

SAVOY

A close-up portrait of Reginald M. Turner, a Black man with short, graying hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red, white, and blue striped tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

**Reginald
M. Turner**

**145th President
American Bar
Association**

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**2022 Most
Influential**

Black Lawyers

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Diversity and Inclusion is Rooted in “We,” Not “I”

BY SHERRIE L. FARRELL
DYKEMA GOSSETT PLLC

Go alone, go fast; Go together, go far.
An African Proverb

Congratulations to *Savoy* magazine’s 2022 Most Influential Black Lawyers. I am humbled to be counted among such a stellar group of extraordinary lawyers. I also thank *Savoy* magazine for the unwavering commitment to showcase Black excellence in the legal and business professions.

It is most fitting that we recognize and celebrate such impressive professional achievements. It is equally fitting that we also recognize the dedication to improving not just the legal profession but the communities in which we live and work. The past two years have put a spotlight on how important that dedication is in elevating our lives and the lives of others.

Our successes are not just individual. Our successes also are collective. The most important lessons I’ve learned in nearly 25 years as a lawyer have nothing to do with my technical, legal acumen and knowledge or being a partner at a law firm. My most important lessons are cemented in the foundation of centuries-old stories of faith, struggle, perseverance and triumph. This is a foundation rooted in building unity, and collaboration and partnerships. This is a foundation rooted in the “we,” instead of in the “I.”

Sustainable change, particularly in the areas of diversity and inclusion, is built on collaboration, respect, courage and action. As armor-bearers in the legal profession, each day we are challenged with building that change.

I’ve been blessed to count among my mentors and supporters a diverse group of people who poured into me both practice and practical lessons for growing as a lawyer at a firm. My mentors have included other African American attorneys, Caucasian men and women, Asian lawyers—both inside and outside the firm. I also have been blessed to serve a diverse group of clients who have mentored me, and provided me with unwavering support, confirmation and opportunity.

A testament to that collective foundation—indeed in the “walking the talk”—has been the enduring partnerships and collaborations between outside counsel and corporate counsel. The phrase,



Sherrie L. Farrell
Partner
Dykema Gossett

“breaking the glass ceiling” often is used to laud a woman or person of color’s individual success and accomplishments. In corporations and law firms across this country, these partnerships continue to put crack after crack into the glass ceilings in the legal profession, helping to drive change. These partnerships are intentional, committed, and transformative. These partnerships bring hope that extends well beyond our individual firms and corporations and into the fabric of our nation.

The collaborations with others has had a positive impact in my career and in the careers of so many African American lawyers. Great stories and great successes are never paved on a road alone. Each of us has a story of a mentor, friend, colleague or peer that has given us a helping hand. Each of us also has a story where we were the mentor, friend, colleague or peer that gave someone a helping hand.

We are the change that we want to see, and the change that our profession needs to see.

Again, congratulations to the 2022 Most Influential Black Lawyers for your distinguished careers and commitment to the community. Thank you *Savoy* magazine for this outstanding recognition. **S**