

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD BAR FOUNDATION

ANDREW L. SONNER

EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY AWARD

AWARD CRITERIA

The Andrew L. Sonner Excellence in Diversity Award recognizes an attorney, individual, law firm, company, association or government practice that champions the Montgomery County Bar Foundation's goal of encouraging racial and cultural diversity in the hiring, retention and promotion of attorneys and in the elevation of attorneys to leadership positions within the Montgomery County legal community. To that end, in evaluating nominations for the award, we will assess a nominee's excellence in one or more of the following areas:

1. Influencing Others

Successful diversity efforts or influence addressing the importance of diversity at every reasonable opportunity. Making persuasive connections between organizational performance and progress on diversity. Exerting influence, including speaking engagements, can be one mechanism for making the case for diversity.

2. Being a Role Model

Individually or within a larger group, acting in such a way that signals that diversity is truly important to the organization.

3. Becoming Engaged

Reaching out to diverse attorneys to understand first-hand the experiences of someone from a different background.

4. Cultivating Diverse Teams

Seeking out diverse talent in its many forms, while placing a premium on good management. Striving to develop and retain diverse team members, by mentoring, training, coaching, and providing constructive feedback.

5. Innovating

Identifying and implementing creative and practical solutions in order to make diversity a reality.

6. Demonstrating Leadership

Taking an active lead in fostering diversity in the profession through national, state, local and specialty bar associations. Forging connections with law schools, colleges, high schools, and other organizations in order to broaden the diversity pipeline in Montgomery County.

NOMINATING PROCESS

Eligibility: Eligible nominees include any attorney, non-attorney individual, law firm, company, association or government practice.

Time period: While our emphasis is on actions taken within the last year, we recognize that it may be difficult to isolate certain achievements within a calendar year. Notable achievements from the past or that occur on an ongoing basis may be included as well.

Number of Nominations: Individuals and organizations may make as many nominations as desired.

Selection Process: The nominees will be reviewed by the Diversity Committee of the Board of Directors of the Montgomery County Bar Foundation, which in turn will make recommendations to the Board of Directors, which will make the final selection.

Timing: The deadline for submission of nominations is 5:00 p.m. March 13, 2026. Nominations may be submitted on the Nomination Form to the Executive Director by email to wanda@barassociationmc.org.

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NOMINATION FORM

DEADLINE: March 13, 2026

THE COMPLETED NOMINATION FORM AND ANY SUPPORTING MATERIALS (LIMITED TO 10 PAGES) MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 13, 2026.

Please refer to the [Award Guidelines](#) before completing the nomination form. Type or print all information clearly and answer all questions as thoroughly as possible. The pdf version can be printed and completed offline. The Word text version may be completed and saved.

Name of Nominee

Firm/Organization/Company/Association

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Email

Phone

Please refer to the award guidelines and answer the following questions in order, as accurately and completely as possible on separate sheets, with any supporting material attached to this form. In your nomination, please repeat the question, followed by the response.

Note: Incomplete nominations will not be accepted and will be returned for additional information.

Name of Nominator

Relationship to Nominee

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Email

Phone



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1. LAW FIRM, COMPANY, ASSOCIATION or GOVERNMENT PRACTICE:

- (a) Describe the nominee's efforts in encouraging, increasing and/or maintaining diversity in the legal profession, with particular focus on recruitment, retention and promotion of diverse attorneys.
- (b) Describe and provide specific details and documentation on how the diversity efforts of the nominee have resulted in increased diversity in the firm, company, association or government practice and/or the legal profession overall.
- (c) Explain whether the efforts above were made within the scope of employment or on a voluntary basis (or both).



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2. ATTORNEY OR INDIVIDUAL:

- (a) Describe the nominee's efforts to encourage, increase and/or maintain diversity in the legal profession, including dates and specific examples.
- (b) Explain whether the efforts above were made within the scope of employment or on a voluntary basis (or both).
- (c) Describe and provide specific details and documentation on how the individual's efforts have resulted in increasing diversity in the legal profession.
- (d) Attach a current résumé or biography with work history and educational background for the nominee.