

## INCREASING DIVERSITY IN THE STATE BAR

For years, the State Bar has been committed to ensuring that all attorneys in California have access to equal opportunity for entry and advancement in the profession. Despite the Bar's efforts, there is a widening gap between the numbers of attorneys in the legal profession from diverse backgrounds, and the overall diversity in the general population. While statewide demographics show that 53.3% of the population are from racial and ethnic minority groups, both the census and recent surveys of Bar membership indicate that only 17% of the bar membership are racial and ethnic minorities. Further, only 32% members are women, 4% have a physical disability, 2.4% are LGBT professionals, and 24% of members are age 55 or older.

To assure a truly representative legal system, the State Bar recognized the need to develop innovative ways to encourage diversity in the profession. On April 2001, the State Bar adopted a number of policies toward this goal, including:

- The State Bar President utilizing the position as a bully pulpit to demonstrate a commitment to improving diversity in the legal profession and in the governance of the State Bar and to inspire effective and equal opportunity for all persons for entry and advancement in the profession.
- The creation of the Center for Access & Fairness. The Center maintains a clearinghouse and directory of diversity efforts; produces written and electronic materials to address diversity issues; develops educational programs for lawyers on the elimination of bias; provides support and staffing for the Council on Access & Fairness; helps to create a diverse pool for all State Bar committees; and identifies and helps coordinate work done by the American Bar Association, Administrative Office of the Courts, California Minority Counsel Program, local minority and specialty bars, etc.
- Recognition at the Annual Meeting of the outstanding efforts made by members of the legal profession on diversity issues.

In October 2006, the State Bar Board of Governors created the Council for Access & Fairness, to institutionalize the work of the 2006 Pipeline Project, calling it a "new and vibrant vision for the State Bar's diversity agenda, one that stresses collaboration, ends duplicative efforts and concentrates scarce resources on a more focused diversity mission".

We are pleased that we have made significant progress towards implementing the State Bar policies to increase diversity in the profession through the Diversity Pipeline Initiative and the support for the Council on Access & Fairness by immediate past president Sheldon Sloane.

All diversity programs and policies are to be implemented with funds from voluntary contributions and not through the use of any mandatory dues paid by members of the State Bar.



The State Bar  
of California | Office of Legal Services,  
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# CELEBRATING

# diversity

IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

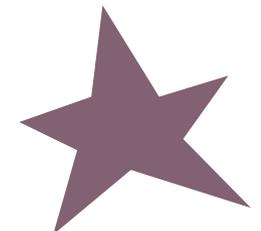
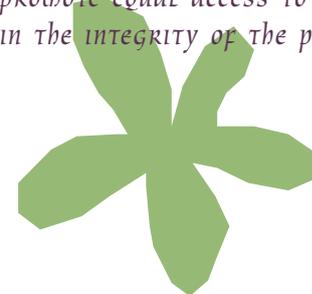
SEPTEMBER 29, 2007

Anaheim Marriott Hotel

Presenting the  
State Bar of California's

SIXTH Annual  
DIVERSITY  
AWARDS

*The State Bar of California Diversity Awards were established in 2001 by the Board of Governors to recognize outstanding efforts and significant contributions to ensuring the full and equal opportunity of all persons for entry and advancement in California's legal profession. These efforts promote equal access to justice and increase public confidence in the integrity of the profession and the legal system.*





# CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

PRESENTED BY THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF LEGAL SERVICES, ACCESS &  
FAIRNESS PROGRAMS AND THE COUNCIL  
ON ACCESS & FAIRNESS



Jeffrey Bleich  
State Bar President

**Jeffrey Bleich**, president of the State Bar of California, accepted the 2003 Bar Association Diversity Award on behalf of the Bar Association of San Francisco. He is a partner with Munger, Tolles and Olson. When elected to the State Bar presidency, Mr. Bleich said that he hoped to help develop a pipeline program that will increase diversity in the profession. Mr. Bleich has said "I think that most people understand that it's not your race or gender...but it's how sincere and genuine your commitment is to this issue."



Yvonne Braithwaite Burke

**Yvonne Braithwaite Burke** is a Los Angeles County Supervisor. She was the first African American woman elected to the California Legislature in 1967, the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Congress from California in 1972, and the first to serve as Chair of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors in 1993. Time Magazine named her one of "America's 200 Future Leaders", and she was selected as "Woman of the Year" by the Los Angeles Times. Supervisor Burke established the Second District Education and Policy Foundation, which has provided \$240,000 in scholarships to students in the Second District.



Russell Roeca

**Russell Roeca** is Chair of the Judiciary Committee of the State Bar Council on Access & Fairness, a former member of the State Bar Board of Governors, Treasurer of the Bar Association of San Francisco, a partner with Roeca Haas Hager LLP and a member of Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom.



Joseph L. Chairez  
OCBA President

**Joseph L. Chairez** is the 2007 President of the Orange County Bar Association, past president of both the Orange County Hispanic Bar Association and Celtic Bar Association, a member of the California Commission on Access to Justice and a partner at Baker & Hostetler LLP, where he also serves on the Diversity Committee. Chairez has said "Diversity is our national heritage. It's what makes us great."



### DIVERSITY AWARD - INDIVIDUAL ATTORNEY



Gordon "Sam" Overton

**Gordon "Sam" Overton** Over the last two decades Sam has been continuously engaged in education and advocacy efforts to diversify the legal profession.

- From 1987 to 1996 he was a member of the Judicial Council Advisory Committee on Gender Bias in the Courts, which produced the landmark report *Achieving Equal Justice for Women and Men in the Courts*.

- Since the 1994 formation of the Judicial Council's Access & Fairness Advisory Committee he has been a diligent and vigorous member. Every year since 1994 Sam has served as chair, co-chair or vice chair of one or two subcommittees: the Sexual Orientation Fairness Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on Persons with Disabilities. The subcommittees have effected rule changes that expand accessibility and enhance fairness and they have also created judicial educational materials that have been used statewide to enhance court fairness for their respective constituencies.

- As a member and officer of Lesbian and Gay Lawyers of Los Angeles (LGLA), Sam has worked toward bar diversity in gender orientation. His work was recognized when he received LGLA's Co-Presidents Award last year.

- Sam is President of the City of Los Angeles Commission on Disability, after serving several years as a Commissioner.

- He was Co-chair of the Court Access Advisory Committee for the United States Access Board, which toured and evaluated U.S. court facilities

### DIVERSITY AWARD - BAR ASSOCIATION



Clark Stone  
President of SCCBA

Santa Clara County  
Bar Association

**Santa Clara County Bar Association (SCCBA)** is a leader in supporting efforts to increase diversity in the legal profession.

- In 2006 the SCCBA established the President's Blue Ribbon Commission on Diversity in the Legal Profession. The commission issued a detailed report, held a conference on the findings, and hosted a job fair. The commission has encouraged law firms and private sector companies to recruit and hire minority attorneys and to provide mentorship opportunities to them.

- Their long-standing Minority Access Committee (MAC) works to encourage membership from ethnic minority groups, women, Muslim and LGBT attorneys and hosts an annual Unsung Heroes reception that honors attorneys and minority organizations working to increase access to justice by minority groups and/or to increase diversity in the profession.

- SCCBA has a long-established Rainbow Committee for LGBT attorneys.

- SCCBA provided major support to and helped to coordinate the State Bar's Diversity Summit in 2006, enlisting sponsorship to offset much of the costs.

- SCCBA has been recognized for its role in starting the award-winning Minority Summer Clerkship Program for which SCCBA continues to provide administrative support and host an annual reception for minority summer associates.

