



March 2010 ■ Volume XIII ■ Number 2

The Board of Governors met on March 5-6 in Bremerton. For information on this or past BOG meeting materials, please contact Margaret Shane at margarets@wsba.org.

Bylaw Review Committee Recommendations Continue

On behalf of the Bylaw Review Committee, Chair and Governor **Catherine Moore** (Seattle) and Director of Regulatory Services **Jean McElroy** presented a number of proposed revisions. The sections up for a first reading were: Definitions, Governance, Appropriations, Elections, Meetings, Referenda, Indemnification, Keller and Amendments. Other Bylaw provisions presented included Sections (second reading) and Membership (third reading). The Committee plans to present the revised Bylaws for final adoption by the Board at the April 23-24 meeting in Port Angeles.

Update on the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE)

Director of Regulatory Services **Jean McElroy** and Executive Director **Paula Littlewood** made a presentation regarding the UBE. At the December Board meeting, the Board asked staff to determine if there is an ethnic performance disparity on the WSBA essay exam. WSBA staff collaborated with the three in-state law schools to gather data about the Washington state bar exam pass rates. This data was analyzed by National Conference of Bar Examiners staff, an independent statistician from the University of Washington, and WSBA staff. The Board was presented with the findings, which indicated that the performance gaps seen in the Multistate Bar Exam (MBE) are also found in the Washington state bar exam. Littlewood added that it is important to note that, regardless of the testing instrument used in Washington, the information points to the need for the WSBA and the law schools to combine efforts as a community to begin helping students from day one of law school, as there is a strong correlation between law school GPA and bar exam pass rates. A proposal regarding adoption of the Uniform Bar Exam in

Washington will be on the agenda for first reading at the June Board meeting in Wenatchee.

Diversity Report

Diversity Committee Chair Governor **Brenda Williams** (Seattle), and committee members Governors **Anthony Gipe** (Seattle) and **Lori Haskell** (Seattle) presented several proposals on diversity matters, including a definition of diversity. The Board unanimously adopted the following definition: "Diversity refers to meaningful representation of and equal opportunities for individuals who self identify with those groups that are underrepresented in the legal profession based upon, but not limited to, disability, gender, age, familial status, race, ethnicity, religion, economic class, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Statewide geographic diversity and area of practice shall also be given consideration."

WYLD Report

WYLD President **Julia Bahner** (Seattle) reported that the WYLD held a Northwest Bar Leaders summit with the Oregon YLD leaders where ideas were exchanged related to programming, mentoring, and a moderate means program. Bahner noted that the WYLD held a dual reciprocity CLE with the Oregon State Bar that aided the admittance of more than 40 Oregon attorneys to the WSBA. She also commented that many WYLD members have been affected by the recession and have significant law-school debt. The American Bar Association YLD is looking into this issue and is lobbying Congress to defer legal education student loans. The WYLD will provide workshops later this year related to opening a law firm to address the issue and help young lawyers utilize their degrees and start their careers. The Board was pleased to have dinner with the WYLD Board of Trustees after the meeting on Friday, a tradition that began last year.

Executive Director's Report

Paula Littlewood reported to the Board that at the close of the WSBA licensing season, there was a 40% online participation rate, compared to a national average of 20%. As part of the license renewal process, WSBA members contributed \$320,000 to LAW Fund's Campaign for Equal Justice. Littlewood also shared that the first training for people interested in serving as pro tem judges took place in Seattle at the end of February and was a huge success, with approximately 200 attendees. The training was developed in conjunction with the District and Municipal Court Judges Association and was held again in Spokane in March.

Save the Date! Access to Justice/Bar Leaders Conference 2010

The 2010 ATJ/Bar Leaders Conference is set for June 4-6 in Wenatchee. The conference brochure is available online at <http://www.wsba.org/atj/default1.htm>. The popular Supreme Court-Board of Governors Roundtable will take place again this year, with a discussion about issues that can arise when the bench and the bar's interests differ.

Upcoming Events

Many more events are listed on the Legal Community Events Calendar on the WSBA website at www.wsba.org/info/event-calendar.htm.

April

April 23-24: WSBA Board of Governors meeting, Red Lion Hotel, Port Angeles.

April 29: QLaw Annual Banquet, Hyatt at Olive 8, Seattle.

June

June 4: WSBA Board of Governors meeting, Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee.

June 4: WYLD Board of Trustees meeting, Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee.

June 4-6: Annual Access to Justice/Bar Leaders Conference, Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee.

June 24: King County Bar Association Annual Dinner, Sheraton Hotel, Seattle.

June 25: Washington Minority Bar Associations Collaboration Project Fifth Annual Statewide Diversity Conference, Seattle University School of Law, Seattle.