



Portfolio Media, Inc. | 111 West 19th Street, 5th floor | New York, NY 10011 | www.law360.com
Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

Law360's Glass Ceiling Report, By The Numbers

By Cristina Violante and Jacqueline Bell

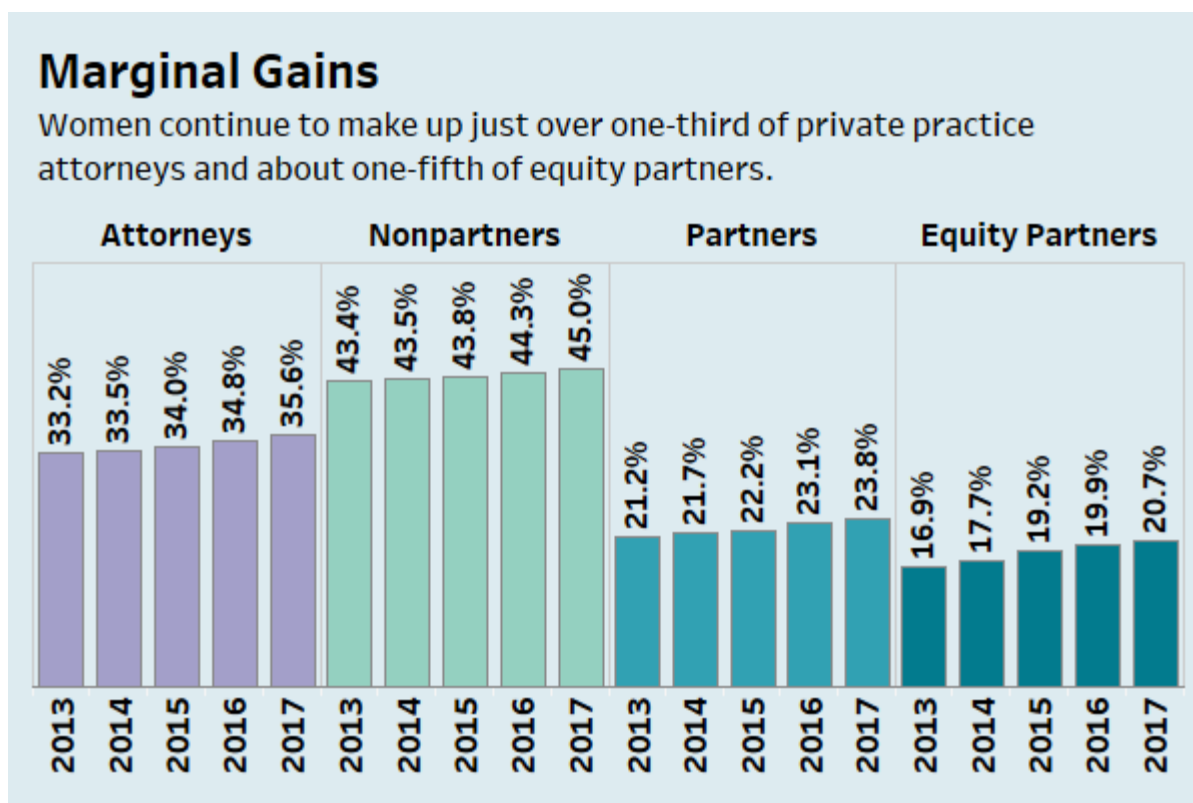
Law360 (May 28, 2018, 9:02 PM EDT) -- Law360's annual look at the gender breakdown of attorneys in private practice shows women are still underrepresented — especially when it comes to holding leadership roles.

The Law360 Glass Ceiling Report, which surveyed more than 300 law firms on the demographics of their lawyer workforce, found that at no level of the typical law firm — nonpartners, partners or equity partners — has the representation of women increased by more than a percentage point from last year.

Women make up just over 35 percent of all attorneys surveyed, meaning that men still constitute almost two-thirds of private practice.

And the disparity is wider at the top levels. Women account for only 21 percent of equity partners and 12 percent of the highest firm leadership roles.

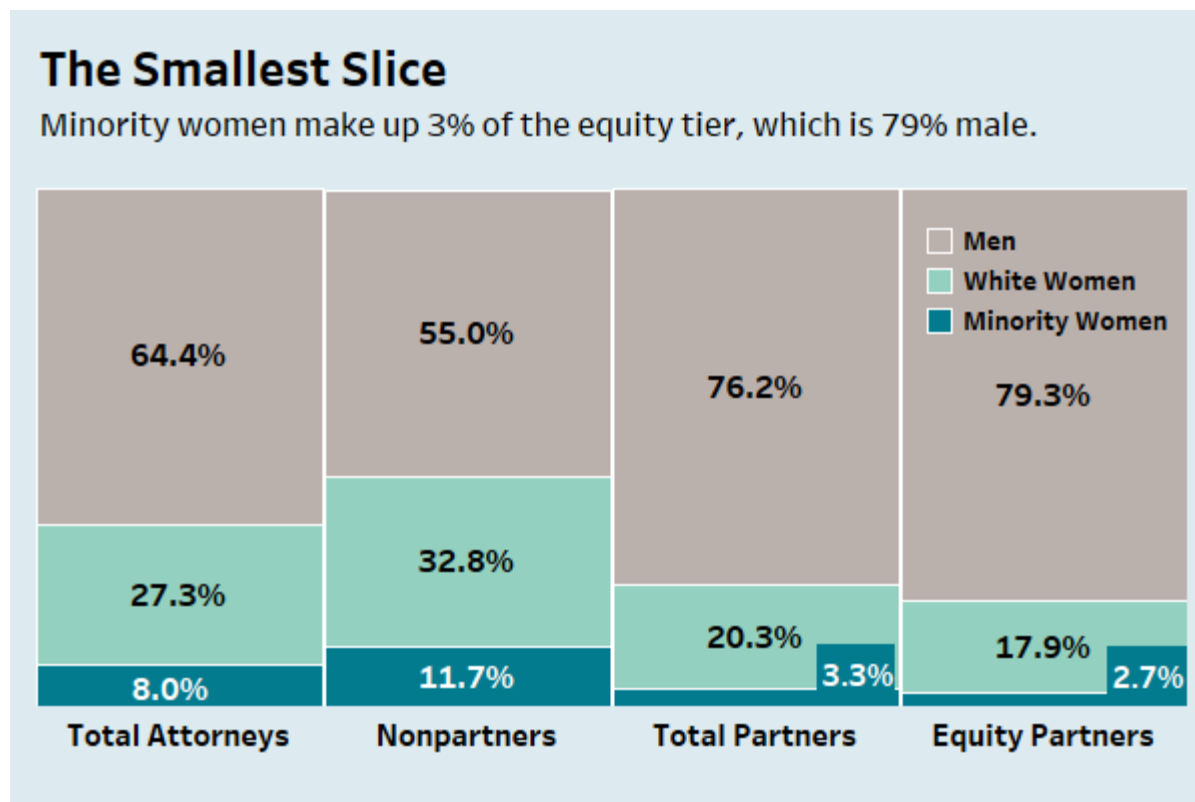
These numbers differ from the pipeline of female legal talent. According to the American Bar Association, women have made up more than 40 percent of law school students for decades, and they're now more than half of the student body.



For minority female attorneys, representation is even more narrow.

ABA data shows that minority women made up almost one-fifth of the 1L class in 2017. Yet the Glass Ceiling Report found that they currently represent only 8 percent of private practice attorneys and 3 percent of all partners.

White male attorneys are more than 27 times as likely to be an equity partner than minority women, while white women are almost seven times as likely and minority men are twice as likely.

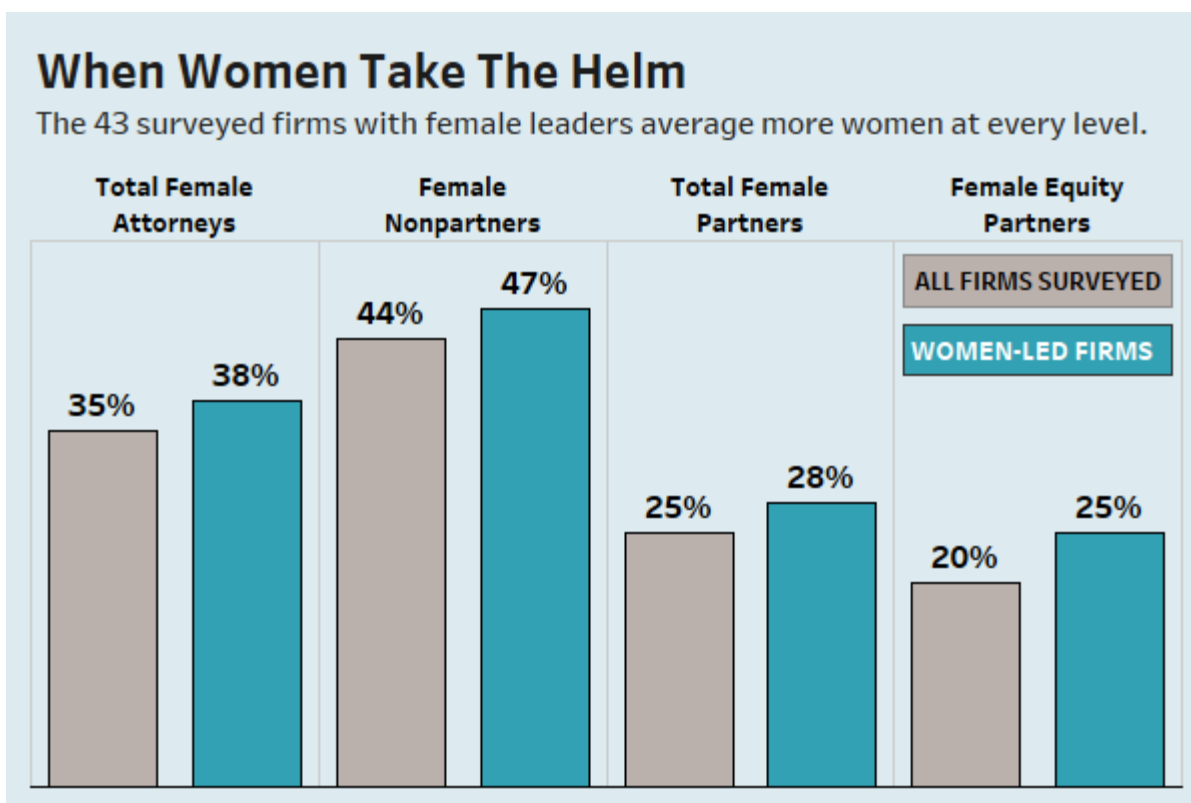


Often these disparities are exacerbated by the fact that female attorneys are absent at the top levels of the firm.

Just over 40 of almost 350 law firms surveyed have a female lawyer in a top leadership role — managing partner, chairman or CEO.

This dearth of female representation in leadership roles means that women have less of a say in firm direction and workplace policy.

But Law360's data suggests that having a female leader sets an example for younger associates that they have a future and a path at the firm. In fact, the Glass Ceiling Report found that the 43 firms with women in a leadership role averaged a better representation of female attorneys across the firm.



The survey also revealed a handful of firms that are above average in their representation of female attorneys and female partners, earning them the title of the **best law firms for women**.

Other firms distinguished themselves as having the highest percentage of female equity partners across all firms surveyed, landing them on this year's Ceiling Smashers ranking.

While the overall number of female equity partners hovered at just over 20 percent, the Ceiling Smashers have a combined equity tier that is almost 27 percent female.

While transparency around disclosing headcount data is important, numbers don't always tell the full story. Even if a firm is taking steps to diversify its workforce, there are several less-quantitative factors — such as how work is assigned and credited — that can indicate systemic bias.

Over the past year, a few firms have been hit with lawsuits alleging gender discrimination. The allegations target more qualitative problems with law firm culture, such as **pregnancy bias** and how business development is attributed.

One such case brought by Kerrie Campbell against her former firm, Chadbourne & Parke LLP, **recently settled** in New York federal court. Norton Rose Fulbright, which acquired Chadbourne in early 2017, paid upwards of \$3 million to end claims that the legacy firm had a male-dominated culture and underpaid female attorneys.

As part of this year's Glass Ceiling Report, **Campbell spoke to** Law360's Pro Say Podcast about her experience of gender discrimination and turning to litigation as a remedy.

In this industry, the gender pay gap seems to be the rule, not the exception. The U.K. government is trying to shed light on this problem by requiring all businesses — not just law firms — to disclose the average pay of their male and female employees.

But many firms were reluctant to disclose the data for partners, saying they didn't qualify as "employees" whose salaries must be disclosed, and this leaves the true scope of the pay disparities unclear.

For many women in law, gender equity means something more than making up half of the pie. Law360 asked more than 40 women from across private practice what equality for female attorneys looks like. **Here are their answers.**

--Editing by Jeremy Barker and Kelly Duncan.

Methodology: Law360 surveyed more than 300 U.S. firms, or vereins with a U.S. component, about their demographic makeup as of Dec. 31, 2017. Only U.S.-based attorneys were included in the survey, and firms had to have at least 20 U.S.-based attorneys to participate.

All Content © 2003-2019, Portfolio Media, Inc.