

**The State Bar of California**  
**Council on Access & Fairness Initiatives**

**Early Education Pipeline:**

**Marshall Brennan Constitutional Literacy Program:** In May or June 2009 we will hold meetings in SF and LA with Law School Representatives to introduce the Marshall Brennan Constitutional Literacy Program and encourage law school faculty to implement the program. The program involves law students providing a constitutional law curriculum and a mock trial competition for high school students in disadvantaged communities.

**Mock Trial Program Best Practices:** We have researched various mock trial programs throughout the state, which participate in the program through the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF). We have identified factors which account for greater success involving students from diverse backgrounds. The findings will be compiled and made available to local bars, law schools, private bar entities, early education institutions, and other diversity stakeholders.

**Mock Trial Programs:** We are reviewing Mock Trial fact patterns provided through the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) Mock Trial Program to ensure that diversity elements are included. Suggestions for additional issues and fact patterns will be provided to CRF.

**College/ Law School Projects:**

**Pre Law Advisors:** A meeting of northern California college pre-law advisors was held at Golden Gate University Law School. We are planning a Southern California meeting and will compile resource information from both meetings for use by advisors as they counsel students and for use by students planning to attend law school.

**Bar Exam Prep:** We are continuing with outreach to diverse law students about demystifying the bar exam. We presented a program at the Bar Association of San Francisco, which was co sponsored by the COAF, BASF and For People of Color. 75 students attended this Saturday session. The program was videotaped and has been posted on the For People of Color website ([www.forpeopleofcolor.org](http://www.forpeopleofcolor.org)). We are planning to distribute written information to accompany the program.

**Law School Rankings:** We are in the process of conferring with deans from California ABA accredited law schools for input on our proposal to urge US News and World Report to develop and incorporate a meaningful diversity component as part of its overall law school rankings. A diversity index currently exists, but is separate from the overall aggregate rankings. We are also considering urging the ABA to include meaningful statistics re diversity in the annual law school report.

**Law School Education:** We are compiling information from law schools that are implementing The Carnegie Foundation recommendations for law student practical education. We will determine how to encourage expanded practical training in CA law schools and will also determine how to incorporate the identified skill sets in our attorney mentoring resources.

### **Legal Profession Projects:**

**Los Angeles County (Phase One):** Legal Employer Focus Group questions have been developed and will be tested through individual interviews with representatives from law firms, corporate counsel, public interest offices and government employers. The questions will be modified based on the feedback from the initial interviews and the focus groups will be convened. The discussions will incorporate the underlying impact of the economic downturn in all levels of the profession.

**Mentoring Resources:** Mentoring resources have been drafted and will be expanded to incorporate practical skill sets identified in the Carnegie recommendations and through Prof. Marjorie Shultz's study re predictors for successful lawyering. The resources will be available to all diversity stakeholders, in particular law firms and other legal employers, diversity bar associations, and attorneys. The purpose of the mentoring resources is to increase the retention and advancement of diverse attorneys in the legal employment context.

### **Judicial Projects:**

**Online Application for Judicial Appointment:** We updated the "Tips and Checklist" for the online judicial appointments application and process. We continue to coordinate with the Governor's Judicial Appointments Office to modify the "Tips" when the application form is changed and to alert the Governor's office when we learn of glitches in the online process.

**Judicial Diversity Commentary:** We updated judicial diversity data and demographics and provided an analysis and commentary on Judicial Diversity for use by local and minority bars participating in the Bench Bar Coalition visits to Sacramento. We also circulated the analysis to all local, minority, diversity and specialty bars throughout the state.

## **COAF Projects and Events:**

### **COAF Diversity Stakeholder Outreach:**

All members of the COAF will be conducting outreach to local, diversity and specialty bars and other legal groups to provide information about the COAF initiatives and to forge a partnership for future collaboration. Any group needing a presentation should contact staff.

### **Diversity Stakeholder Forum:**

The Annual Diversity Stakeholder Forum is scheduled for Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Administrative Office of the Courts in San Francisco. Diversity stakeholders include all entities engaged in and supporting diversity in the legal profession, as well as representatives from the various diversity constituencies including minority, women, LGBT and older attorneys, as well as attorneys with disabilities. The forum will provide the opportunity for open dialogue on identifying and plugging the leaks in the diversity pipeline in the context of the current economic downturn.

### **Diversity Pipeline Awards:**

The COAF conducts outreach and makes recommendations to the Board of Governors for the State Bar Diversity Pipeline Awards, recognizing exemplary contributions to increasing diversity in the legal profession. Each year this award is presented to an individual attorney, law firm (or other practice setting) and bar association. A separate Education Pipeline Award recognizes early education programs (preschool to high school) that educate the students about the judicial system and promote a career in the legal profession.

### **Diversity Coalition Initiatives:**

- **State Bar Appointments:** The COAF conducts a review of the diversity of membership for all State Bar appointed entities and provides feedback to the Board of Governors. The COAF conducts outreach to minority, women, LGBT, and other diversity bars to encourage applications for State Bar appointment and conducts workshops on the application and appointments process.
- **Statement of Diversity Principles:** The State Bar has adopted a statement supporting and promoting diversity in the legal profession and among its own appointed entities. The COAF will help to promote the diversity principles to outside entities including legal employers, bar associations, law schools, and other settings in which attorneys participate.

### **Diversity Pipeline “Road Show”:**

The Council regularly updates a PowerPoint slide show including the most current data and demographics for all stages of the diversity pipeline including early education, college/law school/bar exam, legal profession and the judiciary. The information provides a snapshot of the current status of diversity along the pipeline and provides a statement of the ongoing needs to address diversity issues and challenges. The State Bar makes the slides and data available to individuals and entities for their own presentations and can be tailored to the geographical location of the entities. The COAF has presented this program at the State Bar Annual Meeting, Section Education Institute, as well as for local and minority bar associations, the courts, law schools, and other venues.

### **Diversity Pipeline Program Listings:**

The State Bar maintains a list of model diversity programs that have met “CSIRE” criteria (Continuity, Sustainability, Impact, Replicability and Evaluation/self assessment.) These programs are posted on the State Bar website as a resource for entities engaged in the creation or expansion of diversity pipeline programs.

### **Diversity Pipeline Speakers’ Bureau**

The State Bar Center for Access & Fairness will develop a listing of attorneys from diverse backgrounds who are willing to volunteer as panelists on substantive law programs and participate in Elimination of Bias programs.

### **Evaluation and Self-Assessment Tools:**

The former State Bar Diversity Pipeline Task Force recognized the importance of self-assessment and evaluation of diversity pipeline programs to determine the impact being made by the programs toward our diversity goals. The Task force created a guide for diversity pipeline programs to conduct their own program evaluation.

### **Resource Materials:**

- Diversity Pipeline Task Force Report
- Statement of Diversity Principles
- Challenges to Practice of Law for Attorneys from Diverse Backgrounds
- Challenges to Practice of Law for Attorneys with Disabilities
- Diversity Pipeline Road Show Slides
- Diversity Pipeline Task Force Courts Working Group Report
- Judicial Diversity Commentary and Resources
- Tips/Checklist on Completing the Online Judicial Application
- State Bar Appointments Overview and Tips for Applicants
- Brochure: “Want to be a Lawyer?”
- Brochure: “Disability Awareness: How to Accommodate Persons with Disabilities”
- Brochure: “Creating a Model Work Environment for LGBT Individuals”
- Brochure: “Understanding Transgender Law and Transgender Clients”