

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council  
August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting Minutes

*The DEI Council advances diversity, equity, and inclusion and addresses the problems of bias, systemic inequities and underrepresentation in the legal profession and legal system.*

**Member Attendees:** Alec Stephens, Sharon Sakamoto, Pres. Sunitha Anjilvel, Gov. Tom Ahearne, Raina Wagner, Miryam Gordon, Dallas Martinez, Gov. Nam Nguyen

**WSBA Staff:** Diana Singleton, Saleena Salango, Elliott Schwebach

**Guests:** Steve Crossland

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 12:05 P.M.

### Welcome & Opening

Pres. Sunitha Anjilvel reported on the DEI Council's accomplishments over the past few years and the Council members expressed gratitude for her last meeting as Council Co-Chair.

### July Meeting Minutes

On motion from Alec Stephens, seconded by Pres. Anjilvel, the July meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

### Board of Governors Updates

**Standards for Indigent Defense Services** - Pres. Anjilvel shared that the Supreme Court is accepting comment on the proposed updates to the [Standards for Indigent Defense Services](#) approved by the Board of Governors at their March 2024 meeting. Miryam Gordon suggested discussion of public defense and court budgets in future DEI Council meetings, given that opposition to these standards are based around funding for public defense and dearth of public defenders. Diana reported on the CPD's ongoing efforts following this update and suggested connecting with Christopher Swaby and other CPD members to come to an upcoming DEI Council meeting. Gov. Ahearne shared that the state legislature will be key in ensuring adequate funding for public defense.

**Alternative Licensure Pathways** - Bar passage rates not connected to competence. Adopting the next-Gen Bar Exam.

**Tribal Law Outreach** – Pres. Anjilvel reported on a panel during the July BOG Meeting in Nespelam, WA focused on tribal law and their intersection with diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on the legal profession – particularly the focus on equity and sovereignty rather than diverse representation.

### DEI Council Retreat Report

Raina Wagner reported on the DEI Council retreat on July 27<sup>th</sup> at the NW African American Museum. Pres. Anjilvel shared the strategic goals for FY25, which include approval and implementation of the DEI

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Plan, ensuring momentum and advocacy following the Pathways Summit, and proactive budget planning for FY26.

## FY25 DEI Council Member Appointments

Pres. Anjilvel announced that Raina Wagner and Gov. Nam Nguyen will serve as the Council Co-Chairs for FY25. Raina Wagner shared that, in addition to re-appointing Miryam Gordon to serve a 2<sup>nd</sup> term, the BOG Nominations Committee also appointed five new members to serve their first term (Oct 2024 – Sep 2026): Milli Cunningham, Lynnette Jenkins, Anthony Rich, Jerry Thomas, Yohana Valdez. In addition, the Nominations Committee appointed Julien-Marie Tarraf to fill the mid-term vacancy left by Mia Little (Aug 2024 – Sep 2025). Paris Eriksen, WSBA's Volunteer Engagement Advisor, is working to confirm acceptance of these appointments with them.

## Lived Experience Stipend Policy

Diana Singleton shared updates about efforts to develop a lived experience stipend policy and answered questions. The BOG Budget and Audit Committee determined that it should be a proposed change to WSBA's fiscal policies and placed it on the agenda for a first read at the September Board of Governors Meeting, where members can provide comment. Miryam Gordon made a motion to have the DEI Council express support for this policy, seconded by Sharon Sakamoto. The motion passed with abstentions from Alec Stephens and Pres. Anjilvel.

## DEI Plan Updates

Sharon Sakamoto and Miryam Gordon reported on the last DEI Plan Workgroup meeting, during which they discussed how to incorporate data from the Membership Demographic Study conducted by [KGR+C](#) and findings from the DEI Assessment from [Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession](#). The DEI Plan Workgroup will work on outreach to ensure plan goals are in line with those important to the DEI Council's mission and developed a new goal for a first read with the Board of Governors in January 2025. The next DEI Plan Workgroup Meeting has been rescheduled from September 6<sup>th</sup> to August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2-3:30 p.m., since the next regularly planned one coincided with the Board of Governors meeting.

## Pathways To Legal Diversity Summit Updates

Saleena Salango reported on the current status of the summit and encouraged members to register and attend.

## Roundtable Discussion and/or Announcements

Steve Crossland, the Chair of the LLLT Board, shared that the LLLT Board would like to develop a relationship with the DEI Council and invited members to attend the LLLT Board meetings. The LLLT Board is creating a Workgroup to analyze the license, determine ways to better support LLLTs, and consider the possibility of reinstating the license in the future and partner with community colleges so potential LLLTs can become licensed in their communities and reduce financial barriers to practice.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:32 P.M.