



## **DIVERSITY REPORT CARD 2013-14**

The mission of the Louisiana State Bar Association is, *inter alia*, to “assure access to and aid in the administration of justice,” “promote the professional competence of attorneys,” and “encourage collegiality among its members.” GOAL 3 of the LSBA strategic plan is as follows: “The LSBA provides the foundation for a supportive and collegial community of legal professionals.”

The mission of the Committee on Diversity in the Profession, consistent with the LSBA’s mission, strategic plan, and diversity statement, is to assess the level of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, age, geographic, sexual orientation and disability diversity within all components of the legal profession in Louisiana; to identify barriers to the attainment of full and meaningful representation and participation in the legal profession by persons of diverse backgrounds; and to propose programs and methods by which the LSBA can most effectively work to remove those barriers and achieve greater diversity.

### **Louisiana State Bar Association Diversity Statement**

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) recognizes that achieving diversity in the legal profession is an evolutionary process that requires the Association’s continued effort and commitment.

The LSBA is committed to diversity in its membership, Board of Governors, staff, House of Delegates, committees and all leadership positions. Diversity is an inclusive concept that encompasses race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability.

The LSBA is a richer and more effective Association because of diversity, as it increases our strengths, capabilities and adaptability. In addition, a diverse group of talented legal professionals is important to the success of law firms, law departments, public service organizations and other organizations that include attorneys.

Through increased diversity, the LSBA and its members can bring more varied perspectives, experiences, backgrounds, talents and interests to the practice of law and the administration of justice.

**DIVERSITY — INCLUSION — PROFESSIONALISM**



Diversity Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Luis A. Leitzelar and Barbara B. Ormsby, present SWLBA President Chantell M. Smith with the Guardian of Diversity Award.



LSBA President-Elect Joseph L. "Larry" Shea, Jr., and 2013-14 LSBA President Richard K. Leefe and US Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana, Kenneth A. Polite, Jr. attend the 2014 Diversity Conclave.

The Committee on Diversity has successfully initiated and implemented a number of programs on behalf of the LSBA during the past year.

### Statement of Diversity Principles

- *Goal: encourage law firms and offices to execute the LSBA Statement of Diversity Principles; commit to becoming more diverse and more inclusive within their workplace; and strive to diversify their clientele and suppliers.*
- Over 343 signatories (including law firms, law departments, courts, bar associations, and individuals)

### Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession

- Seventh Annual Conclave: "Inclusive Professionalism: Harnessing the Power of Our Differences" (March 21, 2014, New Orleans)

### Diversity Awards

- Recognized the LSBA Human Rights Award recipient
- Recognized the Guardian of Diversity Award recipient

### Diversity Communications and Resources

- Published "Focus on Diversity" newsletters within the LSBA *Bar Briefs* throughout 2013-14
- Production of a diversity video
- Compilation of educational resources related to diversity and inclusion

### Community Outreach

- Partnered with LSBA Committee for Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities: 3rd Disabilities Summit, "Building an Enabled Area," (October 24, 2013, U.S. Attorney's office, New Orleans)
- 4th Disabilities Summit (scheduled October 23, 2014, New Orleans)



2014 Diversity Conclave attendees



Fourth Annual Suit Up for the Future participants pose with the Honorable Karen Wells Roby after their final presentations.

**Outreach to Law Students to Strengthen the Diversity Pipeline to the Legal Profession**

- Partnered with LSBA’s Minority Involvement Section: 1st Professionalism Development Diversity Symposium, “Preparing Practice-Ready Attorneys,” (September 14, 2013, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, New Orleans)
- Partnered with LSBA’s Minority Involvement Section: 2nd Professionalism Development Diversity Symposium (scheduled August 8, 2014, Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge)
- Partnered with LSBA’s Minority Involvement Section: 6th Annual Minority Legal Virtual Internship Fair (April 2014)
- Partnered with Loyola University New Orleans College of Law Black Law Student Association and Tulane University Law School Black Law Student Association: 2nd annual Setting the Bar: Pre-Law Conference (February 1, 2014 and February 15, 2014, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, New Orleans)
- Law Student Networking Reception, LGBT Diversity (April 10, 2014, New Orleans)

**Outreach to Students to Strengthen the Diversity Pipeline to the Legal Profession**

- Partnered with Just the Beginning Foundation: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Suit Up For the Future: High School Summer Legal Institute and Intern Program (June 9-27, 2014, New Orleans) *in collaboration with Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law School, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, Southern University Law Center, and Tulane University Law School*
- Provided volunteer support: Young Leadership Council of New Orleans, Power Ties (2013)



LSBA President Richard K. Leefe, Honorable Karen Wells Roby and Honorable Fredericka Homberg Wicker present Suit Up attendee with her Certificate of Completion.

## Outreach to Law Firms and Judiciary

- *Goal: to increase the judiciary's awareness of the impact of diversity and inclusion on the profession and the administration of justice; to encourage the Louisiana Supreme Court to embrace diversity and inclusion as priorities and to actively engage in diversity and inclusion discussions and efforts.*
- “Diversity Toolkit” for legal employers: LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity Department webpage <http://www.lsba.org/Diversity/>
- Outreach to Corporate Counsel: Commitment to Diversity, Execution of letter by LSBA President Richard K. Leefe and corporate counsel executives (April 2014)
- Diversity and Inclusion Presentation: Louisiana Judicial College's Fall Conference scheduled for (October 5-7, 2014, New Orleans)



Luis A. Leitzelar (right) presents Preston J. Castille, Jr. (left) with Taylor, Porter, Brooks and Phillips' Certificate of Appreciation for their sponsorship of the 2014 Diversity Conclave.

## Diversity Integrated Programs

- *Goal: provide diversity and inclusion education and awareness throughout the state without the venue of the mini diversity conclaves. The Committee on Diversity is engaged in outreach efforts to request and create presentation opportunities with local and specialty bar associations as well as the LSBA Continuing Legal Education Committee and Professional Speaker's Bureau. The Committee on Diversity is committed to training attorneys and judges to facilitate diversity and inclusion discussions. The Committee on Diversity coordinated over 40 CLEs by partnering with local and specialty bar associations and identifying other existing CLE programs that diversity and inclusion topics could be integrated into.*
- Train the LSBA Facilitator: LSBA workshop designed to provide specialized training to facilitate diversity and inclusion discussions (May 7, 2014, New Orleans)
- “I Thee Wed: The Constitutional Implications of *Hollingsworth v. Perry* and *United States v. Windsor*” (July 12, 2013, New Orleans)
- “Life Imitating Art: The Impact of the Media on Perceptions & Professional Relationships within the Legal Profession” (August 23, 2013, New Orleans)
- “The Professional Workplace: Changing the Model to Enhance Inclusion” (December 13, 2013, New Orleans)
- “The Complexity of Professionalism in a World of Difference” (January 23, 2014, Baton Rouge)
- “Diversity Matters: Practicing Professionally in a Globalized World” (April 2, 2014, National Labor Relations Board)
- Partnered with Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCAA) and Entergy Corporation: 1st Academy for Leadership & Inclusion (November 13, 2013, Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Orleans)
- “Blind Spots: What Lawyers Should Know about Implicit Bias and Effectiveness” and “Tips for Effective Cross-Cultural Lawyering” presented by Judge Wendell Griffen (LSBA Solo-Small Firm Conference, March 7, 2014, New Orleans Marriott)
- “Unconscious Bias” (April 9, 2014, Judge Albert Tate Jr. American Inn of Court, Lake Charles; April 10, 2014, American Inn of Court of Acadiana, Lafayette; April 30, 2014, A.P. Tureaud Inn of Court, New Orleans)

**Outreach to LSBA Members**

- Goal: to increase collegiality through measures such as: designing welcoming activities to create mentoring opportunities for the newest members of the bar association; providing networking opportunities for members throughout the state; strengthening relationships with local and specialty bar associations through programming collaboration; developing leadership skills of and opportunities for less seasoned attorneys; increasing the presence of LSBA leadership at events throughout the state; and providing member benefits that enhance and make easier the practice of law for all attorneys.*
- The LSBA has successfully implemented a number of programs during the past year throughout the state to improve member outreach and educate members on the many benefits available through the LSBA.



Officers of the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Louisiana, (l to r), Vice President Ira J. Gonzalez, President Daniel R. Estrada, and Treasurer René DeRojas attend the First Annual Diversity Bar Spring Social sponsored by the HLAL and several other specialty bars.

**Increased LSBA leadership presence at events hosted by local and specialty bar associations**

- Attended more than 30 local and specialty bar association events throughout the state
- Welcomed the newest members of the LSBA into the noble profession during new admittees receptions throughout the state



2013 Disabilities Summit speakers, (l to r) Tori Smith, Brian S. Lestage and Paul J. Masinter.

LSBA 2013-2014 President Richard K. Leefe, president-elect Joseph L. “Larry” Shea, Jr., and other LSBA leaders attended events throughout the state hosted by local and specialty bar associations. Such events included red masses, openings of court, bench bar programs, scholarship galas, receptions, and judicial investitures. During the events, LSBA leaders welcomed the newest members of the LSBA into the profession, provided remarks to attendees regarding LSBA benefits and programs, and networked with attendees to gain feedback regarding ways to improve member benefits and services. Some of the events attended are as follows:

- Alexandria Opening of Court, Red Mass, and New Admittees breakfast (September 4, 2013)

- 4th Judicial District Bar Association Opening of the Court, Memorial Service and New Admittees brunch (September 6, 2013)
- Shreveport New Admittees Reception (October 29, 2013)
- New Orleans New Admittees Reception (November 14, 2013)
- Lafayette New Admittees Reception (January 10, 2014)
- Southwest Bar Association, Lake Charles, CLE and New Admittees Reception (January 30, 2014)
- Baton Rouge Bar Association Opening of the Court and New Admittees Reception (February 19, 2014)



Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society members (l to r) Cordelia D. Tullous, President Rachael D. Johnson and Ashley J. Heilprin at the 2014 Diversity Bar Spring Social.

### **Co-hosted and supported CLE presentations and programs**

- Co-sponsored and supported events of local and specialty bar associations
- Provided speakers and/or presentation materials for CLE programs for local and specialty bar associations
- Coordinated the planning of CLE programs for LSBA members interested in facilitating programs that integrate topics related to diversity and inclusion

LSBA representatives staffed information tables during several of these events to provide materials regarding member benefits, to promote upcoming programs, and to answer the questions of LSBA members. The LSBA provided speakers for free diversity/inclusion professionalism CLE presentations for at least 10 local and specialty bar associations.

### **Local Bar Leaders Luncheons**

- Hosted lunches throughout the state for officers of local and specialty bar associations

LSBA 2013-2014 President Richard K. Leefe, President-Elect Joseph L. “Larry” Shea, Jr., and other LSBA leaders hosted lunches throughout the state for officers of local and specialty bar associations.

LSBA officers and Board of Governors members provided literature on member benefits and discussed LSBA initiatives and programs. The LSBA received feedback from local bar officers and leaders about programming that interests them, their bar association members, and their law firms. The LSBA officers discussed the Month of Service statewide project, opportunities for participation in diversity and inclusion awareness, the new Senior Lawyers Division, Access to Justice updates, and opportunities for future involvement in the LSBA and its committees. Additionally, participants brainstormed ideas on bolstering the perceived integrity of the profession as well as how to incentivize involvement among young attorneys.

## Increased Member Benefits

- The LSBA strives to provide its members with benefits that are meaningful and that assist members to practice more efficiently

The newest benefits include:

- **Clio** - A web-based practice management system specifically designed for small- to mid-sized law firms. LSBA members receive a 10% discount on a subscription to the service.
- **American Bar Association** – A 20% discount off the regular ABA non-member price.
- **SurePayroll** – An online payroll vendor. LSBA members are able to enroll with SurePayroll at a discounted member rate to eliminate the burden and inconvenience that often come with managing payroll and payroll taxes for each payroll day.
- **Geico** – LSBA members receive exclusive savings on homeowners, renters, motorcycle and automobile insurance rates.
- **TechnoLawyer** – An online resource with more than 13,000 members in which legal professionals can share their knowledge and experiences with their peers and access volumes of archived articles and information to assist with technology in the practice of law. TechnoLawyer has made its entire archive of information available to LSBA’s membership at no charge.
- **Office Depot** – The Louisiana State Bar Association has negotiated amazing rates for the Office Depot® discount program. Members can find 93,000 commonly used products discounted below retail price, including ink, paper, office supplies, toners, stamps/daters, pens, pads, laptops, webcams, computers, furniture and much more.



New Bar Admittees Desherick J.W. Boone and Alissa Shay Zeller attend the 2013 New Orleans New Admittee Welcoming reception.

## Conducted Photo ID Bar Card Outreach

- Provided opportunities for members to obtain, free-of-charge, the new LSBA color-photo ID Bar Card that should allow for easier access into most courts throughout the state

The photo ID bar card outreach was provided in the following cities:

- Baton Rouge (January 23-24, 2014; February 19, 2014)
- Biloxi, MS, Jefferson Parish Bar CLE by the Sea (April 24, 2014)
- Covington (April 11, 2014)
- Destin, FL, LSBA Annual Meeting (June 1-6, 2014)
- Lafayette (January 10, 2014; April 10, 2014)
- Lake Charles (January 30, 2014; April 9, 2014)
- Livingston Parish (March 20, 2014)
- New Orleans (March 6-7, 21, 2014; May 7, 2014; October 23, 2014; November 12, 2014)

**Thank you to the 2013-14 members of the LSBA Committee on Diversity in the Legal Profession. Your commitment to diversity is an inspiration to others in the legal profession.**

Paul Stephen Tuano Balanon	Luis Arturo Leitzelar
Adrejia LaJoy Ann Boutte	Maria Pabon Lopez
James D. Caldwell, Jr.	David D. Meyer
Ariel A. Campos, Sr.	Yolanda Denise Montgomery
Christina Leigh Carroll	V. Elaine Boyle Patin
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Marcus Eugene Edwards	Michael Ray Robinson
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LaWanda Batiste Gibson	Chantell Marie Smith
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Christopher Bondreak Hebert	Scott Jerome Spivey
Honorable Karen K. Herman	Honorable Max N. Tobias, Jr.
Paul Damon Hesse	Jack M Weiss
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Wayne J. Lee	Sheila Marie Wilkinson

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Kelly McNeil Legier

Former Director, Department of Member Outreach and Diversity

*The LSBA and the Diversity Committee would like to thank Kelly for her years of service and commend Kelly on her dedication and commitment to issues related to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.*

## **LSBA MEMBER OUTREACH AND DIVERSITY STAFF**

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