**MESHEA L. POORE, ESQ.**

Meshea L. Poore, a long-time champion of under-represented people, serves as vice president for the division of diversity, equity and inclusion at West Virginia University. In that role, she motivates the Mountaineer family to recognize the value in diversity and to create transformational change.

“It is vitally important that we foster an environment that embraces the wholeness of every individual that calls West Virginia University family and wants to call West Virginia home,” she said of her mission. “We are the beacon that will guide the way.”

Poore has been helping to light the way toward equity throughout her career. An attorney who served in the West Virginia House of Delegates from 2009 to 2014, she is an accomplished and sought after motivational speaker, public and political leadership consultant and strategist. The Women’s Campaign Fund named her a “Game Changer” during her campaign for the U.S. House of Representatives for West Virginia 2nd Congressional District. She has mentored and consulted with hundreds of elected officials throughout the nation as they seek higher office.

Poore is also an experienced educator who served as an adjunct professor at West Virginia State University and as a faculty member in residence at the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

In 2017, Poore became the first African-American woman to be named president of the West Virginia State Bar since its 1947 founding. Prior to operating her own practice, she was an attorney in the Office of the Kanawha County Public Defender in Charleston, West Virginia.

In addition to practicing law, Poore worked with the People for the American Way in Washington, D.C., as a defender of constitutional values, including free expression, religious liberty, equity and equal justice under the law. She chairs the Racial Justice Committee for the Charleston (WV) YWCA and served as a director and debate coach for the West Virginia Democratic Party.

Her many leadership roles included chairing the West Virginia Women’s Commission and serving as a regional chair of the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women.

Poore earned her bachelor's degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and her law degree from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She also graduated from the Women's Campaign School at Yale University.