

Attachment B
Council on Access & Fairness Vision Statement

COUNCIL ON ACCESS & FAIRNESS VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES
(approved January 24, 2009)

Introduction

Equal access to and fairness in the justice system are vital to the effective operation of that system. In recognition of these important goals, three governmental bodies in the State of California are focused on addressing issues related to access and fairness in the judicial system and the legal profession. The work of these groups is summarized below. Their work is interrelated and informs and supports the work of the others. The groups are:

- *The Access and Fairness Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council of California*, which monitors and examines issues related to *access to the judicial system and fairness in the state courts* and makes recommendations to the Judicial Council that promote racial, ethnic, gender, disability, and sexual orientation fairness in the judicial branch. In addition, the committee submits proposals to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Education Division/Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) for the education and training of judicial officers and court staff.
- *The California Commission on Access to Justice*, made up of lawyers and judges, as well as academic, business, labor and community leaders, appointed by the State Bar of California and other statewide entities, which *explores ways to improve access to civil justice for Californians living on low and moderate incomes*, including the establishment of the Equal Access Fund and other funding sources for civil legal services to the underserved.
- *The State Bar of California, Council on Access and Fairness*, which advises the State Bar Board of Governors on strategies to enhance diversity opportunities and advancement in the legal profession. “*Opportunities*” encompass leadership development and appointment to State Bar entities, as well as initiatives to educate students about the law and career opportunities in the law. “*Advancement*” encompasses recruitment, employment, retention and promotion in the legal profession. The Council is composed of 25 attorney and public members appointed by the Board of Governors. The membership represents a wide range of stakeholders engaged in programs and initiatives focusing on increasing diversity in the legal profession. Consistent with State Bar appointments policies and diversity criteria, Council members are drawn from diverse constituencies, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity and national origin; gender; age; sexual orientation and transgender; disabilities; large, small and solo firms; government and public sector practice; domestic corporate and private firm practice; P-12, college and universities and law schools; and the judiciary. The vision, mission, goals, strategies, objectives and desired outcomes of The State Bar of California Council on Access and Fairness are detailed, below.

COAF Vision:

The council's vision is of a culture of inclusion within California legal and judicial communities that accommodates the needs of California's diverse population and ensures that the justice system delivers procedural fairness and substantive justice to the people of California; of a legal profession comprised of a diverse population of attorneys (including minorities, women, LGBT, seniors, and persons with disabilities); of the elimination of the educational achievement gap between diverse K through 12 students and other student populations; of equal access for diverse students to enhanced educational opportunities and information about the legal profession to cultivate and support their interest and involvement in the judicial system, and of a student population that understand its role and responsibilities as active participants in our democracy.

COAF Mission:

The mission of the Council on Access and Fairness is to advise the State Bar Board of Governors on appropriate strategies, consistent with State Bar policies and procedures, that enhance opportunities and advancement in the legal profession for diverse populations, particularly those who have been historically underrepresented... "Opportunities" encompasses leadership development and appointments to State Bar entities, as well as initiatives to educate students about the law and career opportunities in the law, referred to as education "pipeline" initiatives. "Advancement" encompasses recruitment, employment, retention and advancement in the legal profession. The Council will also screen candidates for the Annual Diversity Awards.

COAF Long-Range Goals and Strategies:

Long-Range Goals:

GOAL 1. Barriers are eliminated and diversity is encouraged all along the California educational pipeline (from preschool through admission to the legal profession).

GOAL 2. The California legal profession and judiciary will reflect the rich diversity of the California population and respect the cultural values of their constituents.

Strategies:

Strategy 1. Produce Institutional and Attitudinal Changes. Produce institutional and attitudinal changes to create a culture of inclusion within the legal profession and judiciary that fosters diversity.

Strategy 2. Communicate to Inspire and Engage Diversity. Serve as a catalyst for change by framing and communicating ways to respond to diversity challenges to inspire and empower potential lawyers from diverse communities.

Strategy 3. Partner, Collaborate and Coordinate to Achieve Diversity. Partner, collaborate and coordinate with existing entities and individuals already working toward the goal of diversity within the justice system to achieve that goal.

Strategy 4. Measure Change. Create mechanisms to measure change in the diversity of the legal profession over time.

COAF Objectives and Desired Outcomes by Strategy

Strategy 1. Produce Institutional and Attitudinal Changes.

Produce institutional and attitudinal changes to create a culture of inclusion within the legal profession and judiciary that fosters diversity.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Measurable Desired Outcomes</i>
<p>Broaden the criteria for entrance to, advancement and retention in the educational, legal and judicial systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College and law school mentoring programs are developed and actively support diverse student achievement. • Law school admissions criteria actively encourage diversity. • Diversity in law school admissions is factored into US News and World Report law school rankings. • Practices that reduce the barriers that prevent diverse individuals from entering and remaining in the profession are identified, developed, and put in place. • Cultural and socio-economic factors that produce negative perceptions of careers in the legal profession by diverse communities are identified and addressed. • Diversity in State Bar and other legal system leadership positions is increased.

Strategy 2. Communicate to Inspire and Engage Diversity.

Serve as a catalyst for change by framing and communicating diversity challenges to inspire and empower potential lawyers from diverse communities.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Measurable Desired Outcomes</i>
<p>Make the business, moral, and political case for “diversity” with all stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and encourage the use of compelling “incentives” and other solutions to enhance diversity in the profession. • The legal profession is a leader in enhancing opportunities for diverse populations. • Barriers to inclusion are eliminated. • More resources are dedicated to educational pipeline diversity efforts in schools. • More mentors from the legal profession are available and actively assisting students.

Strategy 3. Partner, Collaborate and Coordinate to Achieve Diversity.

Partner, collaborate and coordinate with existing entities and individuals already working toward the goal of diversity within the justice system to achieve that goal..

Objectives	Measurable Desired Outcomes
<p>Reach out to, convene, partner and coordinate efforts with educational and legal professional organizations to develop incentives and rewards for diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active partnerships focused on increasing diversity in the profession are in place with a wide range of educational and legal professional organizations. • Numerous model diversity programs are developed, implemented and sustained by educational and legal professional organizations at every stage of the “pipeline” from, for example, high school mock trial programs to professional mentoring programs sponsored by minority bar associations. • The numbers of students involved in model diversity programs has increased incrementally. • Lawyers volunteer in every social studies class in the state. • Fewer “leaks” in educational pipeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of diverse students attending and graduating from college increases. The number of diverse students matriculating from law school increases. The number of diverse law students admitted to practice law increases. • Diverse attorneys achieve higher levels of success and longer periods of tenure in every area of the legal profession including, for example, at private firms, government and public interest law offices, academia, and the judiciary.

Strategy 4. Measure Change. Create mechanisms to measure change in the diversity of the legal profession over time.

Objectives	Measurable Desired Outcomes
<p>Collect, analyze, and publish data to demonstrate results among key stakeholders inside and outside the profession.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide attorney and judicial demographics are used as one measurement tool to determining diversity within the legal profession. • Data collection, analysis, and publication protocols/guidelines are developed implemented and regularly updated. • Barriers to inclusion of diverse attorney and judicial populations are identified and defined. • “Success” related to increasing diversity in the profession is defined and factors related to achieving success are identified.