

## insights

# Norma Jackson receives Diversity & Inclusion Award from Missouri Lawyers Media

[Norma Jackson](#), Thompson Coburn's Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Professional Development, has been selected to receive a 2020 Diversity & Inclusion Award from Missouri Lawyers Media.

This year the awards will recognize 21 attorneys, firms and organizations "who are significantly advancing diversity, inclusion and the dignity of all people in Missouri's legal profession."

Norma joined Thompson Coburn in August 2018 from the University of Missouri system, where for 14 years she served in a number of recruitment and diversity-focused positions. She now manages attorney professional development at Thompson Coburn and leads our extensive diversity efforts at all levels of the Firm, among clients, and in our legal and business communities across the country.

"We are immensely proud of Norma both for this recognition and for her outstanding efforts over the last two years in expanding and enhancing our diversity and inclusion efforts," said [Tony Anderson](#), a D.C. partner and co-chair of Thompson Coburn's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. "Norma brings a perfect combination of passion and pragmatism to her work, and because of her efforts, our Firm is more dedicated than ever to creating an inclusive workplace and serving as a leader in our communities on critical issues of racial equity and injustice."

Under Norma's leadership, Thompson Coburn was the recipient of the Minority Corporate Counsel Association's (MCCA) 2019 George B. Vashon Innovator Award, a recognition for organizations that have made extraordinary strides to support diverse attorneys. Thompson Coburn has also implemented several new diversity programs and upgraded many existing diversity practices. The Firm hired a Staff Diversity Manager focused on diversity efforts at the professional staff level; implemented firmwide implicit bias training for all attorneys and staff; led de-bias workshops for management, associate review and human resources teams; and hosted a cultural competency program.

Additionally, Thompson Coburn has submitted materials for certification this summer through the Diversity Lab's Mansfield Rule 3.0 pilot, a national initiative designed to close the gender and diversity gap in the legal profession. Norma serves as an advisory board member for Mansfield 4.0, which will determine the next set of national standards for promoting diversity in law firm hiring, promotions and governance.

"The work I do now is motivated by where I came from," said Norma. "I grew up in a small rural community in northeast Missouri. I had a wonderful childhood and loved growing up in a such a close-knit environment. But I was the only African American female in my class from first to 12th grade. When I left for college, I quickly realized there was so much I didn't truly know or understand about the importance of diversity, inclusion, and access for marginalized populations. So I'm very passionate about creating pipelines for underserved and underrepresented individuals, as well as providing access and opportunities, and making the path easier for all the amazing people who come after me."

Norma attended the University of Missouri as an undergraduate. She then obtained a dual Master of Arts in Human Resources Management and Human Resources Development from Webster University. In 2011, Norma earned a J.D. from the University of Missouri, attending law school while working full time at the university.

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