

## LCLD Alumni Advocacy Group Call: February 25, 2020

# Speaker Biographies



**Robert ("Rob") L. Jones, Jr.** is the Associate General Counsel of Labor for American Airlines, the largest airline in the world. His practice includes a wide range of labor & employment issues for a business that operates in more than 250 cities and 40 countries and has more than 100,000 employees. In this role, Jones provides labor and employment counsel and strategic advice to senior business leaders designed to minimize legal risks, maximize profit potential, and execute the best in employee relations and human resource practices. Jones serves as a lead negotiator for the company in the collective bargaining process, first chairs complex arbitrations, manages organizing campaigns, and manages labor attorneys. In his prior roles, Jones was the managing director of Labor Relations and a senior Labor & Employment attorney. Jones has authored countless articles on labor and employment issues and diversity practices and also appears and speaks on the company's behalf at labor and employment-based seminars including the American Bar Association, Minority Corporate Counsel Association, National Employment Law Council, Association of Corporate Counsel, and National Bar Association.



**Linda Seal** is the Associate General Counsel of The Home Depot. She directs the provision of legal services for The Home Depot's Outside Sales and Services organization. This organization is responsible for driving installation sales, store-based sales to professional customers, and sales through The Home Depot Pro, the company's maintenance, repair, and operations wholesale business. She leads and coaches her team as they manage legal and compliance matters for the organization. In addition to these responsibilities, Seal serves as The Home Depot's principal Government Relations counsel and is a member of the company's Political Action Committee board of directors. In this role she provides guidance with respect to all federal, state, and local lobbying, government contracting, and other government related legal matters.



With a legal career spanning over 20 years, **Juanita Harris** is a veteran corporate attorney that always makes time to invest in others. She currently serves as Assistant Vice President and Senior Legal Counsel to Human Resources at AT&T, Inc. at its global headquarters in Dallas, Texas. As a former accountant and auditor, she has the business acumen that enables her to better assist clients in structuring transactions in order to capitalize on business opportunities while identifying, weighing, and managing risk. Her expert advice and counsel on myriad employment matters helps drive business growth and mitigate risk associated with managing a diverse workforce of more than 250,000 domestic and international management and unionized employees.

Prior to her current role, Harris spent two years as a Labor & Employment attorney for AT&T where she managed labor arbitrations and litigation, while she also represented the company before the

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and the Department of Labor (DOL).

Since starting her career with AT&T in Washington, D.C. in 2001, Harris has provided advice and counsel to various business units including Federal Regulatory (successfully represented the company before the FCC advocating for regulatory relief), Wholesale Sales (closed several million dollars in new and renewing business), Finance - Revenue Recovery/Fraud litigation (received favorable decisions in several state and federal jurisdictions resulting in the recovery of several million dollars in funds and assets), Public Sector Sales (closed new business valued at more than \$1 billion dollars), and Healthcare Sales (successfully closed on several high profile deals valued at more than \$1 million dollars).

Prior to joining AT&T, Harris was a trial attorney in the Antitrust Division of the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Honors Attorney Program. During her seven-year stint with the DOJ,

Harris worked on several high-profile mergers, antitrust investigations, and litigation matters in the communications industry.

Harris is active in the AT&T Legal Department's Diversity & Inclusion Committee, and she serves as an AT&T Preferred Counsel "Front Door" Attorney. In this capacity she acts as a liaison between AT&T and its preferred counsel (including women and minority-owned firms). While serving as chair of the Pipeline Subcommittee she collaborated with AT&T attorneys to establish programs in support of the company's commitment to increase the diversity in the legal pipeline. Under her leadership, AT&T attorneys have mentored hundreds of economically disadvantaged high school students in Dallas, San Antonio, Atlanta, Chicago, and San Francisco. The mentoring program is such a success that it is now inaugurated in Mexico.

Harris has also led the legal team's development of a mentoring program with the University of Texas at Arlington Pre-Law Center. She garnered the support of law firms representing AT&T, successfully encouraging them to join corporate attorneys in mentoring undergraduate students at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Notably, some previously-mentored students have entered the legal profession. Determined to eradicate one of the barriers of entry to law school faced

by economically disadvantaged students (i.e. the law school entrance exam), Harris led an effort at AT&T which resulted in the establishment of an endowment for scholarships to cover the cost of the Law School Admissions Test ("LSAT") prep course for UTA Pre-Law Center undergraduate students. In keeping with her servant's heart, she serves on AT&T's Employee Giving Cabinet. In 2017, she introduced several new fundraising and Day of Service programs to the Cabinet, which resulted in the mobilization of more than 500 AT&T attorneys. The cross-country team raised nearly \$1M in financial contributions and volunteered hundreds of hours with various charities across the nation.

Harris is a FINRA arbitrator and holds a J.D. (*cum laude*) from Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law where she was a *Law Review* editor, and a B.B.A. in accounting (finance minor) from University of North Texas. She is engaged in various professional and civic organizations, including the Corporate Counsel Women of Color, the American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, J.L. Turner Legal Association, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Texas Women's Foundation Village Giving Circle. In 2018, she was appointed as a member of the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession and was reappointed in 2019 where she is serving as the Chair of the ABA Model Diversity Survey Committee. She is an American Bar

Fellow and serves on the Texas Bar Office of Minority Affairs Steering Committee of the Texas Minority Counsel Program (TMCP) whose mission is to increase opportunities for minority and women attorneys.

Harris is also a member of the Leaders Circle of the Center for Women in Law (CWIL) and serves on the Board of Directors of the Family Gateway, an organization working to provide stability and life-changing supportive services to children and families affected by homelessness. Harris was awarded the 2017 Outstanding Corporate Counsel of the Year for Diversity Award by the DFW Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel and the Texas Lawbook upon receiving the highest number of nominations from in-house and outside counsel in the Dallas - Fort Worth Legal community. In 2019, the Women's Law Division of the National Bar Association recognized Harris as the Outstanding In-House Counsel. Harris is a 2019 recipient of the very prestigious *Corporate Counsel* and *Inside Counsel* "Women, Influence & Power" Award, which spotlights North American women leaders who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership and business acumen and exhibited a personal dedication to the promotion of diversity in the legal industry. She has appeared on several

panels, including the 2019 Association of Corporate Counsel Annual Meeting, 2019 Center for Women in Law Power Summit, and the 2019 National Bar Association Mid-Year Conference. Harris and her husband, Jurel F. Smith, Jr., reside in Plano, Texas.

Her personal mantra: "So long as everyone is giving, then everyone should be receiving."

Her view of life: "Life is like a park swing, to go higher we must kick harder with each down swing!"