

A LETTER FROM THE BALCH DIVERSITY CHAIR

Over the past few months Balch has celebrated Black History Month, commemorated the 50th anniversary of the historic Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March and honored Black Law Students Association chapters at schools across the Southeast. We look forward to continuing our diversity and inclusion efforts over the course of the year, especially by starting conversations with business leaders about the changing landscape of businesses' diversity efforts in the workplace at our first diversity summit, "Diversity Dialogue in the Changing Workplace."

In this issue of Highlighting Diversity, we reflect on our involvement in several events and activities over the early spring months, look forward to the coming months' activities and commend our colleagues' efforts who continuously strive to improve the legal community with their leadership.

Please join me in celebrating Balch's continued success and support for diversity and inclusion. As always, we welcome your feedback. Please email me at dkauffman@balch.com.

Warmest regards,



Doug Kauffman
CHAIR OF DIVERSITY

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MISSION

Balch is committed to maintaining a diverse and inclusive workplace for all. We understand that achieving greater diversity is essential to delivering excellent service to our clients. We are dedicated to providing a work environment where people of all backgrounds, ages, colors, genders, races, national origins, religions, sexual orientations or disabilities are valued for their perspectives, skills and talents.

Committee members include: Doug Kauffman, Leslie Allen, Matthew Ames, Michael Edwards, Amy Steindorff, Peter LeJeune, Kelly Pate, Riley Roby, Mary Samuels, Lisa Arrington, Barrie Wilson, David Miceli, Jennifer Nicaud, Tashwanda Pinchback Dixon and Steven Burns.



Photo courtesy of The Montgomery Advertiser.

» Bryan Stevenson, equal justice initiative director, speaking at the Heroes Breakfast in Montgomery, Ala., on Wednesday, March 25.

BALCH JOINS THE NATION IN COMMEMORATING THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY VOTING RIGHTS MARCH

In March, Balch was a proud sponsor of the "Dream Marches On" events, commemorating the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March. "Dream Marches On" events included several activities such as the Montgomery Gala & Concert featuring Grammy-award-winning Patti LaBelle to honor the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March,

the Heroes Breakfast and the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Balch attorneys and staff enjoyed participating in several of the events and learning about this historical movement's impact on our nation.

"It was a great honor and privilege to support the "Dream Marches On" events in Montgomery and Selma," said RILEY ROBY, partner in Balch's Montgomery, Ala., office and member of the firm's Real Estate, Lending and Commercial Practice Group. "It was an unforgettable experience and opportunity to celebrate such a momentous historical event that impacted not only our city, but state, nation and world as well."

"Dream Marches On" was hosted by the City of Montgomery, Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitor Bureau, City of Selma, Selma-Dallas County Tourism and Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail.



» Tashwanda Pinchback Dixon, senior associate in Balch's Atlanta office and member of the firm's Labor & Employment and Litigation Practice Groups, at Vanderbilt Law School's BLSA Alumni event.



» Birmingham office members Kathy Collier, partner and member of the firm's Public Finance Practice Group; Susan Nettles Han, senior associate and member of the firm's Labor & Employment and Litigation Practice Groups; Lisa Arrington, Balch's human resources director; and Jenelle Evans McGraw, partner and member of the firm's Litigation Section.



» Mary Samuels, partner in Balch's Birmingham, Ala., office and member of the firm's Environmental Section, and Jeremy Retherford, partner in Balch's Birmingham, Ala., office and chairman of the firm's hiring and recruiting committee, and a University of Alabama student at the University of Alabama's 14th Annual BLSA Scholarship Banquet.

BALCH HONORS VANDERBILT LAW SCHOOL'S FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS AT INAUGURAL BLSA ALUMNI EVENT

TASHWANDA PINCHBACK DIXON, senior associate in Balch's Atlanta office and member of the firm's Labor & Employment and Litigation Practice Groups, recently returned to her alma mater to participate in its inaugural Vanderbilt Black Law Students Association Alumni event. The event honored Vanderbilt Law School's first African-American students, E. Melvin Porter, '59, and his classmate Fred Work, '59 who recently passed away, along with Janie Greenwood Harris, '64, a retired corporate attorney who was the first African-American woman to graduate from Vanderbilt Law School.

ALABAMA DIVERSITY COUNCIL'S ALABAMA WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM EDUCATES BALCH STAFF AND ATTORNEYS ON THE POWER OF WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

On March 26, 2015, members of Balch's Birmingham, Ala., office enjoyed the Alabama Diversity Council's Inaugural Alabama Women in Leadership Symposium at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The symposium included top professional women sharing personal and professional challenges they faced while successfully rising to the top in their respective organizations. The theme of the symposium was entitled "Celebrating Leadership: The Power of Women in the Workplace" and encouraged and promoted career development for women.

MIKE BOWERS REPRESENTS GEORGIA EQUALITY, INC.

Former Georgia Attorney General MIKE BOWERS, partner in Balch's Atlanta office, is representing Georgia Equality, Inc., an equal rights group, as it challenges House Bill 218 and Senate Bill 129. Mike's advocacy on behalf of Georgia Equality has gained much media attention, which may be read in the *New York Times* and in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*.

BALCH CELEBRATES THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA'S 14TH ANNUAL BLSA SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET

Balch proudly joined the University of Alabama to celebrate the university's 14th Annual Black Law Students Association Scholarship Banquet on Thursday, April 2, 2015, at the Harbert Center in Birmingham, Ala. The event honored faculty, students and attorneys for their work in the legal profession. This year's keynote address was delivered by April England-Albright, a 1997 Alabama graduate and attorney for the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights in Atlanta. O. Tameka Wren, human resources partner at BBVA Compass and president of the Magic City Bar Association, joined Balch at the banquet.



» Lisa Sharp, partner in Balch's Birmingham, Ala., office and member of the firm's Governmental Relations Practice Group.

MOMENTUM WOMEN'S BREAKFAST IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Momentum, Alabama's premier women's leadership program, recently hosted a breakfast in honor of Women's History Month on March 19, 2015, to celebrate the progress of women in sports since Title IX. Title IX is a comprehensive federal law of the Education Amendments of 1972 that prohibits discrimination based on the gender of students and employees of educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance. Balch both sponsored and participated in the event. LISA SHARP, partner in Balch's Birmingham, Ala., office and member of the firm's Governmental Relations Practice Group, administered a quiz to the audience on the importance of Title IX and introduced Olympic gold medalist diver and speaker Jennifer Chandler Stevenson.



» Left to Right: Doug Kauffman, partner and chair of Balch's Diversity Committee; David Miceli, executive director of Balch; Keith Dunnivant, American sports author and historian; and Lisa Arrington, human resources director of Balch.

FAMED AMERICAN SPORTS HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR ADDRESSES BALCH'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH LUNCHEON

Each year, Balch celebrates Black History Month with a prominent Alabama-native speaker who discusses the impact of the African-American community on our nation's past, present and future. On February 17, 2015, Balch hosted Keith Dunnivant, a leading American sports author and historian, to speak at the firm's annual Black History Month luncheon. During his presentation, Mr. Dunnivant spoke about his most recent film, Three Days at Foster, which provides an in-depth look into Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant's athletic program and its involvement in ending institutional racism at the University of Alabama and, ultimately, across the state.

UPCOMING EVENT: "DIVERSITY DIALOGUE IN THE CHANGING WORKPLACE" | JUNE 19, 2015

ON FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2015, BALCH WILL HOST ITS INAUGURAL DIVERSITY SUMMIT, "DIVERSITY DIALOGUE IN THE CHANGING WORKPLACE," FROM 8:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M. AT OUR BIRMINGHAM, ALA., OFFICE. THE SUMMIT WILL INCLUDE MULTIPLE SESSIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE. THERE IS NO COST TO ATTEND THIS EVENT; HOWEVER, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

- THE FIRST SESSION will feature a discussion entitled "How Organizations are Now Approaching Diversity and Inclusion" led by panelists Lajuana Bradford, senior vice president, director of corporate diversity and public affairs at Regions Financial Corporation; Moanica M. Caston, vice president of diversity and inclusion at Georgia Power Company; and Dr. Overtoun Jenda, associate provost for diversity and multicultural affairs at Auburn University.
- THE SECOND SESSION will be led by Dr. Charles Carson, associate dean of Brock School of Business at Samford University. A two-time recipient of the Brock School of Business' Outstanding Scholarship Award, Dr. Carson has published more than 25 peer-reviewed articles in academic journals. Several of his articles have been published in leading academic journals such as Educational and Psychological Measurement, Management Decision, Journal of Managerial Issues and Human Performance. Dr. Carson will discuss how diversity impacts a business's bottom line in his discussion entitled "Providing the Bottom Line Business Case for Diversity."
- THE THIRD AND FINAL SESSION, "Keeping Diversity Messaging and Initiatives Legal," will be led by DOUG KAUFFMAN, partner in the firm's Birmingham, Ala., office and chair of Balch's Diversity Committee, and KELLY PATE, partner in Balch's Montgomery, Ala., office and member of the firm's Labor and Employment and Litigation Sections.
- For additional information and to register for "Diversity Dialogue in the Changing Workplace," please [click here](#).