

THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF BLACK WOMEN IN LAW

IT BEGINS IN LAW SCHOOL...

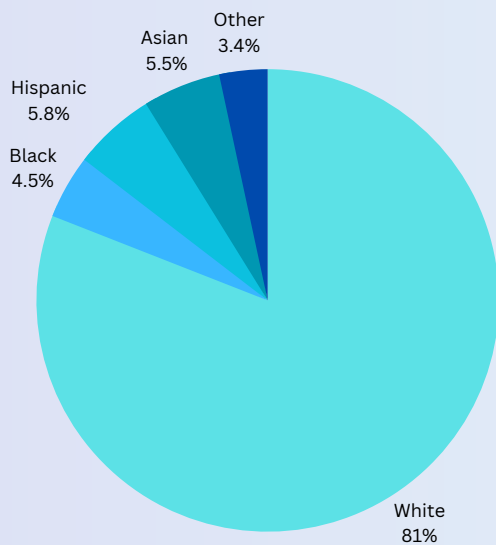
"Less than one-half (40%) of women of color rated race relations in their law school positively, compared to 70% of white men, 59% of men of color, and 58% of white women. In addition, more than half of women of color (52%) reported interactions with students and/or faculty that negatively impacted their academic performance, compared to 21% of white men. Moreover, women of color were 20% less likely to feel comfortable raising their hand in class than white men" (Bagby, 2020).



According to Law360, "Of the white applicants, 78% received at least one law school admission offer, compared to 48% of Black applicants, 52% of Native Americans and Alaska Natives, 58% of Hispanic and Latino applicants and 67% of Asians" (Read, 2023).

At an even smaller percentage than women of color in the legal profession, black women begin their careers in law with a severe lack of support and representation.

IT CONTINUES THROUGHOUT PROFESSIONAL CAREERS...



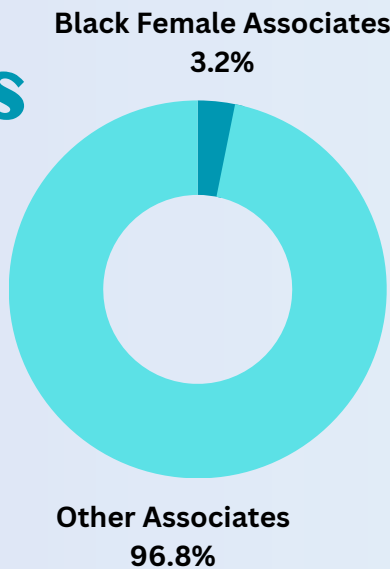
2022 U.S. LAWYER DEMOGRAPHICS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY



Among U.S. Lawyers, these are the percentages that black women lawyers represent in law firms...

ASSOCIATES

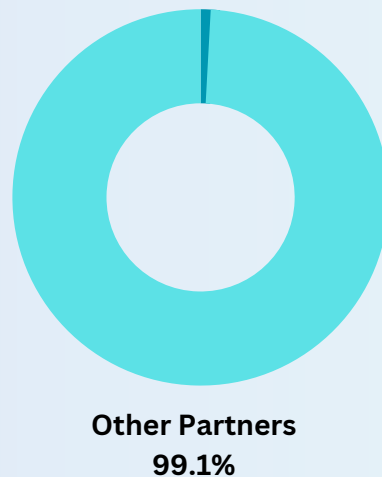
Associates are lawyers who typically have less experience in law, and has no ownership of the firm.



Black Female Partners

PARTNERS

Partners are lawyers who share partial ownership of the firm.



Significantly less black women are becoming partners in law firms than other lawyers of different racial demographics, and are underrepresented in law firm administration.

References

American Bar Association.(2022). Lawyers By Race and Ethnicity (2022). ABA. [https://www.abalegalprofile.com/demographics.php#:~:text=Black%20lawyers%20were%204.7%25%20of,the%20U.S.%20populati on%20\(13.4%25\).](https://www.abalegalprofile.com/demographics.php#:~:text=Black%20lawyers%20were%204.7%25%20of,the%20U.S.%20populati on%20(13.4%25).)

Read, T. (2023, May 17). Minorities, Women Still Lag Behind in Law School Admissions. Law360. <https://www.law360.com/articles/1678601/minorities-women-still-lag-behind-in-law-school-admissions>

Crossley, N. (2022, June 10). For black women lawyers, the needle has barely moved at law firms. Crain's Chicago Business. <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/equity/gains-black-women-law-firms-remain-disappointingly-low#:~:text=The%20percentage%20of%20Black%20women,just%200.24%20points%20since%202009>

REFLECTION

The purpose to create this infographic was to compile all of the statistics and information relating to black women being underrepresented in the legal profession in an easy-to-understand and visualize format. It was also to show the dramatic difference in some of the statistics, for example, the partners and associates data reflects the huge division between black women being underrepresented in partner ownership of the firm/firm administration. I also wanted to show the progression of how underrepresentation and lack of support starts in law school, and how we can see it become even more of an issue farther into the profession.

My thesis seeks to identify the barriers that black women face in the legal profession, and the ways that those barriers can be avoided or made to be less of a hindrance to black, female lawyers. This infographic with the points of how black women are underrepresented in the profession will help speak to the real statistics and help visualize how large of a margin there is. I think it emphasizes the goal the thesis seeks to accomplish by showing that huge divide in the legal profession and how black women are statistically underrepresented as well.