

**DEI Council Meeting Minutes**

**January 10, 2024 from 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

*The DEI Council advances diversity, equity, and inclusion and addresses the problems of bias, systemic inequities and underrepresentation in the legal profession and legal system.*

**Member Attendees:** Raina Wagner, Miryam Gordon, Gov. Sunitha Anjilvel, Gov. Tom Ahearne, Gov. Nam Nguyen, SaNni Lemonidis, Dallas Martinez, Judge Andrea S. Jarmon, Lilli Douglas, Sharon Sakamoto, Mike Rhodes, Christopher Swaby

**WSBA Staff:** Diana Singleton

**December Meeting Minutes**

Sharon motioned to approve the minutes and Dallas seconded. All voted to approve. Motion passes.

**Higher Logic Volunteer Program**

Diana gave additional background on the platform. Various members shared their input on whether to participate as a pilot which included that the platform does not seem to offer the needs the Council needs (e.g., real time collaborative document drafting), it creates more work to learn a new communication method and would add to another communication source to have to check. There was consensus that now was not the best time to pilot this new platform. Miryam moved for the DEI Council abstain from the pilot project. All were in favor.

**DEI Council Charter Amendment**

Diana reported that the proposed Charter amendment will be on the BOG's March calendar instead of the January BOG meeting. Tom asked that a typo be corrected before the final draft is submitted to the BOG.

**Update Regarding this Week's BOG Meetings and Events**

Raina and Sunitha shared that due to the inclement weather, the MBA dinner scheduled for Thursday was being cancelled and would be rescheduled. They shared that the BOG meeting would be virtual only. There was a discussion about DEI Council members attending MBA events; Diana shared that Saleena has periodically sent out MBA event information to the Council, encouraging them to attend and an offer for WSBA to cover their registration fee. In talking about how the Council can build and maintain relationships with MBA, Mike suggested a buddy system where Council members are matched with various MBAs. There was consensus to put this idea on the next meeting agenda.

**Letter in Support of the Bar Licensure Task Force**

Diana reported that the DEI Council's letter in support of the Bar Licensure Task Force's recommendations will be on the BOG Meeting agenda for Saturday morning. There was discussion about the then-Diversity Committee's letter in opposition to some BOG members' proposed resolution in support of keeping the bar exam in place (which was being made just prior to the Bar Licensure Task Force to launching). Diana shared that several MBAs also submitted letters along the same lines and said

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she would send those letters along with the Diversity Committee's letter to the Council. Raina and Sunitha will be presenting the DEI Council's proposed letter at the BOG Meeting on Saturday.

## **Pathways into the Profession**

Diana reported that the Pathways to the Profession is planning the summit. They are looking to schedule it for September 2024 in person in central or eastern Washington. They have reached out to Heritage University and Central Washington University as possible host locations.

## **DEI Plan Subcommittee Updates**

Sharon and Miryam discussed the presentation they will be giving at the BOG meeting this Friday. They shared that they will make it clear that this is an inclusive process and trying to make progress on learning from what other bar associations are doing. Sunitha shared that she'll be presenting to the District and Municipal Judges Association on the planning process and asked for input how to get input from judges. Sunitha encouraged Sharon and Miryam to give prompts to seek input at the meeting. Diana noted that there is an hour slated for this agenda item and affirmed Sunitha's idea. Diana suggested that they ask for input on both process of creating the new plan and the substance. Andrea suggested that they give context on explaining what the current plan is. Miryam shared that we need to consider the work after the plan is completed and presented. Sharon said we need to think about the implementation and accountability.

## **Membership Demographic Study**

Diana shared that the consultant with Kno-Why will be conducting focus groups of the following groups in the month of February: LGBTQIA2S+ community, people with disabilities, Black, Asian, Latinx, and Indigenous/Tribal communities. Diana and Saleena have been working with the consultant on how to recruit people for these focus groups.

## **Announcements and Call for Agenda Items**

Andrea suggested that we discuss the 2024 Apex Award nominations at our next meeting.

Sharon shared that when she and others presented at the WA Initiative for Diversity Summit, some attendees asked whether the DEI Council was considering being involved with bringing back the LLLT license. Sharon suggested we put this on a future agenda.