



Social Justice Initiative

Launched in 2021, Burr & Forman's Social Justice Initiative (SJI) is a voluntary effort of attorneys and staff. SJI is responsible for leading Burr & Forman's efforts to advance social justice in our firm, communities, and legal system. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Therefore, members of SJI will do their part to achieve a more just and equitable society.

Goals

The primary objectives of SJI are to:

- Raise awareness of injustice and inequities facing historically marginalized communities.
- Provide opportunities to realize justice by making a meaningful improvement in the lives of individuals and communities suffering injustice.
- Counteract barriers to justice, including prejudice, misinformation, antipathy, and apathy.
 - Where there is prejudice, we will promote knowledge and understanding.
 - Where there is misinformation, we will promote truth.
 - Where there is antipathy, we will promote empathy.
 - Where there is apathy, we will promote action.

SJI aims to meet these objectives through internal programming and activities, coordination with and support of external organizations, volunteerism, and pro bono work.

SJI's Impact

- SJI offered a firm-wide anti-racism training, which included an overview of the language and imagery of racism and an in-depth discussion on how individuals can eradicate racism within themselves and their sphere of influence.
- SJI organized a firm-wide book club featuring *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein. Rothstein's book examines, in unprecedented detail, the history of redlining, the role of government and business, and the enduring impact of residential segregation.

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- SJI planned a Day of Remembrance to encourage reflection on past injustices and remind all of the need for continued social justice advocacy. Attorneys and staff in multiple offices participated in local activities to commemorate the event. These activities included a trip to the Florida Holocaust Museum, the Milestone Walking Tour at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, a tour of the Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte, a visit to the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, and a guided tour of the Martin Luther King National Park in Atlanta.
- SJI hosted a webinar on the key elements of Critical Race Theory, controversies covered by the press, and the role of Critical Race Theory in understanding American history and contemporary racial inequities.
- During the 2022 election season, SJI affirmed voting rights by providing historical information and resources for voter registration and informed participation.
- Members of SJI spearheaded the 2023 Spring Food Drive. Thanks to their efforts, Burr & Forman raised over \$3000 and collected food items for local charities across the firm's footprint.
- As part of Burr & Forman's observation of Juneteenth 2023, SJI circulated information on the history of the holiday, its promise of freedom, and the nation's current challenges with mass incarceration and wrongful convictions.
- SJI held a School Supply Drive and partnered with Communities in Schools (CIS) to donate over 1200+ school supplies in addition to monetary donations.
- SJI organized a book club on *Built From the Fire*, a historical account of the infamous 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre by Victor Luckerson. Mr. Luckerson meticulously researched the destruction of "Black Wall Street" and the community's resilience and determination in the following decades. During a firm-wide presentation, Victor chronicled the legal battles of entrepreneurs who lost their businesses to the violence.
- SJI supports long-standing civil rights organizations through pro bono work and charitable donation drives.