



DIVERSITY REPORT CARD

2009-10

The mission of the Committee on Diversity in the Profession, consistent with the Louisiana State Bar Association's 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. The Committee on Diversity has successfully initiated and implemented a number of programs on behalf of the LSBA.

Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession

- Inaugural Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges, Making Cents, March 7, 2008
- Second Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession: Continuing the Conversation, March 13, 2009
- Third Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession: The Professional Workplace: Diagnosing the Issues and Finding the Cure, March 5, 2010

Mini Diversity Conclaves

- Lafayette Mini Diversity Conclave, October 14, 2009
- Baton Rouge Mini Diversity Conclave, November 2, 2009
- Lake Charles Mini Diversity Conclave, April 16, 2010

Statement of Diversity Principles

- Collected over 80 law firm, law department, and court signatories

Diversity Award

- The Louisiana State Bar Association Human Rights Award will recognize outstanding efforts in promoting diversity within the legal profession
- First award will be presented during the 2010-11 Bar Year

Diversity Outreach for the Judiciary

- Incorporated diverse CLE topics and speakers in the programming at judicial colleges and orientations
- Unveiled a portrait of the Hon. Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr. at the Louisiana Bar Center, October 4, 2009

Diversity Communications and Resources

- April/May 2009 issue of the Louisiana Bar Journal was a diversity issue titled "Diversity Refined"
- Developed a library of diversity resources at the Bar Center and added diversity resources to diversity Web page (www.lsba.org/diversity)

Outreach to Diverse Specialty Bar Associations and Groups

- Co-sponsored and supported events of diverse specialty bar associations
- Assisted in formation and revitalization of diverse specialty bar associations

Minority Involvement Section Job Fair and Internship Fair

- Worked with the LSBA's Minority Involvement Section to host 21st Annual Minority Job Fair at Loyola University in New Orleans, August 14, 2009
- Worked with the Minority Involvement Section to host its 2nd Annual Minority Internship Fair at Tulane University Law School, March 13, 2010

Diversity Outreach to Law Students

- Hosting a professional development workshop for law students in New Orleans and in Baton Rouge
- Assisted Minority Involvement Section with its law student mentoring program

Outreach to Children to Strengthen the Diversity Pipeline to the Legal Profession

- Partnered with the LSBA Young Lawyers Division, the Louisiana Center for Law & Civic Education, and Karen Chatman Edutainment to use Ms. Chatman's "The Right Act: Vote" and "Lincoln Ride On" music pieces to conduct outreach assemblies for middle and high school students
- Assisted the Young Leadership Council with identifying attorney volunteers for its Power Ties program for middle school children
- Developing an attorney volunteer database: "Student Outreach Ambassadors"

Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession

For the last three years, the LSBA has co-hosted a Conclave on Diversity in the Legal profession with the Louisiana Supreme Court and several local and specialty bar associations. On March 7, 2008, the LSBA held an historic inaugural Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges, Making Cents in order to begin a discussion among attorneys regarding racial, ethnic, gender, and generational diversity. The program was attended by more than 115 participants and provoked discussions regarding the importance of diversity, educated on ways to improve diversity, and exposed how internal personal and organizational biases impede diversity. Held March 13, 2009, the second annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession: Continuing the Conversation continued the diversity discussion. The second Conclave was more interactive and allowed the participants to gain skills to address everyday diversity issues in their practices during a three-hour workshop. After a networking lunch, participants received practical information from two groups of panelists. The third Conclave hosted over 170 attorneys and judges on March 5, 2010 for "The Professional Workplace: Diagnosing the Issues and Finding the Cure." The program was even more interactive and allowed participants to gain tangible tools to make them culturally aware and skillful. The afternoon panels addressed hot-button diversity topics and smart business diversity practices.

Mini Diversity Conclaves

In an effort to address the interests of the profession and members of the LSBA throughout the state, the Committee has co-sponsored and is co-sponsoring free mini, half-day diversity conclaves with local and specialty bar associations in major cities around the state. The Committee partnered with the Greater Lafayette Chapter of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc. and the Lafayette Bar Association to host a mini conclave in Lafayette on October 14, 2009 for an audience of about 50 attorneys. The Committee partnered with the Greater Baton Rouge Chapter of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc. and the Baton Rouge Bar Association to host a mini conclave in Baton Rouge for an audience of almost 140 lawyers and judges on November 3, 2009. The Committee partnered with the Southwest Louisiana Bar Association and the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc. - Lake Charles Chapter to host a mini conclave in Lake Charles for an audience of about 60 attorneys and judges. A mini conclave is planned for Alexandria on May 14, 2010 and in Lafayette on August 25, 2010.

Statement of Diversity Principles

On April 4, 2009, the LSBA Board of Governors approved a Statement of Diversity Principles for dissemination to and execution by lawyers, judges, government agencies, law firms, and law departments within the state. The Statement reflects the recognition that meaningful diversity advancements occur when the leaders in an organization embrace diversity and demonstrate through their actions that diversity is a priority to the organization. By executing the Statement, the leaders of an organization agree to use their best efforts to increase the diversity in their hiring, retention and promotion of attorneys and the elevation of attorneys to leadership positions within their organizations. To date, over 80 law offices and courts across the state have executed the Statement. The entire list of signatories is available at www.lsba.org/diversity/DiversityPrinciples.asp.

Diversity Award

The Committee has developed the criteria for a diversity award, the Louisiana State Bar Association Human Rights Award, which the LSBA Board of Governors approved on January 22, 2010. The award will recognize outstanding efforts made by (1) a bar association, (2) a law firm or law department, (3) an individual attorney or judge, (4) a court, or (5) a community organization or individual in promoting diversity in the legal profession. The first diversity award will be presented during the 2010-11 LSBA Midyear or Annual Meeting.

Diversity Outreach for the Judiciary

The Committee has liaisons serving on the LSBA Summer School and Annual Meeting planning committee in order to incorporate diverse CLE topics and speakers in the programming at judicial colleges and orientation.

The LSBA and the Ortique Family unveiled a portrait of the Honorable Justice Revis O. Ortique, Jr. during a reception at the Louisiana Bar Center on October 4, 2009 to an audience of about 75. Justice Ortique, the first African American justice on the Louisiana Supreme Court and the first African American elected to the LSBA House of Delegates, contributed much to the legal profession in Louisiana.

Diversity Communications & Resources

The Committee has written and secured attorneys to prepare and submit to the Louisiana Bar Journal and "Bar Briefs", articles and pictures that focus on diversity issues and events. The April/May 2009 issue of the Louisiana Bar Journal was a diversity issue titled "Diversity Refined." The Committee is developing a semi-annual diversity newsletter as well as a series of diversity brochures. The Committee is developing a library of diversity resources at the Bar Center so that members will have access to information to educate themselves on various diversity issues. A diversity resources link is included on the diversity Web page; it houses links to various diverse organization as well as current diversity articles and reports.

Outreach to Diverse Specialty Bar Associations and Groups

The Committee has provided administrative assistance to the diverse specialty bar associations. The Committee co-sponsored a reception for the Lake Charles chapter of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society to help that chapter re-organize. The Committee has begun discussions to co-sponsor with the Baton Rouge chapter of the Association for Women Attorneys a CLE focused on topics affecting female attorneys, and to co-sponsor black history month CLEs and lunch and learn sessions with diverse bars.

The Committee provided support to help attorneys form a Louisiana Association for Black Women Attorneys in March 2010. The Committee also has offered assistance to the Louisiana Asian Pacific American Bar Association that was recently incorporated in November of 2009.

Minority Involvement Section Job Fair and Internship Fair

The Committee worked with the LSBA's Minority Involvement Section to host its 21st Annual Minority Job Fair on August 14, 2009, at Loyola University in New Orleans. The Fair represented the largest and most diverse employer pool and the largest number of Fair sponsors in the history of the event. Twenty-six interviewing employers and about 25 information table employers met with nearly 100 highly qualified law students and recent graduates, primarily from area law schools. Another 26 employers collected resumes and will contact students individually when hiring needs arise.

The Committee worked extensively with the Minority Involvement Section in its effort to host its Second Annual Minority Internship Fair, which was held on March 13, 2010, at Tulane University Law School. The goal of the Fair is to provide a professional development vehicle for law students ranked any place within their classes to obtain meaningful legal work in an office setting and to receive mentoring from seasoned lawyers and/or judges. The highly motivated student participants are willing to accept invitations for free or modestly-paid internships during all or part of the summer.

Diversity Outreach to Law Students

This spring, the Committee is hosting a professional development workshop for law students in New Orleans and in Baton Rouge. It also helped the Minority Involvement Section implement its law student mentoring program.

Outreach to Children to Strengthen the Diversity Pipeline to the Legal Profession

The Committee is planning a strategic outreach effort to create a database of attorney and judge volunteers, called "Student Outreach Ambassadors," who are interested in participating in outreach efforts to middle schools and high schools. The Committee partnered with the LSBA Young Lawyers Division, the Louisiana Center for Law & Civic Education, and Karen Chatman Edutainment to use Ms. Chatman's "The Right Act: Vote" History Unplugged music piece in a voter education initiative to high school students in New Orleans and Baton Rouge in early October 2008. In May 2009, to further Law Day activities, the LSBA and LCLCE, using Ms. Chatman's "Abraham Ride On" music piece, conducted several instructive and entertaining presentations aimed at educating young people about President Abraham Lincoln during the bi-centennial of his birth. Using Ms. Chatman's hip-hop musical piece, the initiative educated children in a fun and interactive way and exposed them to attorneys in a positive way to subtly plant the seed that they can pursue a legal career some day.

Louisiana State Bar Association

601 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70130-3404

504.566.1600 800.421.5722 • Fax: 504.566.0930