



## Diversity Committee Final Minutes

January 15, 2020

12 PM – 1:30 PM

Conference Call – 1-866-577-9294 Access Code: 52680

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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.

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Members: Chelsea Brisbois, Allison Ross, Laura Wulf, Gov. Jean Kang, Andrea Jarmon, Gov. Hunter Abell, Laura Johnson, Gov. Sunitha Anjilvel,

Absent: Yuping Wang, Nam Nguyen, Gov. Alec Stephens, Serena Sayani, Carly Summers, Lisa Mansfield

Guests: Jordan Camp, Mike Mocerri

Staff: Dana Barnett, Diana Singleton

### 1. Call to Order, Welcome and Approval of Minutes–

Laura Wulf opened the meeting. The committee unanimously approved the November minutes.

### 2. BOG Report

Jean led a discussion about the proposed bylaw amendment for the BOG At-Large position, in which the Diversity Committee would submit at least three candidates to run in a general election, for the "diversity" seats (See language below). The original bylaw amendment had included that the BOG screen the candidates for general election. Jean had suggested changing the screener to the Diversity Committee based on the discussion at the November WDC meeting. The committee had a robust conversation about the benefits and potential drawbacks of both the process of the Diversity Committee screening candidates, and the switch from selection by the BOG to the general election model. Questions were raised about the screening process and the general election process both adding hurdles for candidates. There were also questions about switching to a general election model, particularly when the definition of "diversity" for this position remains broad and vague. The committee recapped why they had landed at this suggestion, based on the November discussion (as documented in the minutes). The committee also clarified that the proposed amendment was not approved by a formal vote by the committee; rather the discussion at the meetings would be helping to inform the BOG members present. Members were encouraged to attend the BOG meeting in-person or by phone to listen and weigh in on the discussion.

*For each of the two Member At Large positions. Governors, the Board of Governors shall select and place no more than three candidates on the ballot from nominations made by the Diversity*

*Committee. After notice of the position has been adequately provided to all members, the Diversity Committee shall forward least three candidates who have the experience and knowledge of the needs of those members whose membership is or may be historically underrepresented in governance, or who represent some of the diverse elements of the public of the State of Washington, to the end that the BOG will be a more diverse and representative body than the results of the election of Governors based solely on Congressional Districts may allow. Underrepresentation and diversity may be based upon, but not be limited to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, geography, areas and types of practice, and years of membership, provided that no single factor will be determinative. The BOG shall then place all candidates forwarded by the Diversity Committee on the ballot to be elected by all eligible voting members. If the Diversity Committee forwards less than three candidates the BOG may, at its option, select additional qualifying candidates on its own or place only those candidates forwarded by the Diversity Committee on the ballot to be elected by all eligible voting members.*

### **3. Committee member recruitment**

Dana reported that Governor Dan Clark is not on the committee this year, and that Will Locke has stepped down due to work commitments, so the committee currently has four open seats. Committee members were encouraged to recruit other members of the bar to join, particularly members from districts: 2,3,4,5,8. Dana will send out materials about the committee or appointment process for members to share with potential recruits.

### **4. Program Updates and Reports**

- a. WYLC collaboration – WYLC Chair, Jordan Camp and Mike Mocerri spoke about the WYLC project to make a proposal for a dress code for court appearances. They shared the reasoning behind the WYLC taking this on, mainly regarding Judges having subjective codes, often enforcing gender stereotypes and norms. More information is in the attached materials. Several Diversity Committee members expressed interest in the issue and raised several questions. Jordan and Mike invited interested committee members to join a team with WYLC members to explore this issue and make a proposal. After a discussion following the presentation, the Diversity Committee members decided not to join a team to develop it at this time, but to offer to review any proposals or ideas that are developed. The committee may decide to endorse the WYLC's proposal. Members also offered suggestions about looking at the racial aspects of dress codes too, and connecting with several MBAs. Dana offered to help the WYLC connect with MBA leaders.
- b. MCLE Board Proposal Update – Jean updated the committee that the WA Supreme Court had rejected the MCLE Board Proposal. Several members expressed their disappointment about that decision, particularly after members of the committee and MBAs had put hours and effort into the proposal.
- c. IL programs update – Laura provided an update about the IL programs. Two programs have taken place with UW Diversity Fellowship applicants, and currently they have not received resumes for the resume review. Hunter, Yuping and Laura J. who attended the most recent program at SU shared that it was a good experience for both them and the students who they assisted with their personal statements.
- d. Pipeline Workgroup –
  - i. The group met, reviewed current programming and did not propose any additional programming at this time. We chose volunteer point people to work with the different schools. Nam and Jean will work with SU: Jean is meeting with Dean Clark to discuss options. Sunitha also expressed interest in being involved with SU. Serena agreed to be

the point person for our work with UW Law School: Dana will be in touch to talk about the role. Chelsea and Hunter are looking into building a relationship with Gonzaga.

- e. Legal Lunchboxes and Beyond the Dialogue Topics – Dana
  - i. Legal lunchbox
    - 1. March 31 Hate Crimes (Faculty: Alec Stephens, Aneelah Afzali, Bre Weider)
    - 2. June 30 – Inclusion Initiatives (Committee Development team: Serena, Chelsea, Sunitha, Jean)
    - 3. Sept 29<sup>th</sup> – REJI (Committee Development team: Jean, Laura W.)
  - ii. Beyond the Dialogue
    - 1. April 1st - Trans and Queer Legal Professionals (Chelsea, Laura W., Laura J, Lisa, Jean)
    - 2. May 27<sup>th</sup>- Allyship (Laura W., Laura J, Lisa, Jean, Sunitha)
- f. Upcoming events – Dana
  - i. APEX award nominations deadline March 23, 2020
  - ii. UW Tacoma Legal Pathways event February 12 Panel, Lunch and Learn
  - iii. March 12 Networking event Wenatchee

5. **Discussion/Brainstorm** – tabled

6. **MBA Updates and Reports** - tabled

7. **Announcements** – There were no announcements

**Next Meeting: February 8<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM – 3 PM, WSBA Office**

**If you need special accommodations contact [diversity@wsba.org](mailto:diversity@wsba.org)**