



Issue 164 | July 16

Gender Discrimination in Big Law?

Lawsuit in Cleveland Highlights Gender Discrimination Problems in Big Law

Did Cleveland-based Big Law firm Jones Day systematically discriminate based on gender, pregnancy and maternity, and maintain a "black box" compensation system where high-ranking partners made decisions without proper transparency or oversight? Those are among the allegations in a \$200 million class-action lawsuit filed earlier this year by Sanford Heisler Sharp, a firm that since 2018 has also brought separate \$100 million gender discrimination suits against Morrison & Foerster and Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart. Whatever the merits or outcome of this suit, according to [Crain's Cleveland Business](#), its sheer magnitude provides a good opportunity to reflect on gender discrimination in Big Law and whether many firms' stated intentions match everyday reality for women lawyers.

Now Open for Applications: ABE Opportunity Grants for Access to Justice

Does your bar organization (or an affiliated group) have innovative programs that help increase access to justice? If so, you may be eligible for an Opportunity Grant from the American Bar Endowment: Since the grants began in 2017, each year, at least one bar-related organization has been among the awardees. The grant cycle for 2020 is now open, with applications due on September 30, 2019. The [ABE grants page](#) has more information about past winners, eligibility, and how to apply.

Michigan Proposes Duty of Tech Competence but Deviates from ABA Model Rule

Michigan may soon become the 37th state to adopt the duty of technology competence for lawyers, via proposed amendments for which the state Supreme Court is seeking public comments until August 1. Most states that have gone this route have fully adopted ABA Model Rule 1.1, Comment 8, but Michigan's version seems to emphasize newer technology as opposed to technology in general. At [LawSites](#), lawyer and technology expert Robert Ambrogi offers his take on this variation, and on a public comment that he says provides some food for thought.

ABA Files SCOTUS Amicus Brief Arguing That Civil Rights Act Covers LGBTQ Discrimination

Earlier this month, the ABA filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in three related cases, seeking to declare that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 encompasses employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or transgender status. In recent months, federal courts have disagreed on whether sexual orientation and transgender status are covered by Title VII, and the court has set arguments for all three cases on October 8. In its brief, the ABA argued that this form of discrimination is based on gender stereotypes and constitutes sex discrimination. An [ABA news item](#) shares more details about the three cases, and a link to the amicus brief.



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