



## News

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### Irwin Fritchie Achieves Midsize Mansfield Certification PLUS Status

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NEW ORLEANS, LA (May 24, 2023)** – Irwin Fritchie Urquhart Moore & Daniels, LLC, is proud to announce that, after a rigorous 18-month process, the firm has achieved Midsize Mansfield Certification PLUS status.

In an announcement made by Diversity Lab, facilitator of the Mansfield Certifications, Irwin Fritchie was named as one of approximately 35 firms, nation-wide, to have achieved Midsize Mansfield Certification PLUS status in 2023.

“When I joined Irwin Fritchie many years ago,” **stated Irwin Fritchie President, Timothy F. Daniels**, “I knew the culture of acceptance and the celebration of diversity was already engrained within the firm, and I am proud that we have remained steadfast in our commitment to diversity and inclusion. We have always appreciated the significance of those core values with our firm and to the critical work we do on behalf of our clients. The achievement of Mansfield Certification, including the additional level of Mansfield’s PLUS status, is a true reflection of our longstanding commitment to diversity within all levels of firm leadership.”

“While I am truly honored and appreciative for our firm, my deep sense of pride for this achievement,” **continued Daniels**, “also comes from seeing the hard work of Darleene Peters – Irwin Fritchie Partner and Diversity Committee Chairperson – come to fruition after this long process, and in knowing that the rest of the world is now able to see what I have understood for years: that Irwin Fritchie is and always has been a national leader in the promotion of diversity and inclusion, both internally and externally. There remains important work to be done in our continued pursuit of true equity and inclusiveness, and we are excited to take on those challenges, but it is a genuine pleasure to celebrate Darleene’s accomplishment in bringing

everything together so we can share our firm culture with the world.”

The Midsize Mansfield Certification focuses on diversifying firm teams and leadership by broadening the slate of talent considered for internal leadership roles. The Certification “PLUS” status achieved by Irwin Fritchie indicates that, in addition to successfully meeting the consideration and transparency requirements of Mansfield Certification, the firm has also achieved 30% representation of historically underrepresented lawyers in current leadership roles and pathway activities. The process for Irwin Fritchie to obtain this certification included a rigorous 18-month collaboration between the firm and Diversity Labs to track, measure, and achieve diversity in firm leadership.

“I have been involved in Diversity efforts for most of my 25-year legal career,” said **Darleene D. Peters**, Irwin Fritchie Partner and DEI&B Committee Chairperson. “As the first African American attorney hired at Irwin Fritchie – who would then become its first African American female partner – I did not know in those early days of the firm that all of my passion and preparation would ultimately lead me to chairing Irwin Fritchie’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEI&B) Committee and being proactively involved in the firm obtaining this Mansfield Certification Plus status.”

“Considering that I am part of a group that is considered traditionally underrepresented,” continued **Peters**, “all of this is a blessing, honor, and a privilege, and it is incredibly rewarding to be part of a firm that is determined to make a difference. Our profession still has quite a bit of growing to do in order to be more diverse and equitable, but I am committed to being part of the solution and of this critical movement.”

The goal of Mansfield is to increase and sustain diversity in law firm leadership through a science-driven method that embeds accountability, transparency, and knowledge-sharing into our talent practices. Along with diverse leadership comes more inclusive and equitable decisions that reflect the needs of a diverse workforce for the benefit of firm talent and clients.

To build upon the early successes of the original Mansfield Rule designed in 2017 for larger law firms, the Midsize Mansfield Certification was tailored and launched in 2020 for firms with fewer than 150 lawyers that have smaller footprints, less formal leadership structures, and fewer hiring and leadership selections. Following similar principles, the certification measures whether midsize firms have considered at least 30% women lawyers, underrepresented racial and ethnic lawyers, LGBTQ+ lawyers, and lawyers with disabilities for leadership and governance roles, equity partner promotions, formal client pitches, lateral lawyer hiring, and more. And while working to achieve these benchmarks, the certified midsize firms also embedded transparency in their advancement processes through written leadership role descriptions and clearly defined pathways to leadership.

Certified firms like Irwin Fritchie are tracking and measuring leadership pipelines and ensuring that their processes for advancement are transparent. Several data points illustrate the outcomes, including:

- Prior to adopting Mansfield, less than one-quarter of participating midsize firms tracked who was considered for equity partner promotions or open lateral lawyer roles.

- Pre-Mansfield, even fewer firms – only 15% – tracked who was considered for leadership such as practice group leaders, office heads, and C-suite roles.
- Less than one-half of participating midsize firms had written and transparent job descriptions for leadership and governance roles prior to adopting Mansfield; research shows that clear and open disclosure of information, as required by Mansfield, helps out-groups become in-groups and levels the playing field for all talent by writing down the unwritten rules and ensuring that everyone has access.

### **About Irwin Fritchie ([www.irwinllc.com](http://www.irwinllc.com))**

With a national reputation as one of the premier defense litigation firms in the country, Irwin Fritchie Urquhart Moore & Daniels LLC serves as national, regional and local counsel for public companies, privately owned businesses, governmental entities, non-profit organizations, individuals, and insurers with civil litigation needs, including Products Liability, Pharmaceutical and Medical Device, Construction, Railroad and Transportation, Trucking, Premises Liability, Professional Liability, and Casualty.

Irwin Fritchie was founded in 2000 by six partners from one of the oldest firms in New Orleans who had a collective vision of creating a firm that would provide clients with the highest level of service. With offices in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Irwin Fritchie has since become the only Louisiana-based law firm – and its individual attorneys are the only Louisiana lawyers – to be recognized by Chambers and Partners on the national level for Product Liability & Mass Tort.

### **About Diversity Lab ([www.diversitylab.com](http://www.diversitylab.com))**

Diversity Lab is an incubator for innovative ideas and solutions that boost diversity and inclusion in law. Experimental ideas are created through our Hackathons and piloted in collaboration with more than 350 top law firms and legal departments across the country. Diversity Lab leverages data, behavioral science, design thinking, and technology to further develop and test new ideas and research, measure the results, and share the lessons learned.

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