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**CLI Launches National Campaign for the Legal Profession: Step Up For Diversity**

**Denver, Colorado – October 26, 2011**—The Center for Legal Inclusiveness (CLI) has launched a national grassroots diversity and inclusiveness campaign for the legal profession. Timed to coincide with the Association of Corporate Counsel’s Annual Meeting in Denver, the campaign was part of CLI’s presentation, "Leading the Way: Legal Departments as Innovators on Corporate-Wide Diversity and Inclusiveness Efforts."

**“Step Up For Diversity: Take Action To Build An Inclusive Legal Profession,”** is a web-based action initiative to help diverse and female attorneys build crucial relationships for success and create a more inclusive legal profession overall. The initiative is one of the many ways CLI is working with legal organizations to increase the retention and advancement of diverse and female attorneys. CLI is also the creator of the only “how to” inclusiveness manual for the legal profession, ***Beyond Diversity: Inclusiveness In The Legal Workplace.***

National research studies report diverse and female attorneys are routinely (but mostly unintentionally) excluded from career-enhancing opportunities, which contributes to the fact that the legal profession is still the least diverse of all professional careers.

“Law firms and other legal organizations cannot afford to leave women and diverse attorneys on the sidelines, even if it is unintentional,” says Kathleen Nalty, CLI’s Executive Director. “The only way for the legal profession to make real progress is through awareness and action. There are so many people who would help if they only knew what to do – now they will with our action items.”

The campaign is aimed at corporate counsel, supervising/managing attorneys, and other attorneys, and the action items vary in degree of difficulty or effort required. Some are as simple as inviting a diverse or female attorney to lunch, while others are more involved, such as extending invitations to diverse and female attorneys to make substantive presentations in corporate law departments. The full list of action items can be viewed at [StepUpForDiversity.org](http://StepUpForDiversity.org).

Some of the attorneys participating so far include corporate counsel from Walmart Stores, MassMutual Financial Group, United Launch Alliance, Einstein Noah Restaurant Group, and Appliance Factory Outlet.

All lawyers are welcome to participate by logging their progress at [StepUpForDiversity.org](http://StepUpForDiversity.org). Participation is free and can be anonymous or public. As extra incentive, winners of this friendly competition will receive: recognition at CLI’s 2012 Legal Inclusiveness & Diversity Summit on May 7, 2012, in Denver, Colorado; free registration to the 2012 Summit with seating at a VIP luncheon table; and recognition on CLI’s website and Step Up for Diversity promotions.

For information about CLI, visit [www.centerforlegalinclusiveness.org](http://www.centerforlegalinclusiveness.org) or call 303-832-3502. CLI is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing diversity and inclusiveness in the legal profession. The organization takes a multi-faceted approach, with focused work on pipeline, recruiting, and retention in the legal profession, in law firms, within government, and inside in-house legal departments.

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