



BOSTON  
COLLEGE | LAW

Women's Law Center and LAHANAS Present

***Semester Kick-Off:  
Diverse Career Pathways***

Thursday, September 17 at 6:00pm

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**Mehreen Butt**  
Wakefield Town Councilor



**Julia Harmatz**  
Energy Foundation



**Payal Salsburg**  
Laredo & Smith



**Sophia Hall**  
Lawyers for Civil Rights



**Lesley Leonessa**  
Dell



**Sarah Sousa**  
Arrowood



**Rebecca Neale**  
Law Office of Rebecca G. Neale



**Uzma Saghir**  
Liberty Mutual Insurance



**Elke Trilla**  
Sullivan & Worcester

# **Attorneys in Public Interest**

## **Mehreen Butt**

Mehreen N. Butt, Esq. is an attorney living in Wakefield, MA. Mehreen was elected to the Wakefield Board of Selectman in April 2017, becoming the first Muslim-American woman elected to a Board in Massachusetts. In April 2018, Wakefield voted to officially change the name to a gender-neutral name and became Wakefield Town Council.

Mehreen has over 15 years working in the social justice and public policy fields and on local, state and federal campaigns. She has worked on health care, poverty, women's reproductive rights and immigrant and voting reform. She has worked at Rosie's Place, Tufts Health Plan and Health Care for All and is currently at Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts. In these positions, Mehreen was responsible for overseeing the policy and legislative agenda of the organizations. She was also a Researcher for the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture at the Massachusetts State House, working for Chairman Frank Smizik (D-Brookline).

Mehreen received a J.D. from American University's Washington College of Law and a B.S. in Biology and English from Tufts University. In 2019, she received the Women's Bar Association's Emerging Women Leader Award. She is also a Board Trustee for Melrose Wakefield Health Care, an advisory member of the South Asian Bar Association of Greater Boston and an associate member of the Wakefield Alliance Against Violence (WAAV).

## **Sophia Hall**

Sophia Hall is a civil rights attorney at Lawyers for Civil Rights (LCR), and she currently serves as the Supervising Attorney, supporting the professional growth of LCR's junior staff. As an experienced litigator, Sophia handles a broad range of civil rights matters, actively representing people of color and immigrant women to protect their rights in the workplace and in the community. Sophia manages a rich docket of employment discrimination and police misconduct litigation that is regularly featured in publications such as the New York Times and the Boston Globe. Sophia also spearheads Massachusetts Election Protection, the nation's largest nonpartisan voter protection campaign, mobilizing several hundred volunteers to provide real-time voter assistance on Election Day through a statewide hotline and field program. She has been recognized as one of Boston's Top 25 Most Influential Millennials of Color, an "Up & Coming Lawyer" by Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly, and an "Emerging Leader" by the Women's Bar Association. Sophia is a 2012 graduate of Boston College Law School, and she holds a bachelor's degree from Emory University.

## **Rebecca Neale**

Rebecca Neale is an attorney and owner of Bedford Family Lawyer, a solo law firm focused on divorce litigation and mediation, and estate planning. She is an Assessor for the Town of Bedford and President of the Board of the Domestic Violence Services Network. Rebecca also provides pro bono representation to survivors of domestic violence in restraining order and domestic relations proceedings, and represented a church that successfully appealed a denial of its application to install solar panels on its historic building. She earned a B.A. from the University of Rochester and a J.D. from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. At UC Hastings, she was a Co-Editor in Chief of the Hastings Women's Law Journal, and after graduation she clerked for the New York State Court of Appeals. Prior to law school, Rebecca was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Turkmenistan. You can reach her by email at [Rebecca@BedfordFamilyLawyer.com](mailto:Rebecca@BedfordFamilyLawyer.com).

# ***In-House Counsel***

## **Julia Harmatz**

Julia Harmatz is the General Counsel and Secretary of Energy Federation. Julia oversees all of the legal activity for the company. She is counsel to senior management and advises the company in all facets of the business, including commercial transactions, litigation, employment, information technology, intellectual property, advertising, marketing, data privacy and security, real estate, corporate governance, regulatory affairs and compliance.

## **Lesley Leonessa**

Lesley Leonessa is a Patent and Intellectual Property Attorney at Dell-EMC. She started her career as a software engineer, and transitioned into patent law after working at Honeywell-Bull, Stratus Computer, and EMC. She holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from UMass Lowell, a M.S. in Computer Science from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, a M.B.A. from Northeastern University, and a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law. Lesley is on the Board of Directors for the Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts.

## **Uzma Saghir**

Uzma Saghir provides legal counsel on a broad range of corporate matters at Liberty Mutual Insurance, including acting as the primary attorney for Corporate Procurement and the Meeting Management & Event Strategy group. Prior to joining Liberty Mutual in 2012, Uzma was a corporate securities attorney at large Boston law firms with a focus on private equity. She holds a bachelor's degree in finance and a law degree from Boston College Law School. Outside of work, Uzma serves on the board of directors for the Women's Bar Foundation where she is chair of the Pro Bono Programs Committee.

# ***Attorneys from Law Firms***

## **Payal Salsburg**

Payal Salsburg is a partner at Laredo & Smith, LLP. Her practice is focused on business litigation and white collar criminal defense. She represents companies and executives in contract and business disputes, and Federal and State government investigations. Payal also advises closely-held businesses on corporate and employment matters. A graduate of Shepard Broad College of Law at Nova Southeastern University in Florida, Payal spent seven years practicing complex commercial litigation and patent litigation at a big law firm, before making the move to a small firm setting.

She is active in the Boston Bar Association (BBA) as a member of the BBA/BBF Joint Planning Committee, the standing Ethics Committee and the Steering Committee of the Business and Commercial Litigation Section. She is a regular speaker at the Practicing with Professionalism series at the BBA, a mandatory one-day course for all newly admitted members of the Massachusetts Bar. Payal is on the Board of Directors of the South Asian Bar Association of Greater Boston (SABA GB) and an active member of the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts (AALAM) and the Women's Bar Association (WBA).

Outside of the legal community, she is on the Board of Boston CASA, a non-profit organization with a mission to ensure a safe and permanent home for court-involved children. In addition, she regularly volunteers up to 20 hours a week at a local day shelter, Mass. General Hospital, and Ricesticks and Tea (a food pantry program serving low-income Asian families). Payal was recently named a 2020 Top Women of Law honoree by Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly.

## **Sarah Sousa**

Sarah Sousa's practice focuses on the areas of employment and business law and civil litigation. Sarah represents both employees and employers in discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, whistleblower and wage & hour disputes. She has tried cases in state court and before administrative agencies. Sarah graduated from Boston College Law School with a focus on employment law in 2014. During law school, Sarah interned in the office of the Massachusetts Attorney General in the Trial Division and the Office of Senate Counsel. She is currently on the Board of the Women's Bar Association, and serves as the Chair of the WBA's New Lawyers Committee. She was recently recognized as an Up & Coming Lawyer as part of Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly Excellence in the Law.

## **Elke Trilla**

Elke Trilla is a Latina and corporate attorney at Sullivan & Worcester LLP's Boston office. Elke focuses her practice on mergers and acquisitions, private equity, emerging markets, general corporate matters and opportunity zone investments. Prior to joining Sullivan & Worcester, she was a corporate associate at Morgan Lewis & Bockius and a Senior M&A Associate at Ernst & Young. Elke is a graduate of Boston University and Suffolk University Law School. Elke has been recognized by local and national organizations including Chambers, the Hispanic National Bar Association, and Get Konnected for her work and commitment to the recruitment, retention and promotion of diverse attorneys.