

PRESS RELEASE

***Working Mother* Names Baker Donelson One of the 2017 "Best Law Firms for Women"**

July 25, 2017

Baker Donelson was today named by *Working Mother* magazine as one of the 2017 "Best Law Firms for Women" in recognition of using best practices in retaining and promoting women lawyers. The annual list recognizes 50 U.S. law firms for their policies in the advancement of women and for the implementation of work-life balance initiatives.

The full list of the 2017 *Working Mother* Best Law Firms for Women is posted [here](#) with highlights on representation of women and women of color in key leadership roles, and usage and promotion rates for reduced-hour lawyers, among other key points. For the first time, *Working Mother* worked in collaboration with the *ABA Journal* as a knowledge partner.

Christy Tosh Crider, chair of Baker Donelson's [Women's Initiative](#) and a shareholder in the Firm's Nashville office, said, "Baker Donelson has long been committed to ensuring a work environment where female attorneys thrive. We're exceptionally proud of this recognition by *Working Mother*, which is a validation of our efforts to create a workplace that is among the best in the country for women. We continue to be focused on the recruitment, retention, support and advancement of women in the profession and developing industry-leading policies that promote work-life balance."

Here are highlights from the 2017 [Working Mother Best Law Firms for Women](#) data:

- Over the last ten years, the percentage of female equity partners has increased to 20 percent from 16 percent and female non-equity partners has grown to 30 percent from 22 percent at the Best Law Firms. This year, the Best Law Firms employ more female equity partners (20 percent) than the national average (18 percent). (Source: National Association of Women Lawyers)
- Among their Top 10 rainmakers, 83 percent of the top firms have at least one woman.
- Since last year, the number of paid weeks of maternity leave offered at the Best Law Firms increased one week to an average of 16 weeks. Yet the average number of weeks of maternity leave taken by lawyer moms stayed the same, at 14. An average of eight weeks of paid paternity leave was offered with an average of four weeks taken.
- A majority (53 percent) of all lawyers at the top firms report working remotely, the most popular flex option among both male and female lawyers at every level, which is offered by all of the winning firms.

At Baker Donelson, female attorneys serve as leaders across the Firm. Currently, women serve as president and COO, on the board of directors, as office managing shareholders, and as practice group and committee chairs. Women lead numerous administrative departments within Baker Donelson as well, such as Knowledge Management, Recruiting and Professional Development. This year's class of new shareholders at the Firm was comprised of more than 50 percent women, making it the third consecutive year women have made up nearly or more than half of the Firm's newly elected shareholders. Baker Donelson offers an industry leading parental leave policy that allows for 16 weeks of paid leave that both male and female attorneys are eligible to take as primary caregivers, and offers intermittent leave, allowing both primary and non-primary caregiver attorneys to continue work during leave and transition back to full-time practice at their own pace.

Baker Donelson has received numerous recognitions as an exceptional workplace for women, including being ranked 53rd on FORTUNE's list of the "100 Best Workplaces for Women®" and being ranked third nationally in diversity for women in the 2018 edition of *Vault, Inc.*'s "Best Law Firms for Diversity." The Firm also recently was certified by the Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF) as a Gold Standard Firm for the third consecutive year.

Subha V. Barry, senior vice president and managing director of Working Mother Media, says, "This is the tenth year *Working Mother* has recognized the Best Law Firms for Women, which heralds U.S. law firms that create and use best practices in retaining and promoting women lawyers. We are proud to illuminate the accomplishments of the firms leading the way in helping women advance and achieve a more balanced work life."

"The *ABA Journal* is delighted to be part of the Best Law Firms for Women project that explores in depth what's really working at law firms to fill the diversity gap and ensure women are getting the support and resources they need to advance," says Molly McDonough, editor and publisher for the *ABA Journal*. The *ABA Journal*'s companion feature will appear in October.

Meredith Bodgas, editor-in-chief of *Working Mother*, says, "The Best Law Firms for Women are not only setting the standard for the modern-day law firm in supporting flexible work arrangements and offering generous paid leave but also ensuring that lawyers who take advantage of these programs are not excluded from the partnership track."

About the Methodology

Law firms completed an extensive application in the areas of workforce profile, flexibility, and development and retention of women. Best Law Firms were selected from a pool of self-selected applicant firms with 50 or more lawyers in the U.S. Statistics reported are aggregated from data provided by the firms collected from the full year of 2016.

About Working Mother Media

Working Mother Media (WMM), a division of Bonnier Corporation, publishes *Working Mother* magazine. The Working Mother Research Institute, the National Association for Female Executives, and Diversity Best Practices are also units within WMM. WMM's mission is to serve as a champion of culture change. *Working Mother* magazine reaches more than two million readers and is the only national magazine for career-committed mothers.