



WSBA

Diversity Committee Minutes

June 9th

10 am – 3 pm

In Person: WSBA Office, 1325 4th Ave, Suite 600, Seattle, WA 98101

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.

In Attendance:

Ailene Limric, Lionel Greaves, Laura Wulf, Roger Hillman, Allison Ross, Carrie Blackwood, Gov. Alec Stephens, Mubarak Abdur Raheem

Unable to Attend: Jennifer Cruz, Navjot Kaur, Oscar Chaves , Robert King, Stephanie Anderson, Gov. Jean Kang, Gov. James Doane, Jennifer Lamari, Linda Fang, Gov. Rajeev Majumdar

Staff: Dana Barnett, and Sierra Suafoa-McClain, Diversity Workstudy Intern

Call to Order, Welcome, Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Ailene Limric at 10:05 AM. The May minutes were approved unanimously.

BOG Report

Gov. Stephens reported updates from the BOG meeting. Gov. Rajeev Majumdar will be President Elect from now through September 2019. A special meeting will take place to fill his governor seat for the remainder of the year. Several bylaw amendments about the distribution of responsibilities between the board president and governors were passed at the last meeting. The young lawyer representative, Russell Knight, was also chosen. Questions were raised by some governors about the process to recruit candidates, and whether or not enough was done to recruit more candidates, and in particular candidates of color.

Oregon State Bar

Ailene Limric informed the committee about an issue regarding the Oregon State Bar and specialty bars. The Oregon Bar issued a statement on white nationalism in February in their bar journal. Several of their specialty bar associations (equivalent of Washington's MBAs) wrote and signed a letter about the same topic. There was public backlash after the publishing of the letters. People asked for dues to be returned, and a specialty bar president resigned as a result. One of the specialty bar associations reached out to several National Minority Bar

organizations to ask for support of the letters and support in the backlash that came from the public. None of these organizations have agreed to take any action.

The President of KABAW (Paige Hardy) reached out to other MBA leaders to see if they would be willing to make a joint statement. The group feels that it is important not to stay silent about these issues because remaining silent perpetuates violence and encourages oppressors to speak out more. There was a motion by Carrie Blackwood to draft a letter from the Diversity Committee on the backlash of Oregon Bar's and Specialty Bar's statement, to be approved by the BOG, and immediately distributed to the public. This motion was seconded by Allison Ross. There was a vote, and 8 yes's and 0 no's, therefore the motion passed unanimously. **Next Steps:** Carrie will collaborate with Ailene Limric and Gov. Stephens to draft the letter, and then circulate it to the rest of the committee for edits. The letter will add request for distribution in the letter. Letter will be presented at the July BOG meeting.

Laura Wulf brought up that it would be helpful to have a framework of how to make these responses when the committee wants to do similar letters so that this process is easier in the future for other groups.

Diversity Training

Dana Barnett led a training with the committee about the difficulty of talking about race and racism.

Annual Report

Gov. Alec Stephens walked the committee through the draft of the annual report. The hope is for the report to be a helpful resource for new committee members to have when they come into this space. Carrie Blackwood raised an idea that it would be a good idea to have a list serve of new, present, and past members so that as a community they can continue to support each other. Gov. Stephens suggested that it would be good to create an onboarding system that involves past Diversity Committee members. **Next Steps:** have outgoing members attend the October new member orientation.

Committee Purpose and Goals

Dana facilitated a session to finalize some of the goals and projects for FY18 and FY19 that the committee has been working on for several sessions. Listed below with some next steps.

Proposal 1. Build the capacity of committee members to conduct consultations and trainings in Diversity, Inclusion and Equity for other legal professionals and organizations. The purpose of this would be to ultimately increase the capacity of the WSBA to offer consultation and training throughout the state. Committee members could assist staff, or co-facilitate with other members, as well as become better equipped to approach and respond to legal orgs in their area who may be interested in addressing these issues. Committee members could offer training and consultation to MBAs, law firms, local bar associations, etc.

Tactics:

- WSBA staff will host a pilot train the trainer for committee members at the March 2019 meeting.
 - *There was discussion about inviting MBA leaders to attend the train the trainers. At this time there is not staff capacity to extend the training to a broader audience, and training committee members, in order to increase the capacity, is being prioritized.*
- WSBA staff will continue to offer training at diversity committee meetings, and share the modules with the members. Committee members can sign up to co-facilitate these short trainings.

- Make Diversity legal lunchbox CLEs available for committee members to view without a fee after it is recorded. **Next Steps:** Dana is looking into this.

Proposal 2. Increase relationship between WDC and MBAs. The purpose of this is to make sure that the work of the committee and MBAs are aligned in working for Diversity Inclusion and Equity, that there is active awareness and relationship between them, and that the MBAs see the WDC as a resource. Many tactics were discussed. The committee settled on the ones listed below for FY18-FY19 committee years.

The committee also revisited the MBA Winter meeting staff report. It was noted that at this meeting MBAs are invited to make requests of WSBA, and that WSBA staff has responded to many of the requests.

Tactics

- Committee members attend biannual MBA check in meetings. **Next Steps:** A sign-up sheet was passed around at the meeting, and will be sent to committee members before the July meeting.)
- In-person meeting and dinner with the BOG, WDC and MBA leaders. This meeting would be hosted and organized by the BOG. **Next Steps:** Governor Stephens will bring this request to the BOG.
- Diversity Committee members will offer to attend MBA board meetings. The purpose of this would be to learn more, and build relationship with the MBA, and to inform MBAs about WDC projects that may be of interest, and areas for collaboration. There was a discussion about making sure that this is useful and desired by MBAs, several committee members who are also on MBA boards expressed that their MBA would likely be interested. We already have an invitation to speak and attend the August LBAW board meeting. **Next Steps:** Dana will send out a sign-up sheet to see how many committee members would actually be interested and willing to make these presentations.
- Include an MBA report as a standing item on the agenda. This would be an opportunity to both update the committee about committee and staff work with MBAs, and also to have committee members who are part of MBAs provide updates and information. Making it a standing item will institutionalize it as a priority.
- WSBA provide funds for one or two WDC members to attend annual MBA events.

The committee did not go over the two other proposal drafts which referred to increasing the number of underrepresented groups in the profession and providing tools to firms and legal orgs to increase the inclusion and advancement of folks once hired. However it was put forward that it would be helpful to create a template of affirmative action policy in hiring.

Updates

A. 5 Year Celebration

The Diversity and Inclusion celebration of the 5-year anniversary of the WSBA Diversity and Inclusion plan took place on June 6th in Seattle and Spokane. The event was full in Seattle and small but mighty in Spokane. The Path Forward presentation will be available soon on the WSBA website.

B. Experience Exchange

The Seattle Experience Exchange was held at K&L Gates in May. The event was successful. Lionel Greaves gave the keynote address, and Stephanie Anderson, Allison Ross, Linda Fang, and Roger Hillman attended as mentors.

C. Community Networking Events

There is an upcoming Community Networking Event in Port Townsend on June 28th. The event is being co-hosted with Washington Women Lawyers, the Latina/o Bar Association, and the Jefferson County Bar Association. This will be our first time hosting in Port Townsend.

D. ARC Reception

The ARC Reception will be held on July 10th at WSBA. The committee was sent information to register to attend as a mentor. The last day to register is June 29th. Please contact Dana if you want to attend and did not register. The keynote speaker will be Judge Helen Whitener.

E. Judge Pro Tem Scholarship Subcommittee

The Diversity Committee was asked to create a subcommittee to create and award scholarships, for the WSBA Pro tem CLE training, targeted to members of underrepresented groups. A small subcommittee was formed for the pilot program which includes; Aileen Limric, Lionel Greaves, and Jennifer Cruz. This will become a regular function for the Diversity Committee.

F. MBA Update –

Dana and Tyler will be scheduling check in meetings with individual MBAs for July and August. Committee members will be given opportunity to sign up to join the meetings.

Announcements

- Governor Stephens announced that Lionel Greaves received the President's Award, for service to the LMBA, at the Loren Miller Annual event this year. Congratulations Lionel!

**Next Meeting: CONFERENCE CALL 1-866-577-9294 Access Code: 52680, Wednesday July 18th, 12:00 – 1:30
If you need special accommodations contact diversity@wsba.org**