

# Proskauer Hosts Juneteenth Forum on Being Black in America and Effective Allyship

**June 30, 2020**

New York, June 30, 2020 – Our Proskauer community gathered together on Friday, June 19th to commemorate and celebrate the Juneteenth holiday with a virtual panel discussion forum. Considered the longest-running African American holiday, Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, celebrates the effective end of slavery in the United States.

Proskauer’s Black Lawyer Affinity Group (BLAG) hosted the virtual panel entitled, “A Path Forward: A Conversation on Being Black in America and Effective Allyship,” to provide a forum for listening to and learning about the lived experiences of our Black colleagues. More than 1,000 members of the Proskauer community attended the forum, including Firm alumni and clients.

Special guest [Michelle Silverthorn](#), culture change expert and founder and CEO of Inclusion Nation, led the conversation alongside featured panelists from Proskauer: partner and head of the Los Angeles office [Bart Williams](#), associate [Atoyia Harris](#), associate [Tosin Adeyeri](#), and associate director of human resources Mark Bunbury. The panel was also joined by associates [Brittany Benavidez](#) and [Tiffany Woo](#), who discussed the importance of being an active ally.

Associate and BLAG co-chair [Sean Spence](#) introduced the panel, poignantly remarking that, “Unless we start with a diagnosis that anti-Black racism has been woven into the fabric of this country since long before Juneteenth, we will never eradicate this disease that to this day devalues and dehumanizes Black lives.”

Mark Bunbury emphasized that the Juneteenth forum “highlighted the importance of organizations and people sustaining the call to action generated by the tragic deaths of George Floyd and many others – and demonstrates the Firm’s commitment to that call to action.”

- **Bart H. Williams**

Partner

- **Atoyia S. Harris**

Special Employment Law Counsel

- **Sean Spence**

Partner