



## CONNECTICUT BAR ASSOCIATION

### STRATEGIC DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN

#### *A Framework for Inclusion and Growth*

The ultimate goal of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan is to have a genuine, sustainable diverse and inclusive environment within the Connecticut Bar Association (“CBA”) throughout its membership and the Connecticut legal community at large in accordance with the CBA’s Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

#### **Background**

On March 23, 2015, the CBA House of Delegates, the CBA’s primary decision-making and policy-making body, unanimously adopted this policy statement to serve as a guiding principle to increase diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the Association’s activities.

#### Connecticut Bar Association Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Connecticut Bar Association is committed to diversity in its membership, officers, staff, House of Delegates, Board of Governors, executive committee, sections and committees, and their respective leaders. Diversity is an inclusive concept encompassing gender, gender identity, race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, and disability.

We are a richer and more effective association because of diversity, as it increases our association’s strengths, capabilities, and adaptability. Through increased diversity, our organization can more effectively address member and societal needs with the varied perspectives, experiences, knowledge, information, and understanding inherent in a diverse relationship.

The Next Step. This Diversity and Inclusion Plan is intended to help the CBA to implement the Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and thereby strive for full and equal participation in the Association by all eligible persons (including attorneys and law students) and eliminate any form of bias in the Association and the legal community at large.

For the purposes of this Plan, the term “diversity” generally represents both diversity and inclusion. Diversity often pertains to the numbers – insuring sufficient numbers of all populations are represented. Inclusion addresses how well the diverse individuals are included in all aspects of the organization, by ensuring that diverse individuals have meaningful opportunities for leadership, influence and success within the Association.



In summary, this Diversity and Inclusion Plan is designed to achieve not just diversity – the presence of lawyers and law students from all backgrounds – but inclusion as well – their full, equal and active participation in all aspects in the Association and the Connecticut legal community at large.

## **I. OBJECTIVES OF THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN**

This Plan sets forth numerous objectives and broad goals. In addition, certain implementation recommendations are set forth as specific actions the CBA will undertake in the immediate future.

## **II. ELEMENTS OF THE CBA DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN**

**A. The President-Elect or the Vice President of the CBA shall serve as a chair of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion for the purposes of implementing and ensuring compliance with this Diversity and Inclusion Plan.**

**B. Encourage wide dissemination of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan within the CBA, and make the Plan publicly available including:**

1. Membership-wide dissemination of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan after adoption, with a letter from the CBA President, President Elect, Vice President and CBA Executive Director.
2. Creation of a diversity page on the CBA website which will include the CBA's Diversity and Inclusion Policy, this Diversity and Inclusion Plan, the biennial Diversity Reports and other relevant information on the CBA's diversity and inclusion efforts.
3. Distribution of the CBA Diversity and Inclusion Plan and the URL for the Plan on the website to all new CBA members.
4. Make the CBA Diversity and Inclusion Plan reasonably accessible to members with disabilities or visual/language barriers.
5. Make reference to the CBA Diversity and Inclusion Plan in appropriate member solicitation materials.

**C. Promote and track diversity within the CBA's leadership, including:**

1. CBA officers (President, President-Elect, Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer).
2. House of Delegates.
3. Board of Governors.

4. All sections, committees, task forces, commissions, and institutes and the presidentially appointed leadership positions for these groups.
5. It is understood that implementation of this goal will be subject to the then-current provisions of the Constitution and applicable bylaws and rules of procedure, and that said governing documents may require modification to implement the provisions of this plan.

#### **ACTION RECOMMENDATION 1**

**The CBA shall designate the Executive Director with the assistance of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion to provide oversight of the implementation of this Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The Executive Director with the assistance of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion will assess the current levels of diversity within the CBA and prepare a report as required by this Plan. After the initial assessment, a survey and assessment will be conducted every two years to gauge the increased diversity and inclusion within each entity (the biennial CBA Diversity Report).**

#### **D. Promote and track diversity and inclusion in the leadership nominating and leadership development processes throughout the CBA:**

1. Encourage diversity and inclusion as an emphasis in all leadership nominating processes, including diversity among the nominating decision-makers.
2. Encourage diversity and inclusion as a factor in the presidential election process.
3. Encourage the CBA Nomination Committee, Sections and Committees, and other CBA entities to emphasize diversity and inclusion in leadership training and development programs.
4. Build diversity and inclusion-related sessions into committee and section conferences, leadership training efforts and the CBA Legal Conference.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION 2**

**The CBA shall review the composition of the House of Delegates and Board of Governors to ensure that the Diversity and Inclusion Policy is being executed.**

**E. Each section will adopt and submit to the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion specific diversity and inclusion plans that are consistent with the CBA Diversity and Inclusion Policy.**

1. Require biennial review and updating of Section diversity and inclusion plans.
2. Recommend designation of Section diversity liaison or other Section leader with responsibility for ensuring implementation of Section diversity and inclusion plans **and to interact with the Executive Director and the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion.**
3. Broad dissemination of CBA Section diversity and inclusion plans.

**F. Promote diversity and inclusion in CBA membership**

1. CBA marketing and membership solicitation materials should be inclusive and welcoming to diverse populations.
2. CBA entities are encouraged to engage in active marketing, recruitment and outreach efforts to organizations, legal communities, and law schools to promote diversity and inclusion.
3. The CBA will reasonably support affinity bar associations and other organizations dedicated to the promotion of diversity and inclusion in the Connecticut legal community.
4. The CBA will continue to explore additional membership campaigns and incentives designed to enhance and encourage a diverse and inclusive membership.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION 3**

**The CBA shall create an award or other form of recognition to honor on an annual basis the CBA Section demonstrating outstanding leadership in diversity and inclusion related membership, leadership initiatives, and other diversity and inclusion efforts.**

**G. Promote diversity and inclusion in continuing legal education and other programming, both live and virtual.**

1. Encourage CBA entities to continue to offer and increase opportunities to improve diversity and inclusion among speakers, moderators, and attendees.
2. Ensure program content appeals to diverse communities, consistent with sponsoring CBA entities' subject matter specialties.
3. Encourage CBA entities to explore opportunities with affinity bars and other organizations that can contribute to diversity and inclusion.
4. Ensure that program venues are accessible to participants with disabilities, or visual/language barriers.
5. Encourage CBA entities to use program locations and venues, as well as social media, to enhance opportunities for participation by diverse lawyers and law students.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION 4**

**The CBA shall encourage all CBA Entities to increase opportunities for diverse attorneys to participate actively in programming.**

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION 5**

**The CBA shall present at least one CLE program focused on diversity and inclusion at the Connecticut Legal Conference.**

**H. The CBA shall encourage diversity and inclusion in CBA publications (hard copy and electronic).**

1. Implement strategic actions to increase diversity and inclusion in CBA members responsible for editorial policy and content of publications.
2. Ensure the inclusion of content of publications relating to the Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

**I. The CBA shall encourage diversity and inclusion in CBA events (e.g. annual awards dinners, luncheons, receptions, etc.) including:**

1. Diversity of planning and award nominations committees.
2. Diversity in speakers.
3. Diversity of award recipients.

**J. Develop tracking and reporting of progress in diversity and inclusion efforts, including:**

1. Encourage robust participation and tracking by CBA entities, using the resources and support provided by the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and encourage greater promotion of the reporting process by CBA leadership and accountability by entities that require significant improvement in their diversity and inclusion efforts.
2. Provide widespread dissemination of a biennial CBA Diversity Report to CBA leadership and to all CBA entities and through posting on the CBA website.

**K. Encourage CBA entities to develop and enhance mentoring of young lawyers and law students, and are designed to advance diversity and inclusion within these CBA entities.**

**II. PROMOTION OF THE CBA DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS**



**The CBA Diversity and Inclusion Plan accomplishments shall be promoted through various means, including the following:**

- A.** Develop and prominently post on the CBA website information about successful diversity and inclusion programs and activities.
- B.** Contribute content to pertinent legal and diversity publications to showcase CBA diversity and inclusion accomplishments.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION 6**

**The CBA shall actively promote in all possible media, diversity and inclusion advancements.**

Adoption

This Plan was adopted by the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion at its meeting on October 5, 2015.

CBA Officers:

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President

Monte E. Frank –President-elect

Karen DeMeola – Vice  
President

Christine Jean-Louis-Secretary

Sylvia K. Rutkowska-Treasurer

Emily Graner-Sexton-Assistant  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark A. Dubois-Immediate Past  
President

Committee Chairs:

Monte Frank

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Committee Members:

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Christine Jean-Louise  
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