



Foster Swift Announces Women in Leadership

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Business Network

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Lansing, Mich. – Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC, is excited to announce its 2019 leadership team, which includes a record number of women. The firm's 2019 leadership roster includes two female Executive Committee members and female leaders for three of the firm's seven practice groups. Women also chair the Political Action Committee and the Associate Attorney Committee. Overall, women comprise 33 percent of the firm's total leadership, placing the firm well above the 12 percent national average, according to a 2018 Law 360 study of female leadership in law firms.

Positions

Anne Seurnyck was recently re-elected as Vice President of the firm's Executive Committee for Foster Swift's West Michigan offices. Julie Fershtman was newly elected as Vice President of the Executive Committee for the firm's Southeast Michigan offices. Anna Gibson, Patricia Scott, and Mindi Johnson are practice group leaders of Trusts and Estates, Finance and Bankruptcy, and Business and Tax, respectively. Laura Genovich chairs the firm's Political Action Committee and Allison Collins chairs the firm's Associate Attorney Committee.

Philosophy

"Foster Swift's management team believes that diversity in the workplace enhances everyone's personal and professional lives. It improves our ability to serve our clients and ultimately deliver better results," says Fershtman, who was the 77th President of the State Bar of Michigan (2011-2012), only the fifth woman to serve in that role. "For decades, women attorneys in our firm have made and continue to make significant contributions to the legal community and have made a difference for clients. Electing and appointing women to leadership roles within the firm, allowing them to help shape the firm's future, is a natural result of the firm's commitment to its diversity and inclusion initiative."

ATTORNEYS

Julie I. Fershtman

Laura J. Genovich

Anna K. Gibson

Mindi M. Johnson

Anne M. Seurnyck

PRACTICE AREAS

Business & Tax

Employee Benefits

Finance, Real Estate & Bankruptcy
Law

General & Commercial Litigation

Municipal & Public Entity Law

Trusts & Estates



Foster Swift has seen a growing number of women within its associate and shareholder ranks. Over the past decade, women have comprised the majority of the firm's newly hired lawyers. The firm's incoming 2019 associate class is 75 percent female. Four out of five of its 2019 summer associates are women.

Foster Swift President, Mike Sanders, notes, "It's exciting to see the firm successfully hiring and promoting more women. While the legal industry as a whole lags in the promotion of women, we are thrilled Foster Swift is a leader in this respect. As the father of two professional young women and as part of the firm's management team, I believe it's critical that women have the opportunity to lead early in their careers."

Foster Swift's policies have long reflected the changing work environment and embraced progressive gender and racial politics. Decades ago, Foster Swift was on the forefront with a pilot program that featured flexible time arrangements for associate attorneys. Because of the consistent success of its participants, the firm's Executive Committee formalized a policy to make reduced hour and flexible time arrangements available to accommodate work-life balance.

Since the introduction of this policy, many women have successfully become shareholders after, or in the midst of, a reduced hours arrangement. For instance, Anne Seurynck, while on a reduced schedule, was the first female chair of the firm's Recruiting Committee, a position she held for eleven years. She simultaneously led the Administrative and Municipal Practice Group for four of those years.

Given Foster Swift's ongoing commitment to recruiting, retaining, and championing diverse attorneys within the firm, it anticipates continued success in its diversity and inclusion efforts in the talent market as well as serving client needs.