



## KENNETH E. SHARPERSON

CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

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As the firm's Chief Diversity Officer, Kenneth Sharperson leads the execution of the firm's strategy on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), as well as ongoing and new initiatives to build and sustain a culture of inclusion and belonging. He collaborates with firm leaders to embed a diverse and inclusive culture into the firm's talent practices, business strategy, drive inclusion programming and initiatives, and support various affinity organizations firmwide and in the communities where we work and live.

Kenneth has extensive experience developing and implementing DEI programs in the public, nonprofit and legal sectors, including six years of service leading the Diversity Committee of a state bar association. Kenneth believes that a data-driven approach to DEI provides critical intelligence for determining where to focus DEI efforts to drive meaningful impact. As the driver of Armstrong Teasdale's commitment to addressing the legal industry's lack of diversity in its workforce, Kenneth will work with law schools to create pathways and expand the pipeline to the legal profession. In his role, Kenneth also will be involved in cultivating key internal and external partnerships to drive strategic diversity and inclusion marketing, as well as business development strategies.

As a practicing lawyer, Kenneth brings unique perspective to the role, as well as a deep understanding of client needs and expectations, and the challenges facing the legal industry. He previously served as counsel to clients across the country in insurance coverage and commercial litigation.

Kenneth collaborates with the firm's Executive and Inclusion Committees in developing and advancing the firm's DEI strategy, including the rollout of various trainings and programs, support of resource groups and affinity groups, and a targeted and intentional approach. He works within the firm to raise awareness, assist each department and practice group with implementation of best practices in alignment with the Inclusion Committee's priorities and goals.

Kenneth has been a champion of diversity and inclusion in the legal profession for over twenty years and is a sought-after speaker and frequently called upon to discuss a host of DEI topics, including managing risks around diversity and inclusion efforts at law firms, building and sustaining inclusive workplaces and increasing a law firm's financial outlook through DEI. Kenneth is a thought leader and regularly published in connection with his insights as it relates to the evolution of DEI in the legal field.

Kenneth is active in DEI initiatives affecting the legal field, including the Law Firm Anti-Racism Alliance's Education Working Group. This group, which focuses on how structural racism informs various areas of law, is responsible for producing research papers and

### ADMISSIONS

New York

New Jersey

other work products that will be included in the Systemic Racism Legal Inventory. As a recipient of the certificate in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace from the University of South Florida, Kenneth is well versed in the essential practices and tools designed to increase workplace diversity and to create a business model that embraces equity and inclusion.

## **BACKGROUND**

Prior to joining Armstrong Teasdale, Kenneth was a litigation partner and Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at a New York metro area law firm where he was responsible for creating strategies to successfully recruit, develop and retain diverse employees as well as leveraging diversity and inclusion to create a sense of belonging among all members of the firm. Before that, he was a lawyer at other law firms in the New York and Washington, D.C., areas.

## **EDUCATION**

- University of South Florida (2021)
  - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace Certificate
- Rutgers School of Law (J.D., 2001)
  - Rutgers Computer and Technology Law Journal, Senior Editor
  - Moot Court Board
  - Legal Research and Writing Teaching Associate
  - Student Bar Association, President
- Hampton University (B.S., 1993)
  - Physical Education
  - Varsity Football
  - Dean's List

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- Forbes Human Resource Council (Member)
- Association of Law Firm Diversity Professionals (Member)
- International Association of Defense Counsel (Member)
- Defense Research Institute (Former Member)
- New Jersey Supreme Court, District XIII Fee Arbitration Committee (Past Chair)
- New Jersey Supreme Court Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement (Former Member)
- New Jersey Supreme Court Committee on Complementary Dispute Resolution (Former Member)
- District VA Ethics Committee (Former Member)
- American Bar Association, Tort and Insurance Practice Section (TIPS) (Former Vice-Chair; Ethics and Professionalism Committee and Public Relations Committee)

- New Jersey State Bar Association Board of Trustees (Former Member)
- New Jersey State Bar Association Diversity Committee (Former Co-Chair)
- New Jersey State Bar Association Leadership Academy Selection Committee, (Former Chair)
- New Jersey State Bar Association Minorities in the Profession Section (Former Second Vice President and Treasurer)
- American Arbitration Association National Roster of Arbitrators (Panelist)
- Garden State Bar Association (Past Board of Directors)
- Claims and Litigation Management (CLM), Diversity & Inclusion Committee (Member)

#### **CHARITABLE AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT**

- Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
- HBCU Greatness (Board member)
- City of Alexandria Parks and Recreation Commission (Former Commissioner)
- East Orange YMCA (Former Board member and Finance Chair)
- Morris Township Parks and Recreation Committee (Former Commissioner)
- Youth Soccer, Football and Basketball Coach

#### **ACCOLADES**

- Garden State Bar Association, Oliver Randolph Award (2021)
- New Jersey Law Journal, Trailblazer in Law (2020)
- New Jersey Law Journal, Diverse Attorney of the Year (2019)
- New Jersey Super Lawyers, Rising Star (2012)
- American Arbitration Association Higginbotham Fellow (2012)
- New Jersey Law Journal, Top 40 under 40 (August 2009)