) while knowing the CMI had been removed or altered without authority, and (4) knowingly, or should have known, that the distribution “will induce, enable, facilitate, or conceal an infringement.” See *Mango*

*v. BuzzFeed, Inc.*, 970 F.3d 167, 171 (2d Cir. 2020). Thus, a violation of Section 1202 requires scienter and is not a strict liability offense such as infringement.

Section 1203 of the DMCA permits an award of either actual or statutory damages. For violations of Section 1202, statutory damages range from \$2,500 to \$25,000 “for each violation” and are additive. This is in contrast to the more familiar statutory counting per work with respect to copyright infringement claims.

### Current Trends in Case Law

When determining if a DMCA Section 1202 claim has arisen, a court must first determine if the information that has been removed or altered qualifies as CMI. For example, in *Mango*, the Second Circuit affirmed the district court decision that a “gutter credit” (the usual small print photo credit line associated with a copyrighted work) qualifies as CMI under the DMCA and if removed or altered, qualifies as a violation of Section 1202. Similarly, the Southern District of New York clarified that a gutter credit

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constitutes CMI if, for example, it identifies the author of a work and is conveyed in connection with that work. With specific reference to the use of a digital image, the court held that the gutter credit does not need to be included with the image's metadata (another source of CMI) and that because the offender did not respond to the summons and was given notice of the motion for default judgment, willful or intentional removal of the CMI was demonstrated.

Metadata is the digitally stored information that can be used to identify a digital photograph or other electronic document. Courts have ruled that the intentional removal of metadata, the CMI, on the copy of a copyrighted work, and subsequent distribution of that work with knowledge that the work was altered, constituted a violation of Section 1202. The Fifth Circuit in *Energy Intelligence Grp., Inc. v. Kayne Anderson Capital Advisors, L.P.* recently affirmed an award of \$1,062,500 where the defendant was found to have altered the metadata of an electronic document. 948 F.3d 261, 265 (5th Cir. 2020). The defendant was a subscriber to a daily PDF newsletter produced by the plaintiff and was found guilty of changing the name of the PDF file before using the PDF for their own purposes. This simple changing of the PDF's metadata resulted in a jury award of \$2,500 per each of the 425 alterations.

Thus, Section 1202 avails an opportunity of steep statutory damages to copyright holders by simply appending CMI to, for example, accessible digital files for which third parties may then knowingly remove the CMI – creating piracy and a violation of the DMCA.

### **CMI and What Constitutes a Violation**

There are two types of violations that are prohibited by Section 1202. The first violation may occur if CMI is removed or altered by a party; and a second violation may occur when an individual distributes a copyrighted work knowing the CMI has been altered or removed, and that individual knows, or should reasonably know, that the distribution will aid or conceal an infringement.

Indeed, this second type of Section 1202 violation often extends to physical objects. For example, in *Design Ideas, Ltd. v. Meijer, Inc.*, the plaintiff brought suit against defendants alleging infringement of their "Sparrow Clip" product, a clothespin with silhouetted bird design on top. 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 113704 (C.D. Ill. Aug. 25, 2016). The Court held that plaintiff owned a valid copyright over the clothespin article and included CMI on the body of the clothespin in the form of the identity of the copyright owner. Thus, each infringing clothespin sold having altered or falsified CMI each counts as a "violation" in the statutory damages calculation.

Similarly, in *Tierney v. Moschino S.p.A. et. Al.*, a well-known street artist, Joseph Tierney, a/k/a Rime, created a mural titled "Vandal Eyes" on the exterior of a building in Detroit. Tierney sued the designer Moschino when the plaintiff noticed that his work was made part of a dress and jacket worn by two attendees to the 2015 Met Gala (Katy Perry and Jeremy Scott). 2:15-cv-05900 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 05, 2015). Plaintiff claimed the infringed designs included not just "mechanical copies of the Mural", but also "inclusion of the brand name 'Moschino' made it appear as if it were part of the original work," creating a violation of Section 1202 by intentionally altering plaintiff's CMI. Although the case ultimately settled, the Court did uphold plaintiff's DMCA causes of action through a first Motion to Dismiss by defendant.

### **Practical Applications and Best Practices for Copyright Holders**

When seeking to ensure maximum protection for a copyrighted work, include as much CMI data with the work as possible. Preferably, copyright holders should seek to include CMI with both physical and digital copyrightable material. For example, a digital photograph being provided to a media outlet could include not only a watermark and an author's name, but also comprise metadata that contains as much CMI data about the photograph as possible (e.g., descriptive data, rights data and administrative data). Doing this will

provide increased protection, and if any of the CMI has been removed or altered, an offender may be held liable.

Be cognizant of who is using what social media platforms for your business and what the terms of use of those platforms are and how they affect your use of media. For many companies, removal of CMI is acceptable under their terms of service. Specifically, the Facebook® terms of service explicitly allow them to strip the metadata from any images that you upload. Thus, for example, if a third party takes your image from Facebook®, the CMI was altered with your permission, so the third party would not be distributing the work knowing the CMI had been altered without your approval – negating any Section 1202 violation. As a prevention measure, for images uploaded to any social media, it is recommended that you include a visible watermark as well, as most terms of service do not give the social media platform permission to crop watermarks out.

Finally, copyright holders should make sure that all CMI data associated with a work is not only correct, but also up-to-date. This prevents confusion about whether CMI data is properly included and provides a chronicled history of CMI data pertaining to the work. It would be incredibly difficult to prove that someone removed CMI data that does not actually match the information, such as if the author's name was spelled incorrectly. In order to protect works in a proactive manner, the normal steps should be fol-

lowed by obtaining copyright registration, but also make sure to include as much CMI data with that work as possible. By doing so, a potential infringer that has removed or altered the work's CMI data in any way may also be held liable for additional damages.



Edward F. Behm, Jr.



Benjamin A. Ailes



## New Board Member Spotlight

**Robin Seifert**  
Assistant General Counsel,  
Teleflex Incorporated

**In what year did you start in your current position?**

*I started with Teleflex in June of 2013.*

**In what year did you first work in-house?**

*A long, long time ago in a galaxy not so far away.*

**What law school did you attend?**

*The University of Pittsburgh – Hail to Pitt!*

**Where did you attend college and graduate school? What degrees do you hold?**

*I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Temple University, where I was a member of the Diamond Marching Band and the Owls Basketball Pep Band.*

**What do you consider to be your most pivotal career move?**

*Each move to a new company has been pivotal. Each one led me to a next step in my career and culminated in my current position, which I find both challenging and fulfilling. I didn't necessarily see the path at the time but each position was definitely a stepping stone and taught me something that I needed to know for the next opportunity.*

**What's the best thing about your current job?**

*My colleagues in the Teleflex legal department. I respect them as lawyers and enjoy working with them as people.*

**What's the worst job you've ever had?**

*A college summer job in tele-sales for a company that made institutional (prisons, hospitals) furniture. I don't even really like talking to my friends on the phone so cold calling strangers was not my cup of tea.*

**What's the most valuable life lesson you still apply today?**

*Always be true to yourself.*

**What do you consider to be the best thing about ACC membership?**

*The opportunity to meet other in-house attorneys.*

**How do you achieve work/life balance?**

*I generally try to avoid looking at work email at night or on the weekends.*

**If I were not practicing law, I'd...  
...be travelling the world.**

**My favorite vacation spot is:**  
*Hilton Head Island, SC.*

**A place I've never been but would most like to visit is:**  
*Australia or Alaska.*

**My all-time favorite movie is:**  
*Love Actually*

**Please tell us about your pet(s):**  
*We have a Bernese Mountain Dog named Gretchen, a cat named Liesel and a pond full of fish (some of whom winter in a tank in our house).*

## 2021 Upcoming ACCGP VIRTUAL Events

Visit [ACC Greater Philadelphia](#) for the most current event details or to register for chapter events.

**March 1**

**IP Webinar with Armstrong Teasdale**

**March 11**

**Litigation CLE Institute**

**March 17**

**Real Estate Webinar with Saul Ewing**

**March 18**

**GC/CLO Summit**

**The General Counsel's Role in Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Belonging**

**March 23**

**Banking & Financial Services CLE Institute**

**March 25**

**Meet Your Counterparts Networking with Hogan Lovells**

**March 31**

**Contracts & Commercial Law Roundtable with Womble Bond Dickinson**

**April 1**

**International Law Webinar with Fisher & Phillips**

**April 6**

**Labor & Employment Roundtable with Littler**

**April 21 & 22**

**Annual In-house Counsel Conference**

**April 28**

**Meet Your Counterparts Networking with Saul Ewing**

**May 3**

**Intellectual Property Webinar with Cozen O'Connor**

**May 13**

**Labor & Employment Webinar with Morgan Lewis**

**May 18**

**Health, Biotech & Pharma CLE Institute**

**May 20**

**Meet Your Counterparts Networking with Ogletree Deakins**

Be on the lookout for calendar updates!

## Sponsors for 2021

We thank our 2021 Sponsors for their support of our chapter. Without them, we could not achieve the levels of success that the chapter consistently reaches.

### DIAMOND



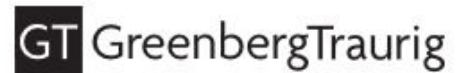
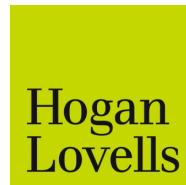
### EMERALD



### PLATINUM



### GOLD



### SILVER



### À LA CARTE



# My Take: Pursue Justice!

By Jo Anne Schwendinger

A message from the Chair of the ACC Global Board of Directors

Even as the world was grappling with COVID-19, other threats demanded our attention in 2020. Following the disturbing killing of George Floyd at the hands of police officers in the United States, people from many nations marched, protested, and demanded change. In the United States, this was followed by a period of political tension, culminating in an attack on the Capitol building in January of this year. On the world scene, refugee crises continue, with a growing number of people living in a country other than the one where they were born. Income gaps continue to widen. Food insecurity remains an intractable issue. Employers continue to make hiring and promotion decisions based on factors other than objective qualifications, thereby denying opportunities to disadvantaged groups. These events and realities are sobering reminders that we must be relentless in our pursuit of social justice.

The pursuit of social justice is not new. Gaps in social justice are not unique to a particular time, community, or place. In fact, the global dimension of social justice issues was recognized by the United Nations when, on November 26, 2007, the General Assembly declared that February 20, would be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice.

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**The pursuit of social justice is not new. Gaps in social justice are not unique to a particular time, community, or place.**

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As lawyers, who are also a part of a world in need of repair, what can we do? How can we contribute to the fight? Certainly, we must uphold the laws of the lands in which we work and live. As in-house counsel, we advise and instruct our clients on all areas of the law. We can therefore be advocates for compliance with laws that call for things like greater diversity and inclusion, as well as protections for



the planet. And some of our in-house colleagues work for nonprofits and NGOs that promote social justice causes like fairness in housing, healthcare, and access to the legal system. There are many ways that in-house counsel can engage in the pursuit of social justice daily.

That said, is there a role for in-house counsel that goes beyond compliance with laws? If so, what should that role be, both within our organizations and within society?

Finding a role that is both meaningful and acceptable within work norms can be daunting. Nevertheless, there are tangible actions we can take to become allies for change within the profession and within our own legal departments. I encourage you to use the ACC Docket article, "[The Time is Now: 10 Ways In-house Counsel Can Advocate for Change](#)," as a jumping off point for ideas on how to leverage your position to promote diversity and inclusion, call out bias, and make colleagues feel welcome.

If taking up the social justice challenge feels like the right approach for your legal department, there are many avenues available to you. For one, you can hire legal service providers who promote social issues. For example, you can include in your outside counsel RFPs questions about a firm's diversity and inclusion initiatives — and even better — ask for their D&I metrics and scorecards.

Ask about the causes they support, and perhaps even suggest partnering on pro bono activities that promote the social justice causes that are important to you and your client. Also, consider choosing law firms that demonstrate a commitment to work-life balance, with programs or policies that encourage lawyers to take time beyond the billable hour to care for family, community, and themselves.

If you choose your legal service providers based on their social commitments, I challenge you to keep track of how they are doing, and to take work away if they do not live up to their promises. These are hard conversations to have, especially with trusted counsel or firms your organization has worked with for years. But they are necessary to move the needle and go beyond platitudes. While no one action will end injustice, each thoughtful act moves us closer.

If you are looking to do more with social justice, reform, and corporate citizenship, don't forget that ACC is always there to help. For example, following the release of [ACC's statement on George Floyd](#) last summer, the ACC Foundation launched its [IDEAL](#) initiative and has since released many resources and produced programming on diversity. Recent programming, featuring notable diverse counsel, includes the two-part series, "[What Every GC, Board, and Corporation Needs to Know About Diversity](#)."

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[Inclusion, and Equity.](#)” You can find both sessions and more [On-Demand.](#)

In addition to IDEAL, we continue to expand our Seat at the Table initiative. While it’s critical that we champion the access and reporting structure of CLOs and those in leadership positions within the legal department, it is equally important that all levels of our teams have a clear pathway to earning their seats. I recently had a conversation with ACC’s Ramsey Saleeby to discuss this topic in “[Find Your Seat – Earning the Role of Strategic Business Partner.](#)” And as I encourage individual lawyers to seek and earn recognition, I also ask those in leadership positions to take a stand on

equity within your departments. Being an ally to diverse communities truly matters in this area. I am optimistic when I read in the recently released [2021 Chief Legal Officers Survey](#) that 72.7 percent of CLOs surveyed believe a focus on diversity and inclusion will continue to grow in importance in 2021 and beyond.

How we show up in our personal and professional lives matters. Standing up and saying something matters. Whether through a company statement or via a hiring decision, we have the power to make a difference, to be allies for change. As the keepers of the law, and those charged with managing risks and liability, we are uniquely positioned to champion

these issues. I applaud you for the strides you are making and challenge you to do more; to go further. And as you grapple with finding a response to the question, what can we do, I encourage you to share your thoughts and insights with your fellow ACC members.



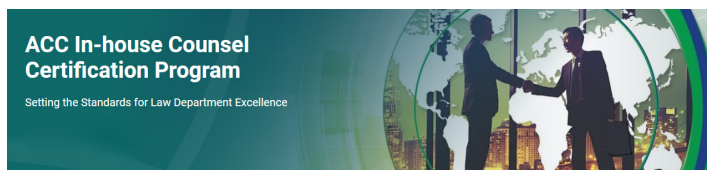
Jo Anne Schwendinger  
II-VI Incorporated  
Chief Legal & Compliance  
Officer & Secretary

## ACC News

### ACC In-house Counsel Certification Program

1–11 March & 19–29 April

The [In-house Counsel Certification Program](#) covers the core competencies identified as critical to an in-house career. This virtual training is a combination of self-paced online modules and live virtual workshops. The workshops will be conducted over a two-week period, four days a week for three hours each day.



### ACC Xchange 2021

16-17 June

This two day experiential learning experience was specifically created for in-house counsel and legal operations professionals. Over the course of two days, attendees will be immersed in an advanced, practical, and interactive educational environment. [Get the details and registration rates.](#)



### ACC Foundation Cybersecurity Summit

2–4 March

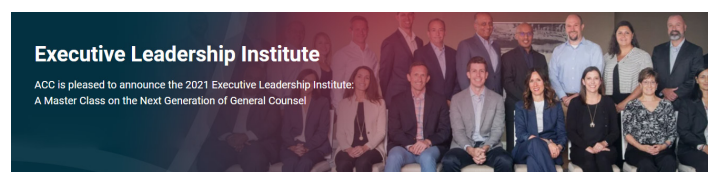
The [ACC Foundation Cybersecurity Summit](#) offers three days of education and networking, designed to engage and educate professionals. Sharpen your skills and knowledge while tackling today’s most pressing cybersecurity concerns.



### ACC Executive Leadership Institute

20-23 July

Invest in your high-performers and put your succession plan in place. [Nominate](#) your rising stars to gain the professional development they need to one day lead your department at the [2021 Executive Leadership Institute.](#)



### Introducing the ACC Data Steward Program

Your law firms are holding some of your company’s most sensitive data but are you certain that it is secure? The [Data Steward Program](#) – Single Client Option – allows you to gain assurance that your law firms are secure, while the DSP Program does all the work.



## New and Returning Members

**Ricki Abrams**

Vertical Screen, Inc.

**Debbie Albrecht**

New Jersey American Water Company, Inc.

**Shreya Amin**

De Lage Landen Financial Services, Inc

**Christopher Arfaa**

New Jersey American Water Company, Inc.

**Katherine Atkinson**

CSL Behring LLC

**Craig Beazer**

Lincoln Financial Group

**James Bennett**

Ellucian Company LP

**Stephen Bishop**

New Jersey American Water Company, Inc.

**Patricia Boujoukos**

Sungard Availability Services

**Meghan Boyle**

American Water Enterprises, LLC

**Katrina Brantley**

TE Connectivity

**Renée Brock**

Worley Group Inc.

**Ainsley Broll**

Elemica, Inc.

**Shawn Bunting**

American Water Works Service Company, Inc

**Candice Cohen**

American Water Works Service Company, Inc

**John Conlon**

Ellucian Company LP

**Katherine Dickinson**

Wawa, Inc.

**Michael Donnini**

QVC, Inc.

**Sarah Dunn**

Allied Universal

**Andrew Dunning**

Siemens Medical Solutions USA, Inc.

**Michele Dyer**

SKF USA Inc.

**Miriam Enriquez**

Comcast Corporation

**Richard Fischetti, Jr.**

Frontage Laboratories, Inc.

**Joseph Flores**

Marlette Funding

**Colleen Garrity**

American Water Works Company, Inc.

**George Gowen**

Ricoh USA, Inc.

**Jonathan Grossberg**

Attorney

**Yuan Han**

Johnson Matthey Inc.

**Edward Hays**

American Water Works Service Company, Inc

**Jocelyn Hill**

Consolidated Rail Corporation

**Timothy Hoban**

Toll Brothers, Inc.

**Mark Humowiecki**

Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers

**Scott Kahn**

Comcast Corporation

**Juliann Kelley**

Goddard Systems, Inc.

**Elizabeth Kim**

Best Egg

**Emily Lozada**

Hamilton Lane Advisors, L.L.C.

**Christopher Luning**

Attorney

**Kimberly MacKay**

West Pharmaceutical Services, Inc.

**Peter Maganas**

C&D Technologies, Inc.

**Colleen Marsini**

Attorney

**Dennis McCooe**

Scandinavian Tobacco Group A/S

**Joseph McCure**

Siemens Medical Solutions USA, Inc.

**Neha Mehra**

HCL America Inc.

**Christopher Mitchell**

Lehigh Hanson, Inc.

**Anne Nguyen**

Chubb Group

**Jeremy Ouchley**

AmerisourceBergen Corporation

**Danielle Petaja**

Ametek, Inc.

**Jacqueline Pinkas**

Ellucian Company LP

**Marc Pitts**

BrightView Landscapes, LLC

**Andrea Procton**

Altus Partners, Inc.

**Richard Ramones**

Consolidated Rail Corporation

**William Reynolds**

Marlette Funding, LLC

**Ashwini Rojiwadia**

De Lage Landen Financial Services, Inc

**Robin Rosenberg**

Attorney

**Adrienne Ruch**

QVC, Inc.

**Christopher Ryan**

Lincoln Investment

**Karen Schneck**

Johnson Matthey Inc.

**Michael Sgro**

American Water Works Service Company, Inc

**Nitin Sharma**

American Water Works Service Company, Inc

**Christine Soares**

New Jersey American Water Company, Inc.

**Maureen Sparks**

Firsttrust Bank

**Matthew Stranger**

American Water Enterprises, LLC

**Ann Strong**

Siemens Medical Solutions USA, Inc.

**Jeffrey Taylor**

American Water Works Service Company, Inc

**Kathryn Traband**

FreedomPay, Inc.

**Jennifer Welding**

Ellucian Company LP

**Ni "Anne" Yan**

Johnson Matthey Inc.

**Courtney Yeakel**

PNC Bank

**Joe Yemola**

Ellucian Company LP



# ACC Greater Philadelphia Member Honored as One of Philadelphia's Top Lawyers in the *Philadelphia Business Journal's* Best of the Bar 2020



## Deborah Pierce

COMPANY:  
Integrity Staffing Solutions

EDUCATION:  
University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School (1978)

As senior vice president and general counsel, Pierce has built an employee relations and in-house legal function to support the rapid business growth and develop strategies to manage legal risks at one of the largest light industrial U.S. staffing firms. She was part of the crisis management team when Integrity experienced a workplace homicide in December 2019, making sure resources were put in place to address the needs of surviving employees, manage the press and social media, and limit legal exposure. She also contributed to strategic planning and implementation of a significant organizational restructuring.

**What is the biggest misconception about lawyers?** That the involvement of lawyers will only impede the achievement

of business goals. In fact, in-house law practice requires building trust daily with business leaders. Lawyers must partner with the business leaders to help define the zone of risk and proceed in an ocean of unknowns. In-house counsel must fit corporate culture yet have the integrity and courage to be the voice of reason and articulate thoughts that may be unpopular.

**How would you assess the current state of Greater Philadelphia's business climate?** There is feast or famine concerning the most critical factor of business profitability: consistent labor force. The key to reviving and sustaining business is creative initiatives that tap into underutilized populations. Examples include English as a Second Language programs to hire foreign nationals, bridge programs for those recently released from incarceration, and decreasing gun violence by providing meaningful employment.

**What is the next step the legal industry must take when it comes to diversity initiatives?** Networking and exposure to other groups is key to decreasing barriers and increasing inclusion. Other

solutions include more hands-on involvement with our communities such as working with neighborhood leaders to find solutions to racial injustice, quality education, and gun violence.

I'd also like to see less segmentation and more cross-functional activity, sponsorships, and partnerships between business and legal affinity groups that represent various demographic segments of the profession.

**Who is your favorite current or former U.S. Supreme Court justice, and why?** Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African American appointed to the Supreme Court and best known for successfully arguing the landmark school desegregation case, *Brown v Board of Education*. As an African-American woman who has been "the first" in many roles at many organizations, I appreciate that Justice Marshall knew quality education was the first step in achieving personal and professional fulfillment.

Follow this link to read the full article: <https://bizj.us/1q7f19>

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