



**Education:** JD, Syracuse University College of Law; BA, Syracuse University

**Company Name:** Dechert LLP

**Industry:** Law

**Company CEO:** Henry N. Nassau

**Company Headquarters Location:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; New York, New York

**Number of Employees:** Approximately 2,000

**Your Location (if different from above):** Washington, D.C.

**Words you live by:** "It is easier to raise strong children than to repair broken men."  
—Frederick Douglas

**Who is your personal hero?** I was blessed. I didn't have to look any further than the opposite end of the kitchen table to find my role model and hero: my father, Vincent Cohen, Sr.

**What book are you reading?** The Mamba Mentality: How I Play by the late Kobe Bryant

**What was your first job:** Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program, tutoring inner-city youth in math and English

**Favorite charity:** 100 Black Men of Greater Washington

**Interests:** Traveling with family, basketball, skiing, and barbecuing

**Family:** My wife, Dr. Lisa Cohen; son, Vincent III (12); and daughter, Laila (10)

## Stand Out, Get Involved, and Speak Up

### The best advice I ever received

Before I went to law school, my father advised me to learn a skill that few people know how to do well. He said it would set you apart from others and no one could ever take it away from you. That advice set me on my journey to become a trial lawyer, and I now share this same advice with aspiring lawyers. I also advise new lawyers to go into government service early in their careers. It is a tremendous growth opportunity that often provides the chance to work at a higher level than one's experience would allow in the private sector.

### The nexus of business and community involvement

Community involvement is a great way to gain experience, nurture relationships, and make a positive impact. For example, I served as general counsel to, and remain an active member of, 100 Black Men of America, an organization focused on

improving the quality of life of minority youth. For three years, I have been an elected member of the Board of Governors of the Washington Bar Association. And I am an elected member of the Board of Trustees of Syracuse University. I meet interesting people with diverse backgrounds and careers, which helps with business development. Not only is community involvement the right thing to do, it also makes great business sense.

How unconscious bias affects hiring and career growth

In the United States, the cost of workplace bias is projected to be a staggering \$64 billion annually (Chisolm-Noel, 2020). Unconscious bias can impact decisions we make, including who deserves a raise and who gets a promotion. As a result, women and underrepresented groups face wage gaps, miss out on choice assignments, and are overlooked for leadership roles, which leads to higher employee

turnover and lower client satisfaction.

Dechert is tackling unconscious bias head on. Since 2018, firm leaders have dedicated time to intense, interactive sessions on inclusive leadership. Topics have included affinity bias, attribution bias, covering, in and out groups, priming, and unconscious bias. The program includes partner meetings devoted to building inclusive leadership skills. The most recent session focused on inclusive leadership in times of crisis, in response to both the global pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement.

While we continue to face obstacles, and it's easy to get discouraged, diverse lawyers and organizations can and do grow. Honing our skills, making ourselves invaluable, diversifying our work experiences, getting involved in our communities, and contributing to a speak-up culture are just some of the ways we prosper.