

Diversity Committee Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2021 – 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

The Washington State Bar Association's Diversity Committee is dedicated to implementing WSBA's Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The work of the committee promotes historically underrepresented groups to enter and stay in the profession of law. The Diversity Committee does this through collaborative relationships and community building activities, which highlight the numerous societal benefits of a diverse law profession.

Present: Luis Beltan, Christopher Swaby, Mubarak Abdur Raheem, Gov. Sunitha Anjivel, Danitza Casselman, Michelle Fukawa, Laura Johnson, Nam Nguyen

Absent:, Serena Sayani, Yuping Wang, Hunter Abell, Carly Summers, Janice Langbehn, Andrea Jarmon, Monica Reinmiller, Shirley Prasad

Staff: Tyler Washington, Diana Singleton

Meeting was called to order at 1:15 P.M.

Minutes

The December minutes were approved without edits.

At Large Governor Elections: Proposed Changes for Bylaws

Paris Erickson gave background on proposed changes to the bylaws and asked for feedback on whether the election timeline for the At Large election and the Congressional election should be consolidated into one election. Paris also explained that there was no longer an urgency to share their input as it was decided that any changes to the election timelines will wait until next year.

WSBA Governor Update

Sunitha shared a BOG update that they will be engaging with a consultant to provide training and facilitation around diversity and inclusion over this year.

Pro Tem CLE Scholarship

Diana explained that the District Court and Municipal Judges Association is sponsoring a pro tem judges training in partnership with the WSBA CLE team. One of their goals is to create more opportunities for bar members from underrepresented communities to join the judiciary.

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The CLE team offers scholarships to attend the training. Over the last few years, the Diversity Committee has helped with the selection process for the scholarships. Diana asked for volunteers to serve on the committee. Michelle, Dani and Nam volunteered.

Law Student/Pipeline

Diana shared what kind of projects and programs the Committee has done with supporting law students from underrepresented communities. Diana also shared that the Minority Bar Associations have coordinated a Joint Minority Mentorship Program and would like the Diversity Committee's involvement if they want; specifically they're looking for help to coordinate an event that would give law students perspective and insight about starting their own practice. The Committee decided to form a workgroup that would meet and discuss possible projects and activities to propose to the larger group. Sunitha, Laura, Mubarak, Michelle, and Luis volunteered.

Diana also introduced Mynor Lopez, a 2L at Seattle U law school, who was visiting the meeting. Mynor is interested in how to create a better pipeline for minorities to enter the legal profession. The Committee discussed how it would be great for Mynor to share more and it should invite other law students and law school staff to join the meetings to learn more and identify what the Committee can do.

DEI CLEs

Diana shared that she will be convening a brainstorm meeting for the Committee and others from the larger legal community (e.g., MBAs, others doing DEI CLE programming) at the end of January. The goal of the meeting will be to share ideas for DEI topics for Legal Lunchboxes. Another goal is to facilitate connections between people organizing DEI CLEs. Diana will let the Committee know so anyone can come.

Communications

The Committee discussed ideas for promoting DEI in various communications. An idea for bringing back the "What Lawyers Look Like" column in the Bar News. Diana was asked to reach to the editor of the Bar News and find if it's possible.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 P.M.