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Diversity Scorecard

Several firms bucked the overall trend, rising in the rankings thanks to improved minority lawyer numbers. Among them: Chadbourne & Parke (going from sixty-second to twenty-ninth) and White & Case (from ninth to fourth). These firms trimmed lawyers, but managed *not* to lose a disproportionate share of minority lawyers.

CHADBOURNE JUMPED TO 29TH SPOT IN 2010 AMERICAN LAWYER DIVERSITY SCORECARD

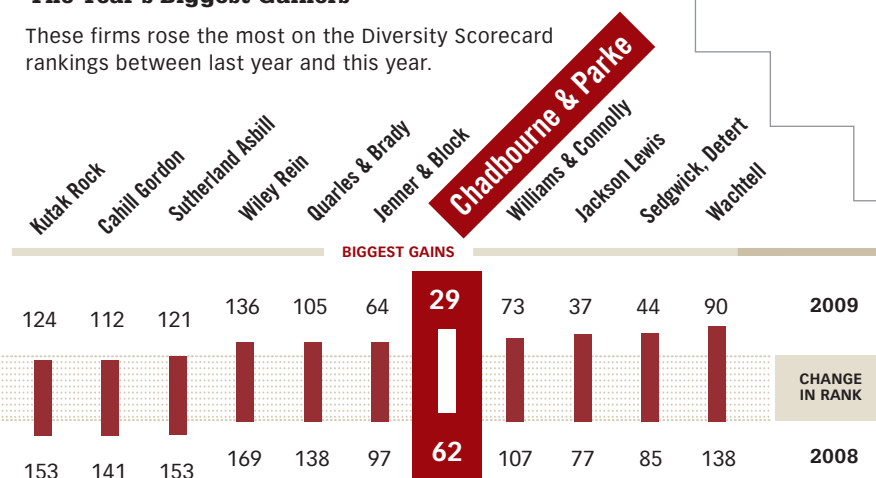
FOURTEEN LARGE FIRMS lost at least 10 percent of their U.S. head count and still upped their percentage of minority lawyers. And while they may not have actually added many minority lawyers, at least they avoided large net losses. One of the biggest improvements came

at Dallas-based Winstead (rising from number 87 to number 66 on the Diversity Scorecard), where the percentage of minority lawyers rose from 11.4 percent to 13.4 percent. Winstead had a net gain of one minority lawyer while laying off or accepting the voluntary departures of 13 percent of its lawyers. "There was no pointed effort to save minority lawyers from layoffs," says Winstead partner Teresa Schneider, the firm's director of professional development. "Our numbers simply illustrate the importance we put on diversity in years past." The firm retooled its diversity program starting in 2007, she says, nearly tripling its diversity budget and hiring a consultant who revamped Winstead's recruiting efforts to better account for minority applicants. The firm also tied practice group leaders' compensation to their ability to recruit minority lawyers.

Other firms also cited their diversity programs for helping them boost their minority percentages despite overall cuts. Chadbourne & Parke's percentage of minority lawyers rose

The Year's Biggest Gainers

These firms rose the most on the Diversity Scorecard rankings between last year and this year.



from 13.6 percent to 16.7 (pushing it from number 62 to number 29 on the Scorecard), even as it lost dozens of lawyers in its U.S. offices. Director of legal personnel Karen Eisen says the firm may be reaping benefits from its 2006 decision to create a diversity committee and hire a diversity manager.

Likewise, Foley Hoag cites a renewed diversity push for its percentage of minority lawyers inching up from 13.6 percent in 2008 to 14 percent in 2009. Peter Rosenblum, Foley's partner in charge of diversity initiatives, says the firm consciously avoided the "last hired, first hired" mentality during its January 2009 round of 17 layoffs. Instead, he says, Foley based those decisions on how it viewed lawyers' roles in the firm's future. In the end, Winstead's Schneider says, the best way to ensure that minority lawyers survive a downturn is to create an atmosphere that fosters diversity during flush times. That way, she says, those lawyers don't get "lost in the mix" when times get tough.

—CLAIRE ZILLMAN

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