

Diversity Committee Meeting Final Minutes

October 5, 2020 – 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

The Washington State Bar Association’s Diversity Committee 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.

Members: WSBA Gov. Sunitha Anjivel, Mubarak Abdur Raheem, Laura Johnson, Shirley Prasad, Danitza Casselman, Nam Nguyen, Carly Summers, Serena Sayani, Andrea Jarmon, Janice Langbehn, Luis Beltran, Christopher Swaby, Michele Fukawa, Yuping Wang

Absent: WSBA Gov. Hunter Abell, Monica Reinmiller

Staff: Diana Singleton, Tyler Washington

Call to Order and Welcome

Meeting was called to order at 12:07 P.M.

Introductions

Diversity Committee and WSBA staff introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Serena motioned to approve the September meeting minutes, Andrea seconded, and the motion passed.

Board of Governors Report

Sunitha provided the BOG update. She discussed the new mandatory MCLE credits. The deans of the WA law schools presented to the BOG and provided information about diversity statistics. In the past the committee was involved in outreach to law schools and hopes the committee can continue this work as well as think about pipeline programming.

At-Large Position Election Process

Sunitha shared that there was a recent bylaw change to the At-Large Governor election process. The Diversity committee will now vet and put forward candidates for vote by all members. The committee discussed recruiting from MBAs and Diana encouraged individual reach outs.

Diana shared that the applications for the At-Large position are due on October 30 and the interviews will take place during the November 7 Diversity Committee meeting. There will be informational drop-in sessions for prospective candidates with former Gov. Alec Stephens and President Kyle Sciuchetti.

The committee discussed the candidate criteria, interview questions and process. Candidates will have 15 minutes each. Shirley asked that the committee set expectations of time with candidates during the interviews. Janice moved to adopt the interview questions and process, qualifying that candidates are reminded of the time limit. This was approved unanimously. Serena moved to adopt candidate criteria, Janice seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Discussion of Diversity Committees potential response to communications from the MBAs regarding June BOG meetings'

Sunitha shared that the MBAs have sent letters to the BOG addressing comments made during the June BOG Meeting. The BOG is hosting a special meeting with the MBAs that will serve as a listening session on October 20. Sunitha asked if the committee wants to address the issue in some fashion. Serena stated she believed it would be appropriate to send a letter of support with MBA. Carly stated that the BOG should be reminded of the commitments it has made to diversity, equity and inclusion. Andrea volunteered to draft the letter, and that it should mention the social backdrop of when the comments occurred, include directives from GR 12, commitments the Bar has made, and our mission statement. She also discussed WSBA's inside-out philosophy. The letter will go through legal analysis.

Carly moved that a letter be drafted in response to comments made at the June meetings, in support of MBA, and that calls attention to the overarching need of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Laura seconded and motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:34PM