

LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

11:30 a.m. • May 4, 2011

Louisiana Bar Center, New Orleans

Participants

Brad J. Axelrod
Ariel A. Campos, Sr.
Isidro Rene DeRojas (phone)
LaWanda Batiste Gibson
Chauntis T. Jenkins
Wayne J. Lee
Kelly McNeil Legier

Claire H. McDaniel (phone)
Yolanda D. Montgomery (phone)
Hon. Max N. Tobias
Michael R. Robinson (phone)
Sandra S. Varnado (Loyola)
Sheila M. Wilkinson
Sharonda R. Williams (phone)

The meeting was called to order at 11:38 a.m. Co-chair Wayne J. Lee presided over the meeting.

I. HOUSEKEEPING

- A. Minutes.** Lawanda Gibson moved and Brad Axelrod seconded to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2011 meeting. The motion passed without objection.
- B. Spring Meeting.** The consensus was that another meeting was not needed before this Committee's term expires. The next Diversity Committee will set a meeting after July 1st.

II. OLD BUSINESS

- A. National Consortium on Racial & Ethnic Diversity Annual Convention 2011.** Judge Tobias reported on the Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts Conference, which occurred April 27-30 in New Orleans at the Omni Royal Hotel. The conference had 85 registrants and 45 speakers. This lower-than-normal attendance was probably impacted by higher airfare as well as changes in state policies. The feedback has been very positive. Scholarships totaling \$12,000 were given to participants to attend the program. The next conference is scheduled in Omaha, NE on May 9-12, 2012. Chair Lee noted that the Consortium presented the LSBA with a plaque to recognize it for its diversity efforts.
- B. Diversity Facilitation Workshop.** Ms. Legier reported on the status of the draft plan.
- C. Diversity Survey.** Ms. Legier reported on the status of the survey that Prof. Do Kyun Kim is conducting for the LSBA. He will complete a draft by the end of July.

III. LSBA OUTREACH REPORT

Ms. Legier gave the report regarding various outreach efforts.

- A. *New Admittee Receptions.* The LSBA is scheduling new admittee receptions in the areas previously hosted: New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Lafayette, and Alexandria.
- B. *Geographic Outreach.* Ms. Legier will meet with LSBA President-Elect Jimmy Davidson to plan the geographic outreach.
- C. *Diversity Conversation Requested.* The LSBA coordinated a discussion April 16, 2011, between the bench and bar in Alexandria, where tensions have arisen between some judges and minority lawyers. Ms. Legier developed the CLE program, titled "Improving Relationships within the Profession." Kim Boyle moderated a panel consisting of Judge Harry F. Randow, Ed Larvadain, and Judge Donald Johnson. About 20 people attended, including all of the members of the Ninth Judicial District Court.

IV. DIVERSITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. *Conclave.* Ms. Jenkins reported on the 2011 Diversity Conclave, which occurred on March 18, 2011, at the New Orleans Marriott at the Convention Center, including the lunch speaker (Marc Morial). The title is "The Professional Workplace: Implementing Solutions and Cultivating an Inclusive Atmosphere." The Conclave had about 196 attendees, and the audience was diverse with about 35% non-minorities and more judges in attendance than the past conclaves. She described the workshop, lunch speech, and panel discussions. The networking reception was hosted by the Louisiana Association for Black Women Attorneys and was well attended with about 50-60 people. It was classy and well received. We gave the speakers gifts. Marc Morial's gift was a 2011 Jazz Fest poster. The Train the Trainer Breakout Session had about 12 attendees, and the Cross Cultural Selling Breakout session had about 40 attendees. The feedback for the breakout sessions was good. There will be a follow-up session for the 12 trainers soon so that they will be ready to facilitate future diversity discussions. Most participants agreed to conduct two sessions within the next year. Ms. Jenkins discussed the budget and finances. The committee engaged in a discussion regarding the venue and parking issues. The consensus was to give additional parking options and possibly negotiate a reduced rate for alternative lots.
- B. *Awards.* Mr. Lee reported that the Board approved Brace Bennett Godfrey, Jr. (posthumously) as the award recipient of the first LSBA Human Rights Award. Notice has been sent to his wife about the award and inviting her to attend the annual meeting to receive the award on his behalf. Ms. Jenkins moved and Judge Tobias seconded to have a plaque purchased to display the award recipients every year. After discussion, the motion passed without objection.
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Ms. Legier will investigate and order the plaque after consultation with Executive Director Loretta Larsen.

C. Diversity Communications. Ms. McDaniel reported on the subcommittee efforts.

1. Diversity Video: Ms. Legier reported on the status of the video contest. No submissions were received by the deadline, and the subcommittee has revised the dates to move the contest to the Fall.
 - March 1 – Publicity Disseminated
 - March 1-31 – Telephone Campaign
 - April 18 - Letter of intent due
 - April 30 – September 30 - Submission period
 - October 1-30 - Judging period
 - November 18- Notification of winner
 - January 19-21 – Presentation of winner
2. Topics for One Hour Diversity Presentation Packages. Ms. McDaniel reported on the proposals received from consultants. The proposals exceeded the budget. We will negotiate with DMM & Associates and Cathy Harris to have them help develop the LSBA’s canned presentations at a lower rate. The subcommittee is exploring the following topics for future canned presentations: (1) What is diversity and what is the LSBA doing; (2) Generational differences; (3) Micro inequities; (4) Developing a successful diversity initiative in my organization (big firm); and (5) Cultural competency basics.
3. Website: The website has been adjusted to add a page for “archived” events, which are the past events.
4. Brochures/Bookmarks: Ms. McDaniel reported that the “Creating a Culture of Inclusion” and “Commitment to Diversity” diversity bookmarks were printed and disseminated. Other topics for future bookmarks include the following: (1) disabilities that are not obvious, (2) the stereotypes/misconceptions, (3) how it impacts the person and organization, (4) strategies for creating a more inclusive environment, and (5) how the person adds value to the organization if given an environment to succeed. The Generational Differences bookmark is being developed now.
5. Newsletter: The second “Focus on Diversity” newsletter appeared within the January *Bar Briefs*. The next newsletter will appear in the May *Bar Briefs*. Ms. McDaniel discussed some of the articles and features for the next issue, including a spotlight on Liskow and Lewis and Adams and Reese.
6. Training for Future Facilitators: Ms. McDaniel reiterated the purpose of the training.
7. Lapel Pins: Ms. Legier noted that the pins have been distributed to those in attendance, and noted that those who have not yet received their pins should email her to have one mailed.
8. Next Subcommittee Meeting: June 9th.

D. ***Diversity Commitment Statement.*** Chair Lee reported for the subcommittee. LSBA President Mike Patterson is sending correspondence that he, Judy Perry Martinez (Northrop Grumman), and Rod West (Entergy) will jointly execute to disseminate to corporate counsel within Louisiana encouraging them to execute the Statement of Diversity Principles. Ariel Campos manned a table at the Judicial College in Lafayette to actively solicit additional judge signatories. Judge Wicker made a presentation to the judges during the judicial college. Judge Tobias reported that no action has been taken by the Louisiana Supreme Court on his letter asking for three hours of diversity to be required of all attorneys and judges over a five year period. Mr. Lee noted that he learned during the Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts conference that the Michigan State Bar has borrowed some of the language from our Statement of Diversity Principles to develop its own statement.

E. ***Diversity Integration.*** The subcommittee did not have any new news to report.

F. ***Diversity Pipeline.*** Ms. Wilkinson reported on the subcommittee's efforts.

1. **"Suit Up For the Future" High School Legal Internship Program:** The LSBA received 28 applications and selected 19 participants. She discussed a partnership offered by Judge Karen Roby, who is an officer of the Just The Beginning Foundation. Judge Roby will provide materials so that we will not have to reinvent the wheel regarding materials and the syllabus. The LSBA will receive a \$9,150.00 grant from the Law School Admissions Council to conduct the program and provide modest \$250 stipends to the student participants. Volunteers are needed to teach. We have three law student interns who will help conduct research for the program. Committee members were asked to help identify court trials or hearings that we might be able to bring the student participants to observe.
2. **College Outreach:** Exploration of the program will continue with possible implementation in the Spring of 2012.
3. **Student Ambassador Outreach Database:** Ms. Wilkinson reported that we have about 53 attorney volunteers in the database. The database has been used to identify attorney volunteers for the Young Leadership Council's Power Ties program and the Teen Court program. Ms. Legier explained phone calling to new admittees will be conducted soon to encourage new admittees to consider participation on the database as well as with the pipeline subcommittee.
4. **Professionalism Scenarios:** We submitted two diversity scenarios to the Committee on the Profession for consideration. We will continue to develop additional scenarios on other topics, such as disabilities.

G. ***Diversity Outreach to Firms and Courts.*** Ms. Legier reported that Ms. Medley is developing a presentation, which will allow any professionalism presenters or members of the Diversity Committee to facilitate discussions for firms and courts.

H. Job Fair. Ms. Legier reported for the subcommittee on the Minority Involvement Section Internship Fair, which occurred virtually in March of 2011. The Fair was converted to a “virtual” fair. Ms. Legier explained that the students’ resumes were distributed to the registered employers.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

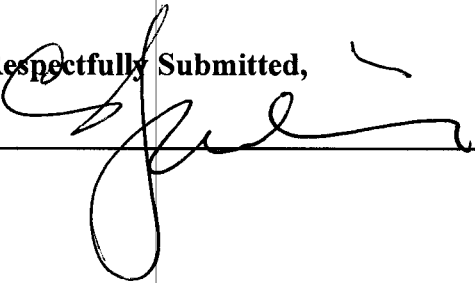
Mr. Lee directed the committee members’ attention to the announcements listed on the agenda.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and appears to be "C. Lee".