

Paulette Brown Bio

Paulette Brown is the first woman of color to lead the American Bar Association (ABA) in its history. As the leader of this 400,000 voluntary member organization, Brown was responsible for governance, advocacy and serving as the voice and face of the ABA. As a result of her initiatives as president seven major policies were developed and approved by the ABA's governing bodies that will have a long-lasting impact on diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and the justice system. Brown simultaneously served as Chair of the Labor & Employment Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association becoming the first person of color to hold that position in 140 years.

Brown is a retired Senior Partner and Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer at an AmLaw 100 law firm and was engaged in the practice of law for more than forty-five (45) years. During her tenure, Brown created structures to ensure the hiring and retention of diverse attorneys and other team members. She is currently Founder and Principal of MindSetPower LLC. During her career, Paulette served in numerous legal capacities including in several in-house positions, owner of a law firm and as a Municipal Court Judge.

Brown also served as president of the National Bar Association and led a delegation to monitor the first free and democratic elections in South Africa. For her extensive work in Africa, Brown received from the National Bar Association the Inaugural Ronald Brown Award.

Brown is internationally recognized for her dedication and efforts relating to diversity, equity & inclusion, creating roadmaps and strategies to structurally incorporate DEI (including the impact of implicit bias) into the corpus of organizations and is a frequent speaker and educator on both. Brown served on the ABA's Commission on Women in the Profession and during that service, she served as the Co-author of the nationally acclaimed Report, *Visible Invisibility: Women of Color in Law Firms*. Following the launch of that report, Brown in 2006 formed the "Women of Color Law Collective", providing a safe environment for women of color focusing on cross-generational personal and professional development. Brown is also the co-author of *Left Out and Left Behind: The Hurdles, Hassles and Heartaches of Achieving Long-Term Legal Careers for Women of Color, Legal Careers of Parents and Caregivers: Results and Best Practices From a National Study of the Legal Profession*, a contributor to *ABA Women's Voices* and has had published numerous articles relating to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Brown has been recognized for her commitment to community service, the advancement of women and women of color and diversity, equity & inclusion. Resulting from her commitment and in recognition for her esteemed career, Brown has won numerous awards and honors, including being named by the *National Law Journal* as one of the most 50 Most Influential Minority Attorneys in the United States, by *Savoy Magazine* as one of the Most Influential Women in Corporate Business, *Ebony Power 100* and featured in several magazines. U.S. News & World Report has recognized her on its list of Best Lawyers in America, and she has been recognized as a NJ Super Lawyer since its inception. She is a member of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers and the American Law Institute.

Brown has received numerous awards including the C. Francis Stradford Award (the highest award

bestowed by the National Bar Association), The ABA's Margaret Brent and Spirit of Excellence Awards, The Thurgood Marshall College Fund's Award of Excellence, The Equal Justice and Gertrude Rush Awards from the National Bar Association, the Thurgood Marshall Award from the Garden State Bar Association, The Professionalism Award from the State Bar of New Jersey and the New Jersey Medal (first person of color to receive it) New Jersey Bar Foundation.

Brown is proud to have received the Outstanding Graduate of the Year from Howard University, Alumni of the year from Seton Hall University School of Law and three honorary doctorate degrees. Brown also served as the 2021 Jon B. Anderson Visiting Chair in Public Interest Law. Most recently in 2023, The Garden State Bar Association's Young Lawyer Award was renamed, "The Paulette Brown Young Lawyer Award".

Brown currently serves as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice and is a Board member of the Community Trust Foundation of New Jersey, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and Board of Visitors, Seton Hall University School of Law.