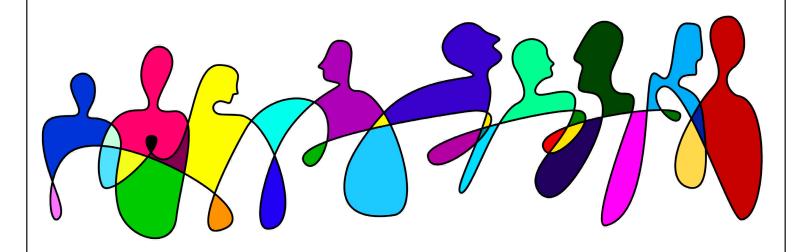


DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT FY 2021



Marcos A. Ramos Monica M. Ayres Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core commitments at Richards, Layton & Finger. These commitments have been there from the start: we were the first major Delaware law firm with a female partner, the first with an African American partner, the first with a South Asian partner, and one of the first with a Hispanic partner. Today I am proud to serve as not only the first woman president of Richards Layton, but also the first African American to lead a major Delaware law firm.

Our diversity efforts have deepened, and we recognize and understand the challenges of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the law. In response, we are creating professional development plans that respect our lawyers' differences, allowing each of us to bring our best selves to our work and to our clients. We are casting a wider net to recruit diverse law students. We are working to identify and develop a pipeline of diverse talent in our community and throughout the country.

But we cannot do it alone. This work requires a collective effort, so we are working with other Delaware law firms, the judiciary, our clients, and law schools—all in an effort to identify, recruit, hire, develop, retain, and promote the best talent, including diverse talent. And together we will continue to do this important work. I am excited about what the future holds and the role Richards, Layton & Finger will continue to play in our country's efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMITTEE CHAIRS

We are very pleased to share with you this summary report of certain activities of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Our committee's charge is to assist the firm as it works to increase diversity among its employees and to promote inclusive policies and practices within the firm. This means that the committee works to help the firm identify its policies and goals and then realize them. But at the same time, the committee also works more broadly to support the firm and its people as they engage in activities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession and our communities.

This report discusses several facets of the firm's and the committee's work. This includes the firm's participation as a member in various organizations that relate to and support diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession and our society. As one example, we highlight our firm's membership in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) and the participation of our attorneys in LCLD programs and initiatives. Beyond memberships, we discuss the extraordinary work being done by our Women's Initiative, including the events it sponsored and some of those who helped make those events a success. We then discuss the firm's and committee's sponsorships, event participation, and seminar offerings, which together reflect the firm's effort to broadly engage and positively contribute. Finally, we conclude the report by highlighting certain of the many pro bono and community service projects handled by the firm and its employees that further the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our lives, work, and community.

We hope that this report gives you a good sense of the concrete activities engaged in by the firm and the D&I Committee. We look forward to continuing to develop as a firm and a committee, and working with each of you to contribute to our mutual goals.





& OUR DIVERSITY INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Firm Mission

The firm's mission is to recruit the finest available talent and then focus on their development, so that each person can share the best of what they are for the benefit of our firm, our clients, and our community. Diversity and inclusion are core commitments for the firm. They reflect our conviction that talent comes in every form and everyone benefits when we work in an inclusive manner as we continuously develop our firm into what it will be in the future.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee's Focus

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee works to realize the firm's commitment to a workplace that is diverse and embraces inclusion. The committee assists the firm in its hiring and retention activities, leads the firm's efforts to support professional and other organizations that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion principles and practices within our legal and broader community, and develops, reviews, and examines inclusive and other policies and practices within the firm. The committee also supports the firm's employees as they engage in related personal, professional, pro bono, and charitable activities. The firm is committed to diversity and inclusion and the principle that the firm, our clients, and our community benefit from a workplace that promotes each individual's ability to learn, grow, and lead in their profession.

& OUR DIVERSITYINCLUSION COMMITTEE



Marcos A. Ramos Committee Chair



Monica M. Ayres Committee Vice Chair



Doneene K. Damon President



Lisa A. Schmidt Executive Vice President



Paul M. Altman Senior Vice President



Catherine G. Dearlove



Anne C. Foster



Paul N. Heath



Jennifer C. Jauffret



Beth Gansen Knight



Claire M. Love



Stephanie Norman



Mark V. Purpura



Srinivas M. Raju



John D. Seraydarian



Sara T. Toner



William A. Yemc



Melissa Lennon Chief Legal Talent Officer



Paul D. Webb Director of Marketing & Business Development



Danielle A. Nowaczyk Director of Attorney Development



Gina Edwards Human Resources & Benefits Manager

our Memberships

Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

In 2020, the firm joined the **Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)**, whose mission is to promote inclusivity in order to enhance the recruitment, retention, and advancement of attorneys of diverse backgrounds within the legal profession.

Minority Corporate Counsel Association

The firm is a member of the **Minority Corporate Counsel Association**, whose mission is to advance the hiring, retention, and promotion of diverse lawyers by providing research, best practices, professional development, training opportunities, and pipeline initiatives.



United States Law Firm Group

The firm is a member of the **United States Law Firm Group (USLFG)** and an active participant in its **Diversity & Inclusion** and **Women Lawyers Committees**. The USLFG, along with its committees, serves as a think tank on best practices for its member law firms throughout the United States, and the firm leverages its participation in these committees to improve and develop the firm's knowledge and practices.

Lex Mundi

The firm is proud to be the Delaware member firm of Lex Mundi, which is comprised of more than 150 member law firms spanning 100 countries across the globe. The firm is involved with Lex Mundi's Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, Women's Initiative Network to Success (LM WINS), which focuses on promoting, supporting, and advancing women in Lex Mundi's member firms, and the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation. Through the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, the firm's attorneys provide legal support to global organizations focused on societal changes that will improve lives and communities around the world.

Pro Bono Foundation

OUR MERSHIPS

Vault

The firm is a Vault Gold Member and participates in its annual Diversity, Equity & Inclusion survey, which reinforces its mission of enhancing and expanding diversity programming and career resources for law students and attorneys seeking lateral career moves.



National Association for Law Placement (NALP)

NALP is an association of over 2,500 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. NALP believes in fairness, facts and the power of a diverse community. The firm regularly engages with NALP through its annual surveys, conferences, and trainings.



Local Memberships

The committee supports the firm's involvement in a wide variety of local organizations, including the DE&I Diversity Clerkship Subcommittee of the Delaware State Bar Association (DSBA), Multicultural Judges & Lawyers Section of the DSBA, Delaware Barristers Association, Delaware Hispanic Bar Association, South Asian Bar Association of Delaware, LGBTQ+ Section of the DSBA, and Women & the Law Section of the DSBA.

LCLD INVOLVEMENT

LCLD's Annual Meeting

The firm's leadership team attended the LCLD's annual meeting from October 19-22, 2020. The LCLD's annual meeting provides the firm with the opportunity to learn from other LCLD members and their respective diversity and inclusion practices, and to contribute to the profession's commitment to continually evolve and improve in these areas.

LCLD 1L Scholars

The D&I Committee supports the firm's commitment to pipeline programs that create more opportunities for diverse talent and encourages traditionally underrepresented persons to consider and commit to a career in the legal profession. The firm's LCLD-related 1L Scholars Program is an excellent example of the firm's actualization of its commitment in this area. The firm implemented its 1L Scholars Program in 2020. Under that program, the firm hires several 1L students, including of diverse backgrounds, for our summer program and provides an opportunity for each 1L Scholar to return as a 2L participant in its summer program and to become a new attorney hire.

LCLD Success in Law School Mentoring

- In 2020, the firm began participating in the LCLD's Success in Law School Mentoring Program, which matches attorneys at LCLD member organizations with 1L students of diverse backgrounds to provide guidance and support to diverse law students throughout their first year of law school and beyond.
- The firm's 2020-21 LCLD mentors were Doneene Damon, Marcos Ramos, Sara Toner, Kate Mowery, Nicole Pedi, Melissa Lennon, and Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk.



LCLD INVOLVEMENT

 On May 25, 2021, the firm hosted its LCLD "Success in Law School" Mentors and Mentees for a virtual roundtable discussion and networking event along with the firm's 1L LCLD Scholars.



Featured in the picture from left to right are: Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk, Melissa Lennon, Angela Lam (LCLD Pathfinder), Doneene Damon (President), Sara Toner, Kate Mowery, Giordano Silvaggi, Vanessa Moody, Amanda Hurd, Niayla-Dia Murray, Nicole Pedi, and Cisse Diawara.

LCLD Pathfinders Programs

• Angela Lam and Frank Sun were nominated by the firm and accepted into the 2021 LCLD Pathfinders Program, which is designed to connect high-potential attorneys from leading organizations early in their careers for a six- to seven-month professional development series that provides professional and personal development, leadership training, and networking opportunities. Marcos Ramos serves as the firm's program facilitator and mentor for the attorneys who participate in this program.



Angela Lam

Frank Sun

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

The Women's Initiative fosters the professional development of its attorneys and promotes a sense of community that strengthens their commitment to each other, the firm, and the legal profession. The initiative focuses on the retention and professional development of women and other lawyers within the firm, support of the attorneys' professional and business skills, development of meaningful mentoring opportunities, and promotion of leadership potential within the firm, for the benefit of the firm, its clients, the profession, and our community.

Women's Initiative Event for Delaware's Women Attorneys and Judges

October 22, 2020, the Women's Initiative hosted Best Practices for Advancing Women in the Law, Especially in Light of the Pandemic and Its Impact Going Forward, featuring nationally acclaimed women attorneys Paulette Brown, Roberta Liebenberg, and Stephanie Scharf. The presentation focused on why experienced women are leaving the practice of law, the impact COVID-19 is having on women within the legal profession, best practices for law firms to enhance their efforts to advance women lawyers within the legal profession, and what women lawyers can do today to put their careers on a secure path. The event was well attended and well received by over 100 of Delaware's women lawyers and judges.





Top Row:

- **Stephanie Scharf**, Partner, Scharf Banks Marmor LLC; Principal, The Red Bee Group; Immediate Past Chair, ABA Commission on Women in the Profession
- **Doneene Damon**, Director and President, Richards, Layton & Finger

Rottom Row

- **Lisa Schmidt**, Director and Executive Vice President, Richards, Layton & Finger
- Roberta Liebenberg, Partner Fine, Kaplan & Black, R.P.C.; Principal, The Red Bee Group; Former Chair, ABA Commission on Women in the Profession
- Paulette Brown, Senior Partner & Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, Locke Lord LLP; and Past President, American Bar Association

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Lessons in Leadership Series

This past year, the Women's Initiative created a "Lessons in Leadership" webinar series featuring panel discussions with influential women leaders and moderated by a member of the firm's Women's Initiative. Presentations included:

On December 3, 2020, the Women's Initiative hosted Lessons in Leadership: Esteemed Women in the Delaware Community, featuring Doneene Damon, President of Richards, Layton & Finger; Kristin Moore, Senior Vice President, Director, and Trust Officer at WSFS; Dr. Janice Nevin, President and CEO of ChristianaCare; and Michelle Taylor, President and CEO of United Way of Delaware. Kate Mowery served as the event moderator.



<u>Top Row:</u> Doneene Damon Kristin Moore Michelle Taylor

<u>Bottom Row:</u> Kate Mowery Dr. Janice Nevin

On March 25, 2021, the Women's Initiative hosted Lessons in Leadership: Esteemed Women in Non-Profit, featuring Pamela Cornforth, President and CEO of Ronald McDonald House of Delaware; Sarah Lester, President and CEO of Cornerstone West CDC; and Charlotte Miller-Lacy, Founder, President, and CEO of I Am My Sister's Keeper. Jane Trueper was the event moderator.



<u>Top Row:</u> Charlotte Miller-Lacy Lisa Schmidt Doneene Damon

Bottom Row: Jane Trueper Pamela Cornforth Sarah Lester

Other Events

 Throughout the past year, the Women's Initiative hosted virtual drop-in coffees, happy hours, and lunch discussions on a weekly basis to foster engagement and support among the firm's women attorneys.

D&I SPONSORSHIPS

The firm and the committee support and sponsor many organizations and activities in our community, including the following.

- The firm serves as a sponsor of the Haile L. Alford Memorial breakfast honoring the life and legacy of Judge Haile L. Alford, the first African American woman appointed to serve on the Superior Court of Delaware and an avid proponent for increasing diversity within the Delaware bar.
- The firm sponsors the DSBA's LGBTQ+ Section, Women & the Law Section, and Multicultural Judges & Lawyers Section; the Delaware Hispanic Bar Association; South Asian Bar Association of Delaware; the DSBA's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Day breakfast; and the Delaware Barristers Association's Louis L. Redding Benefits and Awards Gala, among others.
- In January of 2021, the firm sponsored the DSBA's Multicultural Judges & Lawyers Section's Supplemental Bar Course. The firm's sponsorship enabled the MJL Section to underwrite the participation of 10 diverse Delaware bar exam applicants.
- In 2021, the DSBA founded its Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) Committee. The firm sponsored its inaugural Judicial Diversity Clerkship Program, which will provide diverse 2L students with paid summer clerkships with the Delaware bench in an effort to attract and retain diverse legal talent to the Delaware bar. Marcos Ramos also serves on the Selection Subcommittee for the Judicial Diversity Clerkship program.
- The firm was recognized as an event sponsor for the annual MLK Voice 4 Youth competition in appreciation of the pro bono assistance provided by Jason Rawnsley and the firm. MLK Voice 4 Youth is a speech competition offered to Delaware high school students to afford them an opportunity to articulate how Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy has impacted their own lives in front of a widespread audience and a distinguished panel of judges.

D&I SPONSORSHIPS

- The firm sponsored 20/20 Women on Boards virtual conference in FY 2021. 20/20 Women on Boards is a global education and advocacy campaign committed to raising awareness and momentum toward increasing the number of women who serve on the boards of public companies.
- The firm served as a Blue Partner Sponsor for the University of Delaware's Women's Leadership Initiative's (WLI) Allyship, Advocacy and Accompliceship Webinar Series.
- The firm served as a Partner Sponsor of the Junior League of Wilmington's 2021
 Women's Leadership Summit on February 27, 2021.
- The firm sponsored the National Native American Law Students' Association's Annual Conference on April 3, 2021. NNALSA encourages Native Americans to pursue a legal career and to become strong advocates for tribal communities.
- The firm is a **Gold Sponsor** of **DirectWomen**, whose mission is to increase the representation of women on corporate boards.



- The firm is a proud sponsor and participant in the 2021 Delaware Diversity Job Fair, Mid-Atlantic Black Law Students Association Job Fair, Southeastern Minority Job Fair, and Sunbelt Diversity Job Fair.
- The firm served as a sponsor for Howard Law's 6th Annual 1L Private Sector Reception on April 8, 2021. Doneene Damon hosted a private Q&A networking event with 1L students from Howard Law.
- The firm was a sponsor of Cornell's Professional Development Boot Camp hosted by their Black Law Students Association, Latino American Law Student Association, and Native American Law Students Association.
- The firm served as a sponsor for the Debbie Epstein Henry (DEH) Speaker Series consisting of four engaging webinars in the year ahead. On May 19, The Need for Courage with an Inclusive Lens featured a conversation between Debbie and Vernā Myers, a Harvard-trained lawyer, founder of The Vernā Myers Company, and Vice President of Inclusion Strategy at Netflix.

& EVENT PARTICIPATION SEMINARS

- The firm sponsored the Southeastern Minority Job Fair, and on October 27-28, 2020, Marcos Ramos hosted two 30-minute "Networking Sessions" for its attendees.
- On December 1, 2020, Doneene Damon moderated 20/20 Women on Boards presentation, Women Directors During Times of Crisis.



- Doneene Damon was featured in the University of Delaware's Women's Leadership Institute's webinar series presentation, Women as Allies in the Boardroom, on December 4, 2020.
- On January 5, 2021, Molly Peckman, Principal and CEO of Molly Peckman Training and Development (MPTD), delivered a presentation to the firm's Hiring Committee on ways to identify and eliminate bias during interviews and throughout the hiring process.
- Firm attorneys Amanda Steele, Jane Trueper, Nicole Henry, and Maddie Jolles attended the Penn Law Women's Association Carrie B. Kilgore Annual Reception on March 10 and hosted two 30-minute breakout room sessions to engage with the law students.
- Frank Sun participated in Cornell's Professional Development Boot Camp hosted by their Black Law Students Association, Latino American Law Students Association, and Native American Law Students Association.
- Marcos Ramos gave a presentation to the National Native American Law Students Association (NNALSA) in March of 2021. NNALSA encourages Native Americans to pursue a legal career and to become advocates for tribal communities.
- Doneene Damon and Lisa Schmidt gave a presentation on March 30, 2021 to Temple Law School students, co-sponsored by the Black Law Students Association and the Business Law Society, on the benefits of practicing law in Delaware.

& EVENT PARTICIPATION SEMINARS

- The firm hosted a Villanova Black Law Students Association event on April 5, 2021 where Doneene Damon and John Miraglia presented.
- The firm sponsored Howard Law's Pathways to Success reception on April 16, 2021, and Doneene Damon provided the opening remarks. The Pathways to Success program is a professional and leadership development program for Howard Law's 1Ls and 2Ls. Program topics include financial empowerment, building your personal brand, professional judgment, and giving back to the community. Each student who completes the program will receive a \$5,000 scholarship, and this ceremony honors those recipients and celebrates their achievements. All 1L and 2L students are invited to the ceremony.
- Jarrett Green, M.A. Psychology, Esq., and Rebecca Simon Green, Esq., well-being and culture change consultants and co-founders of USC Gould School of Law's Mindfulness, Stress Management, & Peak Performance Program, presented the firmwide CLE Overcoming Unconscious Bias in Big Law on April 21, 2021.



- In connection with the firm's participation in Well-Being Week in Law, Troy Farmer, MSW, MCC, CPC, CLAC, CGC presented the CLE Being Your Authentic Self on May 7, 2021.
- Sheila Bravo, President and CEO of Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA), presented the CLE Creating and Retaining Diverse Board Talent on May 13, 2021.
- The entire firm was invited to attend the DEH Speaker Series webinar The Need for Courage with an Inclusive Lens, featuring a conversation between Debbie Epstein Henry and Vernā Myers, a Harvard-trained lawyer, founder of The Vernā Myers Company, and Vice President of Inclusion Strategy at Netflix, on May 19, 2021.
- Marcos Ramos is participating in University of Michigan Law School's Latinx Law Students Association's (LLSA) alumni mentorship program and will serve as a mentor to an LLSA student.
- The firm will participate in the 30th Annual Delaware Diversity Job Fair on Saturday, July 31, 2021.

ROBONO SERVICE

- Alliance for Asian American Justice. The firm joined the Alliance for Asian American
 Justice (Alliance), which primarily aims to assist Asian Americans who have been
 subjected to violence with their cooperation with law enforcement investigations or
 their pursuit of civil remedies. The firm has agreed to help the Alliance with its future
 Delaware needs.
- The firm is a pro bono partner for the Second Chance Employment Collaborative launched in 2021 by JPMorgan Chase and Wilmington Alliance, in partnership with Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, Wilmington HOPE Commission, Delaware Center for Justice, and Project New Start. Firm attorneys will assist the participants of the Second Chance Employment Collaborative with the expungement process and the filing of FDIC waivers in order to pursue employment in financial, healthcare, and IT sectors.
- MLK Day of Service. In 2021, the firm's annual MLK Day of Service event was held virtually. Members of the firm served as digital volunteers for the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture's Digital Transcription Project, which aims to transcribe 1.5 million handwritten pages found within the Freedmen's Bureau Records. Members of the firm and their families colored uplifting pictures and wrote encouraging notes to the low-income seniors residing at the Ministry of Caring's Sacred Heart Village, I apartments. The firm also provided hot, nutritious to-go lunches for 400 homeless and at-risk people who were served at Emmanuel Dining Rooms East and West on Martin Luther King Day.

Additionally, members of the firm donated \$14,475 towards emergency food and household needs for Eisenberg Elementary School's food pantry and the families it serves. Eisenberg Elementary School serves over 500 children, many of whom are ethnically diverse and either homeless, living in poverty, or at-risk and particularly struggling in light of the challenges caused by the pandemic. Molly Perdue, Family Crisis Therapist and organizer of the food pantry, spoke to the firm and expressed deep gratitude on behalf of the school's families who rely on the firm's annual collections to the food pantry.



Our firm applauds our efforts in donating \$14,475 to support the Eisenberg Elementary Schools' food pantry.

ROBONO COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware, attorneys and staff dedicate time to the Bancroft Mentoring program, which matches them as mentors to students in kindergarten through 8th grade at The Bancroft School, a low-income school near our firm.
- The firm has provided engagement opportunities and pro bono assistance to TeenSHARP, a local non-profit organization that aims to provide access to college to underrepresented students while developing and advancing successful student-leaders. Wes Peterson and Nate Stuhlmiller assisted TeenSHARP with the process of re-domesticating in Delaware and rewriting its bylaws. Prior to the pandemic, the firm hosted students from TeenSHARP for a breakfast panel with the firm's leadership team and other diverse attorneys to discuss their varied paths to pursing a legal career. The firm continues to engage with TeenSHARP and is actively seeking ways in which it can strengthen its partnership with the organization and the students it serves going forward.
- John Basenfelder, Dorronda Bordley, Robert Kissel, and Marina Leary, under the supervision of Mark Purpura, assisted the ACLU of Delaware by researching individuals' Constitutional rights and their rights to access information under Delaware law. The firm's summer associates researched an individual's right to a phone call at the time of his or her arrest in Delaware. These research matters helped the ACLU of Delaware update the national "Know Your Rights" cards in accordance with Delaware law.
- The firm's summer associates, under the supervision of Mark Purpura, provided probono support to Equality Delaware and Equality Delaware Foundation by researching the impact of the Supreme Court's ruling in Bostock v. Clayton County on the meaning of "sex" in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits employers from firing employees for being transgender or gay.



One of the firm's largest pro bono projects has been its ongoing work on behalf of Central Baptist Community Development Corporation (CBCDC). Under the leadership of Rob Krapf, Mark Kurtz, and Jane Trueper, the firm dedicated over 250 hours in the past year representing CBCDC in connection with its Eastside Rising initiative, an effort to revitalize Wilmington's Eastside community through housing improvement, workforce development, and economic empowerment. Our efforts

ROBONO COMMUNITY SERVICE

included forming, dissolving, and cancelling legal entities; drafting memoranda of understanding involving workforce training programs, low-income housing rehabilitation, and promotion of home ownership; drafting real estate purchase and sale documents; and advising on corporate governance matters. This initiative has improved both the infrastructure and the quality of life in a significant section of our community. Taylor Anderson, Jake Crosetto, Renée Mosley Delcollo, R. Parker Havis, Jennifer Jauffret, Rob Krapf, Mark Kurtz, Wendy Manthorpe, Philip Micha, Fred Mitsdarfer III, Kate Peterson, Tony Roustopoulos, Christopher Ruggiero, Brendan Schlauch, Stan Stevenson, Susan Stewart, and Jane Trueper, among others, contributed their time to this project. In 2020, the firm recognized Rev. Dr. Terrence Keeling, president and CEO of the CBCDC, at its annual pro bono celebration.



Rev. Dr. Terrence Keeling thanked our firm for its ongoing pro bono support to the CBCDC during our annual pro bono celebration.

 This past year, Marisa Terranova Fissel joined the board of directors for Las Americas Aspira Academy in support of its mission to empower the Puerto Rican and Latino communities through advocacy and the education and leadership development of its youth.



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