



# WSBA

## Diversity Committee Minutes

March 17<sup>th</sup>

9 am – 3 pm

In Person: WSBA Office, 1325 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 600, Seattle, WA 98101

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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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Ailene Limric, Allison Ross, Carrie Blackwood, Jennifer Cruz, Laura Wulf, Lionel Greaves, Navjot Kaur, Mubarak Abdur Raheem, Oscar Chaves, Gov. Rajeev Majumdar, Robert King, Stephanie Anderson, Gov. Jean Kang, Gov. Alec Stephens, Gov. James Doane, Jennifer Lamari, Linda Fang, Roger Hillman

Staff: Dana Barnett, Joy Williams, Tyler Washington

**In Attendance:** Mubarak Abdur Raheem, Roger Hillman, Allison Ross, Oscar Chaves, Lionel Greaves, Laura Wulf, Ailene Limric, Robert King, Rajeev Mujumdar, Alec Stephens, Carrie Blackwood, Stephanie Anderson

**Unable to attend:** Linda Fang, Jennifer Cruz, Jennifer Lamari, Navjot Kaur, James Doane, Jean Kang

**Call to Order, Welcome, Approval of Minutes**– Ailene Limric, Co-Chair

- Meeting called to order: 9:15am
- February Minutes approved unanimously

**Diversity Training Activity** – Dana Barnett, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist:

Dana Barnett led the committee in a training activity. Since the meeting was about the purpose and goals of the committee, she began by taking a step back and reiterated why the committee engages in these types of activities. WSBA Diversity and Inclusion plan has an inside out approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion. WSBA works on these values internally and bringing that to others in the legal professions, stakeholders and community.

Committee's members have demonstrated desire to be able to help facilitate training to population at large and legal population. This diversity training activity can be done in an hour. Important to be considerate of time for these activities so people can have time to adequately discuss feelings that come up. If you want the activity worksheet and description reach out to Dana.

During a discussion while participating in the activity Joy Williams raised a suggestion to have a conversation with the Diversity Committee about colorism and that MBA's should be invited to the conversation. It's time to have that kind of dialogue because the oppression goes both ways (lighter complexions and darker complexions.) Joy talked about how people of color took on those tools of white supremacy to oppress without educating each generation why they started and they are embedded in the culture.

### **BOG Report – Governor Alec Stephens, Co-Chair**

Alec shared that the BOG president elections will not be limited to Eastern Washington this year. The proposal submitted preserves some original factors and will take into consideration when the last president from Eastern Washington was last elected.

A work group was created to reevaluate president elections as a whole. Some possible changes that are being considered are if more carve outs will be created, if the president will be elected from the BOG or if the constituents should be voting. The workgroup will also look into what the effort is to recruit diverse candidates.

Attendees will no longer have to travel 50 miles and attend a meeting longer than two hours to be reimbursed.

There is a discussion on whether or not 3 additional members will be added to the BOG (a LLT/LPO and 2 public members.)

Rajeev shared that the WSBA has joined the Washington Race Equity & Justice Initiative (REJI). (More information about REJI was resent to the committee list serve). Dana sits on the advisory board, and can be contacted with questions about the initiative.

Law clerk board is writing a letter to Supreme Court asking not to accept proposed change to Rule 6 program which would lower education requirement to 2 year degree from 4 year. The Law Clerk board argues that it would be disservice to public and would create credibility issues with the law clerk program.

### **Committee Purpose and Goals – Joy Williams, Diversity and Public Service Program Manager and Dana Barnett**

Activity was conducted to evaluate the current work of both the committee and the Diversity Program staff and connecting that work to the diversity and inclusion plan.

Joy provided some background on the committee's past. When Joy came onboard there were two separate committees, the BOG subcommittee and the committee for diversity. Prior to Joy's tenure ( a number of years before)the BOG made a decision to focus on programs that supported the education and development of WSBA members and to move away from pipeline programming. The ARC reception and 1L programming was grandfathered in. The WSBA Diversity and Inclusion Plan was approved in May 2013. All programming was developed in alignment with the diversity plan.

### **Committee Proposals**

The committee engaged in a process to create proposals for areas of focus and specific activities for the next committee year. Four proposals were created and written up on big paper. There was not time to review the proposals at this meeting. Staff will write up the proposals, review them and share with the committee before the next meeting.

### Discussions/Reflections

Laura asks if LLLT/LPOs are allowed to participate in these committees. Joy will follow up if all WSBA members can participate and Dana shared the ways in which staff are changing programming language to be more accessible to all members.

Lionel suggests that during the 5 year diversity celebration a presentation/video of committee history and work should be included.

There is a discussion limitations of the committee. Oscar notes there is a limited amount of bodies available to do the work. Joy suggests we can increase capacity by training the trainers. Joy also notes that it's important to know that anything that committee suggests has to go through a decision making process and where Joy and Dana fall in the process. Members also must take WSBA staff capacity in consideration when committee "dream big." When volunteers aren't available, programming that was promised to WSBA members falls on staff.

Alec and others expressed a strong interest and need for pipeline efforts, particularly for people of color. He also noted that it's important for the committee to be informed of the other work of the Diversity Program staff and activities and the work of MBA's and partners so that they understand what needs are being fulfilled, where there are gaps that the committee could fill, and where the committee/WSBA could support the work of others. Joy shared that staff is currently involved in a mapping process, surveying entities throughout the state to get a sense of all of the D & I programming that is currently happening and where the gaps are. Once completed, this can be shared with the committee.

Along with capacity, committee turnover is also a challenge for the committee. We can lose history of the committee but it also can be an advantage with past committee as ambassadors. Alec recommends that orientation should include departing members so that the new committee member can get to know them as ambassadors. Joy suggests a receptions with past committee members in attendance. Rajeev suggests a Joint Board of Governors/Diversity Committee reception. Rajeev and Alec could put forward this request from the committee to the BOG. Joy would like to develop a document about the history of the D&I efforts that WSBA has been involved in that could help in orientation.

### Project Updates

- A. IL Programs – Jennifer Cruz (tabled until next meeting)
- B. Community Networking Events – Dana Barnett

- Spokane April 20<sup>th</sup> at Gonzaga from 12 – 1:30 PM, Host: Mubarak Abdur Raheem
- Bellevue April 25<sup>th</sup> at tutta bella from 5-7 PM. Due a generous donation from James Doane and Costco we were able to secure a venue. The members who have signed up are Linda Fang, Roger Hillman, and Jennifer Cruz. Dana will reach out to see who would be willing to act as host.
- Port Townsend June 28<sup>th</sup> 5 – 7 PM. Need volunteers. **Please contact Dana if you are interested in attending. Travel will be reimbursed for the committee member who is willing to host.**

- C. Experience Exchange – Dana Barnett

- Roles for committee members could be applying to be a mentor, helping with the matching process, and/or recruiting mentors and mentees. **Please contact Dana and let her know what role you want to take.**
  - Experience Exchange Spokane: April 20<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM - 12 PM. Gloria Ochoa is the keynote. Mubarak will attending and assisting with outreach.
  - Experience Exchange in Seattle: May 31<sup>st</sup> 8-10 AM at K&L Gates. Lionel Greaves is the keynote! Committee members who have signed up to help are: Robert King, Roger Hillman, Jennifer Cruz, Oscar Chavez, Jean Kang, Ailene Limric.. **Help needed from committee members for matching. Allison Ross and Roger Hillman sate they are interested in helping. Dana will be in touch to discuss the process. Please contact Dana if you are interested in helping to match participants. This can be done remotely.**
  
- D. MentorLink Mixer in April: Theme is Fostering Diversity and Inclusion in Leadership. Dana will be reaching out to the members who expressed interest this month with more information.

### **Announcements**

- A. Charles Z. Smith Apex Award: Deadline has been extended to the March 30<sup>th</sup> so you can recommend people as you can see fit.
  
- B. Decoding the Law : Me Too – Carrie will be moderating
  
- C. Legal Lunchbox: March 27<sup>th</sup> noon-130 only webcast.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:48**

**Next Meeting: CONFERENCE CALL 1-866-577-9294 Access Code: 52680, Wednesday May 18<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 – 1:30**  
**If you need special accommodations contact [diversity@wsba.org](mailto:diversity@wsba.org)**