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Crowell & Moring Commits \$1.75 Million and Launches Task Force to Address Racial Equity

Racial Justice Initiative aims to eradicate racism, promote equity and advance human rights

Washington – December 22, 2020: As part of its efforts to address systemic racism, Crowell & Moring is donating a total of \$750,000 to two organizations dedicated to the advancement of racial equity, justice, and fundamental human rights – the Equal Justice Initiative and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. In addition, the firm has committed \$1 million in pro bono legal services in 2021 to further these causes and launched a Racial Equity Task Force to identify near-term actions and goals to enhance the experience of the firm’s diverse talent.

“Combatting racial injustice and inequality has been a part of our firm’s work since our founding more than 40 years ago. The heightened awareness around the senseless and depraved racially-motivated violence over the past year, in particular, has galvanized our community’s commitment to putting those values into action,” said [Philip T. Inglima](#), chair of the firm. “We have a moral obligation to the people of our firm and the communities in which we work and live to use our privilege and our skills to advance this vital work.”

The Equal Justice Initiative and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law will each receive \$375,000 over the next three years toward their efforts to end racial injustice. The [Equal Justice Initiative](#) was founded in 1989 by Bryan Stevenson as a nonprofit organization that is “committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society.” Founded in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy, the [Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law](#) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose mission is “to secure equal justice for all through the rule of law, targeting in particular the inequities confronting African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities.”

In addition, the firm has made a \$25,000 donation to the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, in honor of Monica Parham, a former Crowell & Moring lawyer who pioneered the firm’s diversity efforts 14 years ago as its first Diversity Counsel. Ms. Parham recently passed away after a battle with cancer. The donation will directly benefit the university’s honors scholarship program, which supports African American and other minority students.

“We offer our time, talents, and financial resources with support and inspiration from the members of our African American Affinity Group, who continue to challenge us to use our collective voice and actions to advance the cause of racial equity and justice both within and beyond our own communities,” said [Ellen Moran Dwyer](#), chair of Crowell & Moring’s executive committee and chair of the [Leadership Council on Legal Diversity](#), one of the nation’s leading organizations promoting diversity in the legal profession. “We also recognize the importance of our efforts extending beyond monetary donations and aim to hold ourselves accountable by making honest assessments of the impact of our actions, policies, and culture on our firm community.”

In the wake of the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and others this year, and in response to the heightened awareness around racial injustice, the firm’s leadership established a Racial Equity Task Force and a Racial Justice Pro Bono Task Force focused on furthering the firm’s long-standing pro bono strategy to combat racial injustice.

“It is crucial that we not limit ourselves to conversations about racial justice – we also need to act,” said [Keith Harrison](#), co-chair of the firm’s Diversity Council, vice chair of the Public Service Committee, and a member of the Management Board. “The task

forces are helping us remain accountable to the ideals that this firm holds dear and ensure that our firm is one that we can all take pride in working for.”

“At Crowell & Moring, we realize that the work must also begin at home,” Harrison said. “The firm has undertaken a thoughtful and ambitious effort to establish a more fully inclusive community. The initiative includes critically examining our evaluation, promotion, and compensation systems and how they may impact our diverse lawyers and staff.”

To start, members of the firm’s Management Board committed to sponsor the firm’s African American lawyers to ensure their equitable access to career development and promotional opportunities. Firm leadership also implemented a robust planning process for practice group leaders to ensure accountability and the focused development of diverse lawyers. The Racial Equity Task Force – led by Inglima and the firm’s Executive Committee – meets weekly and is tackling the full range of data analysis, representation, progression, and development issues that impact diverse talent firmwide.

The work of the Task Force reflects an important collaboration between firm leadership and members of the African American Affinity Group. These efforts have been augmented by a series of firm-sponsored Diversity & Implicit Bias Dialogues to educate the firm’s community about the negative consequences of unconscious bias, providing a safe forum to explore how past perspectives and actions can impact individuals. The diversity dialogues led to effective action steps for allies within the firm community to promote anti-racist and ally-driven behavior.

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