

# Diversity and Inclusion Managers Summit

Friday, August 24, 2018  
Ritz Carlton, 921 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA  
8:15 AM – 2:45 PM

4.25 hours of CLE credit (Including Professionalism)



**Hosted By:**  
LSBA Diversity Committee

8:15 am - 8:45 am - Registration

8:45 am - 9:00 am - Welcoming Remarks

9:00 am - 10:00 am - **Session One (1.0 Professionalism Credit Hour)** "*Minority in a Majority Firm: Combating the Status Quo*"

- **Kim M. Boyle**, Phelps Dunbar LLP, New Orleans, LA
- **Luis A. Leitzelar**, Jones Walker LLP, Baton Rouge, LA
- **Heather S. Lonian**, Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann, LLC, New Orleans, LA
- **Kellen J. Mathews**, Adams and Reese, LLP, Baton Rouge, LA

10:10 am - 11:10 am - **Session Two (1.0 General Credit Hour)** "*A Pragmatic Look at the Work of Career Services Professionals*"

- **Denia S. Aiyegbusi**, Deutsch Kerrigan LLP, Moderator
- **Sarka Cerna-Fagan**, Assistant Dean for Career Development, Tulane University Law School, New Orleans, LA
- **Gwendolyn L. Ferrell**, Associate Director of Career Services, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA
- **Diana Mercer**, Director of Career Development, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, New Orleans, LA
- **Tavares A. Walker**, Director of Career Services and Adjunct Professor of Law, Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA

11:20 am - 12:20 pm - **Session Three (1.0 Professionalism Credit Hour)** "*How to Future-Proof Your Firm: Engaging Gen Y to Z*"

- **Dima Ghawi**, Dima Ghawi LLC, Baton Rouge, LA

12:20 pm - 1:30 pm - Lunch

1:30 pm - 2:45 pm - **Session Four (1.25 Professionalism Credit Hours)** "*Diversity and Inclusion: Worth More than Gold*" (*Facilitated Discussion and Round Table*)

- **Dima Ghawi**, Dima Ghawi LLC, Baton Rouge, LA

## Speaker Bios

**Denia S. Aiyegbusi** is a partner at Deutsch Kerrigan LLP. As part of the firm's civil litigation department, Denia works on cases ranging anywhere from small property subrogation claims, all the way to multi-million dollar, traumatic, brain injury, personal injury cases.

Ms. Aiyegbusi has successfully argued motions in both state and federal courts throughout Louisiana. As an appellate lawyer, she has successfully argued in the Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal and briefed to the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Ms. Aiyegbusi graduated from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law in 2007. In 2016 and 2017 she was on the "Louisiana Rising Star" list. Denia currently serves as Co-Chair on LSBA's Diversity Committee and is also involved with the Minority Involvement Section.

**Kim M. Boyle** practices in the areas of labor and employment, civil rights, constitutional law, commercial, tort and general litigation. Her employment practice includes representing employers in employment related claims, such as retaliation and discrimination claims as well as workplace harassment. She also handles EEOC charges and other administrative complaints through the administrative and judicial process. Her practice also includes the representation of public and private clients in a variety of commercial disputes, including breach of contract, business torts, misappropriation of trade secrets, unfair trade practices and class actions, as well as representation of a number of governmental entities on an array of legal issues. Ms. Boyle is known for her persuasive oral argument skills in both trial and appellate courts, and for her ability to take a matter from inception through verdict at trial by jury or judge. Many of the matters Ms. Boyle handles have been resolved through trial, and she has completed a number of oral arguments before state and federal appellate courts. She speaks often on employment-related topics, litigation and issues of procedure, as well as ethics and professionalism issues. Ms. Boyle was recognized by Benchmark Litigation as one of the Top 250 Women in US Litigation in 2018 and is very active in local, state and national bar activities, as well as community organizations and initiatives. Ms. Boyle served as the first female African-American President of the Louisiana State Bar Association (2009-2010) as well as the first African-American President of the New Orleans Bar Association (2002-2003). She currently serves as a Board and an executive committee member for Tulane University and the New Orleans Business Alliance. She also serves as Chairman of the Board for the Amistad Research Center and is a Board member for Dillard University and Touro Infirmary. Ms. Boyle formerly served as Judge Pro Tempore for Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans, as well as an Assistant Professor of Law at Loyola University College of Law and a member of Princeton University's Board of Trustees.

In addition, she was a member of the Louisiana Recovery Authority ("LRA") and served as Chair of the LRA Healthcare Committee. Ms. Boyle previously served on the Bring New Orleans Back Commission, which focused upon rebuilding the city post-Katrina, and served as Chair of the Health/Social Services Committee of the Commission. She received her J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1987 and her A.B. from Princeton University in 1984.

**Sarka Cerna-Fagan** is Assistant Dean for Compliance and Senior Director of Career Development at Tulane Law School. Before joining Tulane Law, she spent 10 years as a transactional corporate attorney in New York City. After graduating from New York University School of Law in 1993, she worked at White & Case for three years then at Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker for almost five years. She then joined a mid-size law firm, Golenbock, Eiseman, Assor, Bell and Peskoe, where her broad corporate law practice included project finance, aircraft leasing, bank lending, venture capital and mergers and acquisitions. In private practice, Cerna-Fagan had years of career development experience, serving her firms in both recruiting law school students and training summer and junior associates. She has also participated as a panelist in workshops held by the NYU School of Law Career Counseling and Placement Office and volunteered as a mentor for the foreign-trained LLM students. She is admitted to practice in the State of New York and is a member of NALP–The Association for Legal Career Professionals.

**Luis A. Leitzelar** is a partner at Jones Walker LLP, resident in the Baton Rouge office, where he practices in the Business & Commercial Litigation, Environmental and Energy Practice Groups and serves on the Firm’s Diversity Committee. For the past several years, Mr. Leitzelar has been appointed by the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) President to the Committee on Diversity, where he has served as Co-Chair of the Committee as well as the Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession Subcommittee. In 2015, Mr. Leitzelar was presented with the LSBA President’s Award, recognizing his exemplary assistance to the Committee on Diversity in the Legal Profession. In 2013, he was recognized by the Defense Research Institute for his role as contributing author/editor of the DRI Diversity and Inclusion Manual and, in 2012, Mr. Leitzelar was presented with the Multicultural Leadership Award by the National Diversity Council. Mr. Leitzelar is a Fellow of the Louisiana Bar Foundation and of the Litigation Counsel of America. He received his bachelor’s degree in 1987 from Louisiana State University and his Juris Doctor degree in 1991 from Tulane University Law School. He counsels clients in their day-to-day business operations and transactions and has tackled all phases of complex commercial litigation, including class actions, product liability claims and mass torts. He advises clients on the effects of federal and state regulations, and assists them in permitting, compliance, and defense of enforcement matters.

**Heather S. Lonian** is a partner at Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her practice focuses on complex commercial litigation, with a concentration in class action defense and insurance. She has litigated cases in federal and state district and appellate courts on behalf of plaintiffs and defendants. She has represented clients in class action, mass tort, and multidistrict litigation proceedings. In addition, she represented clients in cases involving unfair trade practice claims, intellectual property, employment discrimination, and complex contract disputes. Ms. Lonian is a member of the American Bar Association’s Class Actions and Derivative Suits Committee and the Louisiana State Bar Association. Ms. Lonian is a graduate of Yale University (B.A. 2002) and Harvard Law School (J.D. 2005).

**Kellen J. Mathews** joined Adams and Reese in 2012, and is currently the Partner in Charge of the firm’s Baton Rouge office. He practices as a partner in the firm’s litigation practice group. His practice includes representing clients in complex litigation, products liability, education, construction, commercial and personal injury claims. Mathews has been recognized as a “Rising Star” in the 2017 and 2018 editions of *Louisiana Super Lawyers*, and is listed in the 2018 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*®.

Mathews received his J.D. from the Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Louisiana State University, in 2008. In 2004, he earned his B.A. in political science from Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi.

**Diana Mercer** graduated from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law in 2002. She was a member of the Loyola Law Review and a William Crowe Scholar. Her casenote "Preserving Continuity and Fairness: The Louisiana Supreme Court Limits Deviation from Child Support Guidelines" was published in the Spring 2001 (47 Loy. L. Rev. 885 (2001)). After law school, Ms. Mercer worked as an Associate Attorney at the law firms of Jones Walker and Gordon Arata McCollam Duplantis & Eagan LLC, and then as a Staff Attorney with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. She returned to Loyola in 2012 as a Career Advisor in the Career Development Office. She was appointed Director of the Career Development Office in May 2015. In addition to her work at Loyola, Ms. Mercer is a Board Member of the New Orleans Federal Bar Association and of the New Orleans Citizens Diplomacy Council. She is also a Louisiana Bar Foundation Fellow and a member of the New Orleans Bar Association, the Association of Women Attorneys and the National Association for Law Placement (NALP).

Before law school, Ms. Mercer obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and a Master of Science Degree in Counseling Psychology, both from Georgia State University, and worked as a Substance Abuse Counselor and Individual Counseling Therapist at Family Service of Greater New Orleans.

**Tavares A. Walker**, a native of Donaldsonville, Louisiana, earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Business in 2005 from Louisiana State University and A&M College. He later earned a Juris Doctor in May 2008 from the Southern University Law Center. Currently, Walker is the Director with Southern University Law Center Office of Career Services & Adjunct Professor of Law and also serves as the campus Title IX Coordinator. Tavares is a Captain in the U.S. Army, Louisiana Army National Guard, Judge Advocate General Corps, and is currently serving as the Deputy Command Judge Advocate for the 225th Engineer Brigade.