



The President's Section Diversity Challenge: Working together, everything fits.

Final Report by

ENTERTAINMENT, ARTS, AND SPORTS LAW SECTION

I. The Diversity Challenge Plan

- a. Who are the members of the Section's Diversity Challenge Team (identify leader)?

Our members are Judith B. Prowda (leader) and our Section's Diversity Committee, consisting of Anne S. Atkinson and Cheryl L. Davis (co-chairs) and Rakhi Bahadkar, Rich Boyd, Nyasha Foy, Elissa D. Hecker, Asia D. Sanders, Rob Thony, Jessica Thaler, and Rosemarie Tully.

- b. What specific parts of the Section's diversity challenge plan were to be executed during the Challenge? What parts were for future efforts?

1. **Holding at Least Two Joint CLE Events with Minority Bar Associations** followed by networking/member appreciation receptions, subject to budget. This effort is being led by Rich Boyd and Rob Thony.

Status: Accomplished

Last November, we held a joint CLE program with the Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association (BESLA) and the Entertainment and Sports Law Committee of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association (MBBA) at New York Law School, preceded (and briefly followed) by networking over cookies and coffee. The program, "From Pitch to Pilot" featured lively, informative industry panelists in a mock negotiation regarding a reality television program's development. The CLE program was fully subscribed, and engendered vigorous audience participation as well as wonderful feedback by all the attendees.

On March 8, we held a second joint CLE with MBBA at Cardozo Law School, followed by a wine and cheese networking event. The topic was "From Prospect to Pro: A Legal Primer on the Recruitment of the Professional Athlete, Including the Foreign Player." The panel included a sports agent, a senior NBA executive, as well as a law professor and two practitioners. The attendance was good, and there was, again, vigorous audience participation. The panelists (who along with the audience were a diverse group) stayed to speak with the attendees.

2. **Establishing a Mentoring Program** for diverse 2L law students, new lawyers, lawyers in transition and/or those who wish to shift areas of practice to entertainment, arts or sports law. This project is headed by Cheryl L. Davis and Elissa D. Hecker.

Status: Progress is being made, and we intend to finalize it after the Challenge period.

The mentorship committee outlined the specifics of the program and created online forms for the mentors and mentees to fill in, as well as a methodology for managing the data collected by the forms. We have a full list of mentees and are now in the process of recruiting additional mentors.

The mentoring program will be for one year and consist of career advice. The mentors will be requested to volunteer a minimum of one hour per month of contact with the mentee, which can be over coffee, e-mail, or telephone, whichever works best for the mentor/mentee. If the mentor/mentee wish to continue the relationship after one year, they may do so on an informal basis.

The Diversity mentorship program has received expressions of interest from 23 potential mentees and 5 potential mentors. An e-blast will be sent out soliciting additional potential mentors.

3. **Establishing a Pro Bono Assistance/Mentoring Program.** This program, led by Rich Boyd and Rob Thony, will function much like the mentoring program, but for admitted attorneys. This initiative will require (i) coordinating with the EASL Pro Bono Committee (in particular, with Pro Bono Committee Co-Chair, Elissa D. Hecker), (ii) recruiting EASL members willing to act as a resource for the newer attorneys who are handling the pro bono matters (in conjunction with the Pro Bono Committee), (iii) recruiting the newer diverse attorneys, and (iv) coordinating the above. Each matter must be pre-approved by both attorneys handling it before it is taken on.

Status: Despite significant efforts (including examining similar programs at other bar associations such as MBBA and BESLA), ascertaining the malpractice insurance situation, and preliminary exploration of the topics, this effort will be accomplished after the Challenge.

4. **Working with the PGA East Veterans Initiative** by providing speakers, and representatives for roundtable discussions. This initiative is being led by Rosemarie Tully.

Status: We have made excellent progress and look forward to our first event soon (described below).

EASL will be providing speakers for The Producers Guild of America – East, Veterans Initiative event planned for June 2012. EASL will be working Marine Corps Reserve Maj. Brian Iglesias in organizing an instructional program focusing

on legal issues in independent filmmaking for veterans in the entertainment industry. According to the Initiative, "... there are more than 25 million veterans in the US, many of whom work in media and entertainment, but have no official representation within the industry. Veterans of the United States Military are protected by Federal and State Equal Opportunity laws and regulations and are considered to be underrepresented members of the community. The PGA East Diversity Committee aims to offer these brave men and women a voice through this Veterans Initiative. Its mission is to champion veterans working in the industry through three key functions: Education, Advocacy, and Mentorship." EASL is proud to be a part of this effort.

II. Evaluation

- a. Which goals were accomplished?

We accomplished holding two joint CLEs, and made excellent progress on the Mentoring and Veteran's Initiatives. In hindsight, four major goals may have been too many.

- b. Did you have sufficient resources? Support? Collaboration?

Our members are enthusiastic, but as with any volunteer organization (especially with members who are volunteering in multiple roles), time is limited, and our goals were ambitious. We were fortunate to have the generous support of New York Law School and Cardozo for hosting our events in their space. Our collaborations with minority bar associations has been mutually beneficial.

- c. In the execution of the plan, what worked and what didn't?

What worked were things that had defined goals and that didn't depend on the efforts of other organizations (for example, some of the Veterans' groups we tried to coordinate with are only in the process of being formed and were not ready for our speakers).

Also, the recruiting potential mentors takes more effort than I believe we initially understood.

What has really worked has been encouraging greater communication among diverse people, both within our committee, and those we spoke and interacted with during the course of the various initiatives. We have also established relationships with minority bar associations and laid the foundation for more diversity programs.

- d. If you were to do it again, what would you do differently?

Focus on fewer initiatives and spend more time on each.

- e. What was the best part of the Challenge for your Section?

The best part is working closely with the members of the Diversity Committee,

most of whom are not on our Section's Executive Committee. They are resourceful, energetic, hard-working and wonderful people. It has been fantastic for our section to have them more involved.

III. Looking to the Future

- a. What will be the future diversity efforts of the Section?

We will continue with those initiatives we have not yet accomplished during the Challenge.

In addition, Our Diversity Committee is already at work planning a joint CLE with a diverse bar association for the Fall.

- b. How can the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion assist the Section in these future efforts?

One idea would be to develop and provide liaisons at diverse bar associations and vice versa.