

PUBLICATION

Baker Donelson Recognized for Advancement of Women

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Recently, the Baker Donelson Women's Initiative has been in the press – A LOT. Don't worry, it's all good news. In June, Baker Donelson was honored to receive the Gold Standard Certification by the Women in Law Empowerment Forum (WILEF) for meeting objective criteria concerning the number of women among equity partners, in firm leadership positions and in the ranks of their most highly compensated partners. WILEF honors law firms whose advancement of women stands out. Criteria that are considered for WILEF Gold Standard Certification include the number of women attorneys who are equity partners; who serve as heads of the firm, its offices and practice groups or departments; who serve on the firm's primary governance committee; and who serve on the committee that determines equity partner compensation.

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.

Then, in July, *Working Mother* magazine named Baker Donelson as one of the 2017 "Best Law Firms for Women" in recognition of using best practices in retaining and promoting women lawyers. 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."

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."

For the sixth consecutive year, *Vault, Inc.* ranked Baker Donelson among the **top ten** law firms in the country in the 2018 edition of *Vault, Inc.*'s "Best Law Firms for Diversity." The Firm ranked tenth in the country on *Vault*'s overall "Best Law Firms for Diversity" list. The Firm was ranked **third** nationally for Diversity for Women, **tenth** for Diversity for Individuals with Disabilities and received **top 25** rankings in the categories of Diversity for Minorities and LGBT Diversity.