

Diversity News

A Newsletter of the Washington State Bar Association



The Washington State Bar Association's Commitment to Diversity: "To advance and promote diversity, equality, and cultural understanding throughout the legal community . . ."

December 2011

Here's what's happening in the world of diversity (from the WSBA perspective). If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at chachdw@wsba.org.

New Stuff

Congratulations to King County Superior Court Judge Steven González, appointed by Governor Gregoire to the Washington State Supreme Court. Judge González will fill the seat of Justice Gerry Alexander, who retires from the bench at the end of the year. <http://1.usa.gov/vXjGC4>

Welcome to incoming president of the South Asian Bar Association of Washington Kaustuv M. Das, and thank you to outgoing president Aravind Swaminathan for your service.

The November edition of News Flash is now available! To check out news of the WA state legal community, produced by the office of WSBA's Executive Director Paula Littlewood after each BOG meeting, see <http://bit.ly/iPgt95>.

The Membership Survey Is Coming

As part of the WSBA membership study focusing on retention and the reasons that our members are moving within and/or leaving the profession, a survey (either online or in the mail) will be sent to approximately 10 percent of the membership in January 2012 and your participation is vital. Please participate, so that many populations can be represented.

We will post a link to the survey on the WSBA website in February 2012. In the event you are not randomly chosen to be part of the control group, please fill out the survey so that we can hear from you. We will also be conducting four online fora (similar to focus groups) in order to ask specific follow-up questions from our survey. If you are selected to be part of one of the fora, please participate, as this will provide us with more in-depth answers to specific questions. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

All survey and fora information will be handled by an outside consulting company (Areté Resources, PLLC), to keep responses confidential. The WSBA will not have access to the respondents' names. You can see a visual interpretation of the timeline in the text box at right.

WSBA Executive Director Paula Littlewood discusses the Membership Survey in this month's *Bar News*. For the full text, see <http://bit.ly/l7PXI3>.

Timeline of the Study

January 5
Membership survey sent to random sampling of the WSBA membership

February 3
Membership survey random sampling closes



February 6-17
Membership online survey open to all members

February 6-17
Final round of survey fora



March 2012
Membership Study closes and analysis begins



Thank you for all your diversity efforts in the state of Washington!

Happy holidays and best wishes in the New Year!

— Chach and Jen

For an interesting read about holidays around the world, please check out these links!

- Diversity Holidays: <http://bit.ly/uJjSPF>
- Interfaith Calendar: <http://bit.ly/bv9Qq6>

Legal Info of Interest

“9th Circuit Refuses to Let ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Ruling Set a Precedent,” by Amanda Bronstad. A federal appeals court on Nov. 9 rejected a request by Log Cabin Republicans for a rehearing of its constitutional challenge to the now-repudiated “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. <http://bit.ly/vGel6Q>

“9th Circuit to Reconsider Armenian Genocide Case *en banc*,” by Amanda Bronstad. A federal appeals court has ordered an en banc rehearing of a challenge to a California statute that has spawned lawsuits against insurance firms on behalf of victims of the Armenian genocide. <http://bit.ly/udxoIV>

“Ethnic Diversity Improved at Law Firms in 2011; For Women, Not so Much,” by Karen Sloan. Law firm diversity took a hit in 2010, but the picture improved somewhat this year — at least when it came to ethnic minorities. <http://bit.ly/sDS9i2>

“Faculty Diversity Means Gains for Female Law Students, According to Study,” by Karen Sloan. A study of law review membership indicates that gender and racial diversity on law school faculties may translate into more opportunities for female students. <http://bit.ly/txNdJ8>

“Ginsburg, Others Praise the Impact of *Reed v. Reed*, 40 Years Later,” by LeighAnne Manwarren. At a packed panel discussion at the National Press Club on November 17, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg remarked at how the Constitution has allowed the country to evolve to embrace “a marvelous diversity.” <http://bit.ly/vfQzTS>

“Opportunities Diminishing for Women at Large Law Firms, Study Finds,” by Karen Sloan. The bad news keeps coming about women at large law firms. <http://bit.ly/tionDj>

“Spokane’s Mayor and Police Chief React to the Thompson Verdict,” by Nicholas Deshais. Five years and seven months after Otto Zehm’s death — and after a jury of 12 unanimously agreed that Spokane Police Officer Karl Thompson was guilty of violating Zehm’s civil rights by using excessive force, and of lying to federal investigators — Spokane Mayor Mary Verner says the city will not change course. <http://bit.ly/slv138>

“Victims Speak out About North Carolina Sterilization Program, which Targeted Women, Young Girls and Blacks,” by Michelle Kessel and Jessica Hopper. Elaine Riddick was 13 years old when she got pregnant after being raped by a neighbor in Winfall, N.C., in 1967. The state ordered that immediately after giving birth, she should be sterilized. Doctors cut and tied off her fallopian tubes. <http://bit.ly/ujKrL5>

“What Spurs Students to Stay in College and Learn? Good Teaching Practices and Diversity,” by Dan Berrett. Good teaching and exposure to students from diverse backgrounds are some of the strongest predictors of whether freshmen return for a second year of college and improve their critical-thinking skills, say two prominent researchers. <http://bit.ly/uJihFI>

“Women Feel Less Ambitious, Says Survey,” by Vivia Chen. Before you read on, I’d suggest that you pour yourself some whiskey. Or bourbon. Or gin. Or whatever it takes to make bad news go down a bit easier. <http://bit.ly/v5ObYG>

“Women Shafted on their Reviews,” by Vivia Chen. Why do women still lag behind men in law firms after all these years? Consider this explanation: Women aren’t getting the partnership prize because their firms are grading them harder. <http://bit.ly/rrjZcv>

Opportunities

Are you a bar association president-elect? If so, you may be interested in the ABA Bar Leadership Institute! For more information, including scholarship applications, see <http://bit.ly/tc0QWH>.

The 2012 Access to Justice and Bar Leaders Conference will be held in Yakima on June 8–12. The topic this year is “Our New Economic Reality: The Legal Profession’s Role.” The Conference Planning Committee is now accepting proposals for workshops. For more information, including the Workshop Proposal Form, see <http://bit.ly/l1fya0>.

Upcoming Events

December 14: Mother Attorneys Mentoring Association of Seattle Brown Bag Lunch: Holiday Dessert Social. Garvey Schubert Barer, 1191 Second Avenue, 18th Floor; noon to 1:00 p.m. RSVP through Big Tent (preferred if you are a MAMAS member) or by email to davinai@vulcan.com.

December 15: QLaw Holiday Social, Poco Wine Room; 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. <http://bit.ly/uEthuA>