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College of Law Practice Management Announces

2014 InnovAction Award Winners

Two awards given in our tenth anniversary

October 28, 2014 – Ann Arbor, Michigan – The College of Law Practice Management, an international organization that recognizes excellence in law practice management, today announced the recipients of the 2014 InnovAction Awards. Higgs & Sons Solicitors and Legal Talent Lab are the two recipients of the coveted 2014 InnovAction Awards.

For the tenth year, the InnovAction Awards have recognized outstanding innovation in the delivery of legal services, demonstrating to the legal community what can happen when passionate professionals, with big ideas and strong convictions, resolve to create effective change.

Here are the 2014 InnovAction Award-winning entries:

- [Legal Talent Lab](#), **OnRamp Fellowship**. Key Team Members: Caren Ulrich Stacy, Legal Talent Lab in collaboration with several partners and directors at Sidley, Hogan Lovells, Baker Botts and Cooley

The legal profession has a leaky pipeline. Plenty of high-performing lawyers enter the profession, but many of them – women in particular – leave within a few years. In most AmLaw 200 firms there is a 50/50 gender split at the entry-level, but only 16% of the partnership are women. Once these women lawyers exit the profession, it is not easy to get back in. Since law firms usually hire and advance lawyers based on tenure, it's difficult for a returning lawyer and her potential employer to know where she fits into the traditional structure upon re-entry.

The OnRamp Fellowship, created in December 2013, aims to address this problem by replenishing the pipeline of mid to senior level women lawyers in law firms. As the first “Returnship” ever launched in the legal profession, the Fellowship is a re-entry platform that matches experienced women lawyers returning to the profession with law firms for a one-year, paid position. This unique experiential learning program gives returning women an opportunity to demonstrate their value in the marketplace while also broadening their experience, skills, and legal contacts. In turn, the legal profession and law firms benefit by engaging with a previously untapped pool of high-performers and by increasing gender diversity in the profession.

Four top firms -- Sidley, Baker Botts, Cooley, and Hogan Lovells -- initially piloted the Fellowship by hiring 9 returning women lawyers as Fellows in May 2014. In September 2014, just a few short months later, 11 law firms joined the four founding firms to offer more than 80 Fellowships in 24 cities across the U.S. as part of the first “Returnship” ever launched in the legal profession for women lawyers. The additional firms include: Akerman, Baker Donelson, Blank Rome, Crowell & Moring, Fenwick & West, Fish & Richardson, Fried Frank, Jenner & Block, K&L Gates, Orrick and White & Case.

- [Higgs & Sons Solicitors](#), **Achieving Cultural Transformation**. Key Team Members: Glyn Morris, Higgs & Sons, Paul Hunt, Higgs & Sons, Krishna Balthu, Higgs & Sons, Prof. Ben Clegg, Aston Business School.

Higgs & Sons (Higgs) has successfully delivered an innovative programme aimed at transforming its culture and operations, and at the same time redefined its brand as an early innovator and a role model within the UK legal industry.

Through a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with Aston Business School (Aston), Higgs has developed a unique methodology for achieving cultural transformation throughout the fabric of a law firm with a 139 year history.

Significant achievements include:

- Measurable cultural change towards building a law firm that is innovation-driven and change-ready, by harnessing the latent creativity within the professionals. Lawyers were able to link their actions with both the firm's performance and the macro-economic events.
- Ground breaking application of academic techniques (notably PrOH Modeling developed by Professor Ben Clegg at Aston Business School) and the rigor of a research approach to solve traditional business problems faced by the legal industry.
- Profitability of the firm has dramatically increased.
- Developed innovative tools and frameworks that are changing the way every lawyer thinks about price and service, as well as new and innovative ways of scoping, pricing and budgeting cases at the outset based on clients' perception of value and risk.
- Developed a robust methodology for delivering change within a professional service environment at an accelerated pace.

Timothy B Corcoran, Principal of Corcoran Consulting Group was the Chair of the InnovAction Committee and the InnovAction award judges included Ida Abbott, Ida Abbott Consulting; Tom Clay, Altman Weil; Patrick Lamb, The Valorem Law Group, Merrilyn Astin Tarlton, Astin Tarlton/Attorney at Work; and Tony Williams, Jomati Consultants LLP.

The awards were presented on Friday, October 17, 2014 at a special lunch session during the 2014 Future's Conference, held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the College of Law Practice Management in Boston, Massachusetts.

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About COLPM

The College of Law Practice Management (the College) is a not-for-profit organization formed in 1994 to honor and recognize distinguished law practice management professionals, to set standards of achievement for others in the profession, and to fund and assist projects that enhance the highest quality of law practice management. The College and its Fellows inspire excellence and innovation in law practice management by:

- Honoring extraordinary achievement
- Developing, exchanging and disseminating knowledge
- Stimulating innovation in the delivery of legal services

About 2014 InnovAction Awards

The College continues its global search for ingenuity in law practice management. Designed to inspire creative thinking in a field known for its over-reliance on precedent, the InnovAction Awards are intended not only to identify effective innovation but also to inspire it through international recognition.

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