

Charlene Theodore



A diversity consultant, change management strategist and engaging speaker, Charlene helps shift perspectives and change the way leaders and employees think about the modern workplace.

Charlene Theodore is Chief Inclusion Officer at McCarthy Tétrault. Committed to concrete action in advancing the Firm's core mission to accelerate diversity, inclusion and corporate social responsibility, Charlene oversees McCarthy Tétrault's award-winning Inclusion Now program. Charlene sits on the Firm's Inclusion Now Council, an action-oriented governance model that leads the implementation of our EDI programs. Charlene also supports the firm's clients with strategic advice on innovative and impactful solutions to realizing equity in the workplace.

Charlene has a unique understanding of the interconnection between the legal profession and EDI, and how to achieve tangible results. As the first Black president of the Ontario Bar Association (OBA) and 10th woman to hold Office, Charlene designed and implemented a series of initiatives for law firms and Corporate Canada to reimagine workplaces — building productive, profitable, healthy, diverse and inclusive work environments.

Charlene's achievements in workplace equity and inclusion are informed by her experience as a former employment and labour lawyer. She appeared before administrative tribunals and various levels of court, including Canada's Federal Court of Appeal. She also represented the interests of Canadians of African descent before federal and provincial legislative committees, as well as United Nations human rights treaty bodies. Her employment and labour practice was centred on advising management and boards on all aspects of governance and workplace operations including government relations, labour negotiations, pensions, and benefits.

Charlene is a member and former Director of the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers (CABL), Canada's largest national association of Black lawyers and judges. She is a recipient of a 2017 Lexpert Zenith Award honouring her for work in advancing the interests of women in the legal profession and society. In 2020, Charlene was named one of Canada's 25 Most Influential Lawyers by Canadian Lawyer Magazine.

Charlene is also a member of the Top 40 Advisory Board, a body that reflects the diversity and leadership excellence in Canadian business, and identifies outstanding young business leaders for Canada's Top 40 Under 40 Award.