**DEI Council Meeting Minutes**

**11/14/2022 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm**

The Washington State Bar Association’s DEI Council is dedicated to implementing WSBA’s

Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The work of the committee promotes historically underrepresented groups to enter and stay in the profession of law. The Diversity Committee does this through collaborative relationships and community building activities, which highlight the numerous societal benefits of a diverse law profession.

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**Attendees:** Sharon Sakamoto, Governor Sunitha Anjilvel, Miryam Gordon, Megan Dawson, Governor Matthew Dresden, Mike Rhodes, Maria Mia, Lilli Douglas, Laine Ellison, Raina Wagner, Christopher Swaby, SaNni Lemonidis, Governor Alec Stephens

**WSBA Staff:** Nicholas Mejía, Diana Singleton, Saleena Salango

**Guests:** Immediate past president, Brian Tollefson, Governor Nam Nguyen

Meeting called to order 12:05 p.m.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Sunitha discussed the importance of the work in which the council does. There was a recognition of Imani and the importance of their work. Sunitha asked instead of a moment of silence to continue the work and embody the vision and work Imani would have wanted. Introductions occurred until 12:28 p.m.

**November Minutes:** Miryam Gordon and Governor Stephens stated to refer to governors by their last name. Governor Stephens motioned; Governor Anjilvel seconded the motion. Governor Dresden requested his name be corrected. Voted unanimously in favor.

**Overview of work for the year:** The Definition of Diversity Workgroup and DEI Plan workgroup were commended for their important work. In 2013 there was a DEI Plan that was put in place, and it was set to relooked at ten years after it was instituted which is coming up very soon. There is a chance to relook at this plan and Governor Anjilvel asked for all members to participate in this work. It was noted there is no expiration date when it comes to the DEI Plan.

The Law Student Pipeline Workgroup was discussed as a priority as it is important to keep the law schools in mind. Membership demographic study showcases the diversity within the WSBA as well as what challenges WSBA members are facing. The WSBA had hired a consultant to conduct surveys and collect data.

**Bar Publications:** The WSBA magazine is trying to be part of the solution related to promoting DEI work and DEI spaces. Mentioned that interested members of the committee are welcome to do a publication. Miryam mentioned that it may be beneficial to support the MBAs through giving them a column in the Bar News. Saleena mentioned that there is currently a standing MBA section in the Bar News.

**At-Large Candidate Interviews:** At large interviews will be upcoming next spring, Governor Stephens called on members to participate in the at large governor elections. He also mentioned that it may be important to have first read of the definition of diversity soon before the elections occur.

**MBA Proposal:** The proposal was put forward due to inactivity related to DEI focused work. The MBAs are encouraging the WSBA to continue its work to help Washington’s historically excluded communities.

**Pro Tem Scholarships and Reception:** Every other year the WSBA puts on a two day CLE related to this matter. The DEI Council is involved because the DMCJA wants more individuals to attend. The DEI Council would serve as the individuals who choose who receive scholarships.

**Planning Future Meetings**

Breakout rooms occurred until 1:15 p.m.; Governor Stephens requested at the next meeting it is discussed what the Member Demographic Study work entails as an entire council. Governor Anjilvel seconded that notion.

**Hybrid Strategic Planning/Learning Retreats**

Governor Anjilvel asked for input from council members. Mike Rhodes stated he was fine with either hybrid or in person, SaNni mentioned hybrid would be beneficial due to accessibility. Governor Stephens mentioned that he prefers the dates being on a Saturday, mentioning having the retreat from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. could be beneficial. Governor Dresden mentioned it may be beneficial to combine an activity alongside the work, such as “a play” or another non-work related activity. January’s retreat date was set for the 7th, 2023.

**Monthly Virtual Meetings – Future Agenda Items**

Council Members were encouraged to consider publishing DEI Content in Bar News. It was mentioned that it may be beneficial for the WSBA to add pronouns in Legal Directory as a future consideration. It was also mentioned that it may be worth having a conversation as to how the DEI Council will continue to support the Native American community through the usage of land acknowledgements. Lastly, it was announced everyone must join a workgroup as mentioned in the council charter. If someone misses three meetings unexcused you will have to roll off the council.