Company Name: Dechert LLP
Industry: Law
Company CEO: Co-Chairs: David Forti and Mark Thierfelder (effective July 1, 2023)
Company HQ Location: Philadelphia, PA; New York, NY
Number of Employees: Approx. 2,000
Your Location (if different from above): Chicago, IL

Amanda K. Antons, PhD, *Partner*

Education: JD, DePaul University, magna cum laude; PhD, Microbiology & Immunology, Vanderbilt University; BS, Agricultural Biochemistry, Iowa State University.

Words you live by: "Your children will become who you are, so be who you want them to be." – David Bly

Personal Philosophy: Work hard and be kind to people.

What book are you reading? *Far from the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity* by Andrew Solomon

What was your first job? Farm hand on my father's family farm

Favorite charity: Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

Interests: Beekeeping and traveling

Family: Steve, husband, and seven-year-old triplets, Harper, Grace and Nolan

What can be done to increase diversity in STEM fields?

The most impactful change to the level of diversity in STEM will come when STEM companies and organizations value diversity economically as much as they value qualities such as educational success and prior experience. We have observed this in the legal field. When clients of law firms began to demand that the teams staffed on their matters included a high percentage of diverse attorneys, the law firms began to view diversity as a value-add, both in the business sense and as the best way to achieve a successful outcome for the client. As a consequence, firms adopted more inclusive and equitable hiring practices.

What barriers do you see to closing the gender gap in STEM?

Efforts to resolve the gender gap are still undermined by the high number of women who leave STEM before they reach leadership levels. We have seen improvements in the pipeline of women in STEM, with a greater number of girls and young women studying and entering STEM fields than ever before. We need to continue to make strides in nurturing this pipeline, but – even more urgently – make improvements in keeping women in STEM so that they become leaders and decision-makers. Until we reduce the numbers of women leaving STEM (or the workforce, generally), there will be a continued gap at the highest levels that inevitably has a trickle-down impact. Reducing this gap will include, for example, making sure that women's inventions are considered for patenting at an equal rate as their male colleagues' and intentional efforts to ensure that women are compensated at the same level as men for their contributions to their STEM organizations.

Where do you see women in STEM in five years?

The drive to strengthen and boost the place of women in STEM fields is an opportunity that our daughters, mentees, and young professionals can and should be leveraging. From my viewpoint, the industry very much wants to bring women along at equal rates in the STEM fields. While there are obviously hurdles that we face relating to both the pipeline and retention of women in STEM, now is the time to elevate women to leadership roles in STEM, so that we ensure that those issues are addressed by the very individuals who have faced them. Fostering this virtuous cycle of advancement will ultimately work to empower women in STEM.