



Sara Roitman
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My credentials: JD, Boston College Law School, staff writer and note editor, Boston College Law Review; BA, Hamilton College

My work location: Chicago, Illinois

Words I live by: Work hard, say yes to opportunities, and be kind to people—these are words I both live by and my guiding professional philosophy.

What I'm reading now: These days, my favorite reading is largely focused on stories for my children. *Rosie Revere, Engineer* by Andrea Beaty and David Roberts (illustrator) is a beloved favorite. It is a heart-warming and inspiring read for girls and boys—especially if we are to inspire the next generation of diverse STEM leaders!

My favorite charity: Center for Reproductive Rights

My interests: Hiking, cooking, and traveling, in particular; but ultimately, doing anything with my family and our sweet golden retriever.

My family: My husband, Ben, and kids Will (5), Max (4), and Alice (1)

Company: Dechert LLP

Industry: Law

Company Headquarters: New York, New York/Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

CEO: Henry N. Nassau



In Her Own Words . . .

Increasing Diversity in STEM

Fortunately, the legal profession is ahead of other industries when it comes to involving diverse attorneys in STEM fields, but we have much room for improvement. In our field, you cannot overstate the importance of giving diverse lawyers opportunities early and often.

One thing firms can do to deliver high-quality STEM work from diverse attorneys is to ensure that the younger diverse lawyers are engaged in STEM issues early in their careers through partnerships with STEM-focused senior attorneys. This engagement will help young and diverse lawyers identify specific interests in STEM fields, while nurturing meaningful mentoring relationships. Equally important, it will help spark the next generation of diverse STEM leaders who will become passionate about key STEM issues and drive these talented diverse

lawyers into a wide range of roles.

Bringing down Barriers

There are many barriers to closing the gender gap, but there is also much we can do. One significant way we can close the gap and retain some of our greatest future STEM leaders is by showing young STEM women that they can successfully manage a career and a family. The more examples we have of senior STEM women who have chosen to have children and be involved as supportive parents, while also successfully holding demanding senior positions, the more we can attract the best talents from a diverse pool and provide younger women the support they need to remain in STEM fields.

The STEM World Is Changing

Product liability law is seeing an increase in gender-specific

mass tort litigation and a greater focus on women's health care products. This is attributable to several factors, including an increase in pharmaceutical products designed primarily or exclusively for women (e.g., hormone therapy, birth control, breast implants) and the fact that women tend to interact with the health care system more than men (even excluding pregnancy-related visits). Firms will benefit by being mindful of this trend and recruiting strong and diverse lawyers into STEM fields.

On a more contemporary note, we are exploring how the coronavirus pandemic will change the role of STEM issues in the product liability legal field. In particular, the constant focus by the lay media on medical science and public health may influence how judges, witnesses, jurors, and other stakeholders perceive and consider science and epidemiological issues going forward.