**Please complete the questions below and return to Mark Wilson: mwilson@nysba.org**

## I. The Diversity Challenge Plan

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

Noreen DeWire Grimmick, Chair, William Friedlander, Betty Lugo, Mark Moretti, Cory Rosenbaum, and Violet Samuels**.**

### 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. We planned to provide presentations on the practice of law and court room conduct for law students and young attorneys at law schools throughout New York State to be co-sponsored by minority bar associations. A presentation was held at Touro Law School on March 12' 2012 titled "The Case for Diversity". The participants were: Judge Michele Woodward (the first and only African American Judge sitting in Nassau County); Valerie Cartwright, Esq. (President of Amistad Bar Association); Betty Lugo, Esq. (Co-Chair Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and Founder and Member of First Hispanic Woman Owned Law firm in New York); and Jeffrey Yong, Esq. The moderators were: Violet Samuels and Cory Rosenbaum.

2. Scholarships made available to minority students to attend the trial academy scheduled for March 21, 2012. The Trial Lawyers Section Diversity committee provided five (5) scholarships for attorneys of diverse backgrounds.

3. We arranged our CLE presentation at this year's convention to include preeminent practitioners in our profession who are women and minorities. The inclusion of women and minorities in our panel as presenters highlights their accomplishments in the practice of law.

4. We scheduled our summer annual meeting to be held at a location which was "family friendly" and more readily accessible by public transportation to encourage attendance by women and minority members. The 2012 annual meeting is scheduled to be held in Woodstock, Vermont; a location that is accessible by train and less expensive than other venues the Trial Lawyers used in the past.

5. On April 24, 2012 the Trial Lawyers section will be a sponsor of two Law Day events being put on by the Monroe County Bar Association. The first is the Law Day Luncheon which will feature ABA President Bill Robinson. We are also sponsoring the Installation Dinner that evening. We will have a table of 10 seats at both the lunch and dinner which Andrew Brown and Mark Moretti are filling with Young lawyers with an eye toward diversity. There will be an informational table at both events and we are accepting new members without fee for the remainder of the year on that day.

6. Our Section is also planning a CLE program in Puerto Rico during the Somos El Futuro Conference in November 2012. This CLE would focus on trial and litigation practice. The speakers include: Judge Manzanet-Daniels, Judge Doris Ling-Cohan, Judge Tingling, Betty Lugo, Rosevelie Marquez Morales and others. The Somos El Futuro Conference is an annual meeting held in Puerto Rico where participants include New York State Governor, Legislators, Judges, Attorneys, Not for profit corporations. The issues discussed include the impact and progress of the Puerto Rican and Hispanic community in New York State. This event will be co-sponsored with minority bar associations, and other sections. A meeting with Judges and attorneys in Puerto Rico is also planned.

7. We are in the process of considering developing an internship program for minority candidates funded, in part, by the Trial Lawyers section. Alternatively, the Trial Lawyers section may lend financial and other support to local bar organizations across the state which have already established internships for minorities.

**c. What were the goals that the Section set to be accomplished?**

1. Programs to introduce, educate and recruit minority and diverse members.

2. Mentor minority and diverse members to become active members with leadership potential in our section.

3. Outreach to minority bar associations, not for profit corporations and other diverse organizations to co-sponsor events relevant to our section.

## II. Evaluation

**a. Which goals were accomplished?**

As noted above, we have taken affirmative steps implementing each of our diversity initiatives made progress on all of our goals. These goals are, of course, long-term and ongoing, so the Trial Lawyers intend to continue to advance these developments and add to them over the years.

We were successful in organizing an active and committed diversity committee; establishing an outreach to minority bar associations; granting (5) diversity scholarships to the Young Lawyers Section Trial Academy; and having minorities and women in our profession featured as preeminent guest speakers giving presentations and advice on professional conduct to law students and newly admitted attorneys.

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

No. We would have benefitted from greater participation by more members of our section, especially long term members who had previously served as officers or current officers. Additionally, we would have also benefitted from active participation by more members who were knowledgeable about the allocation of financial resources which would have facilitated our ability to achieve our goals. Past and present leaders in our section who are knowledgeable about the processes by which financial resources are allocated, and knowledgeable about the time frame for submitting a budget for our various diversity objectives should become involved in our committee and offer their guidance.

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

What worked best: The attitudes of all the committee members worked best towards moving the agenda of this fledgling committee forward. All committee members were active and willing to participate in numerous conference calls, organizing events, and bringing up the concerns of minority and women during discussions of where to hold our annual meetings and identifying noteworthy presenters for various CLE events.

As for what didn't work, it's more a matter of improving the ability of this newly formed committee to get things done. The section needs to commit more of the stalwarts of this section to the work of the diversity committee in order to emphasize the importance of diversity. The people who have led this section for years are most knowledgeable about getting budgetary support on short notice, and in many other ways more knowledgeable about who to contact within the larger organization in order to move forward more aggressively with our agenda. We have been recruiting more of these long term members to join our committee. They are invaluable to us and their commitment speaks volumes about the overall commitment of this section to diversity.

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

Outreach is crucial. We are working with the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion to encourage collaboration and involvement with minority bar associations and diverse attorneys and judges. We will also update our website to ensure information is shared.

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

1. Research, education and information

2. Meeting and speaking with other members, judges and minority bar associations to encourage collaboration

## III. Looking to the Future

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

1. CLE programs

2. Support of internship program

3. Assistance with placement of women and minorities in the profession.

4. Joint venture with law schools to train lawyers and improve interviewing techniques

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

1. Assist with providing and gathering information, outreach, and networking.

2. Assist with programs, partner with our section on events and CLE programs.

3. Provide resources, minority bar associations contacts, and minority judges contacts.

4. Provide mentorship and orientation.

Dated: March 21, 2012

***Noreen DeWire Grimmick***
***Chairperson for the Trial Lawyers Diversity Committee***