

**American Bar Association
Law Student Division**

Adopted November 2, 2002

Diversity Mission Statement

To promote diversity in the profession and ensure equal opportunity and inclusion for law students regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity in the membership, leadership, and activities of the Law Student Division.

Diversity Goals

- To actively recruit law students of color¹, women law students, law students with disabilities² and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (“LGBT”) law students.
- To foster an environment of inclusion to assist in retention of law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students.
- To identify and remove all barriers, whether institutional, attitudinal or behavioral, to the full and meaningful participation of law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students in the Division
- To actively seek participation of law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students in Division activities and on programs, task forces, and working groups.
- To provide law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students with opportunities and training to take on leadership roles at all levels of the Division.

1 Law students “of color” is defined as persons of African-American, Black, Hispanic, Latino, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, and Native American culture or origin.

2 Law students “with disabilities” are defined as persons with mental, physical and sensory disabilities.

Long Range Goals and Action Plan

1. Ensure unequivocal support and participation of Division Officers, Delegates and Circuit Governors in implementing the diversity plan.
 - At each orientation of the new bar year, all officers, delegates, circuit governors, liaisons, ABA School Reps and Student Bar Association Presidents (SBAs) shall receive a copy of the Diversity Plan.
 - At each orientation, diversity training shall be provided to stress the importance of diversity in the Division. Have a speaker from within the ABA Law Student Division to stress the importance of diversity and its long-term benefit to the Division.
2. Work with the officers, delegates and board members to provide diversity training and related programs.
 - Seek active participation from law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students.
 - Encourage Division officers and/or Board members to attend the national meetings of the major national minority law student bar associations by funding their travel expenses:
 - National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL)
 - National Asian Pacific Law Students Association (NAPLSA)
 - National Black Law Students Association (NBLSA)
 - National Hispanic Bar Association – Law Student Division (NHBA-LSD)
 - National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (NLGLA)
 - National Native American Law Students Association (NNALSA)

Participate annually in the “joint booth” ABA project at each national meeting to provide materials about the ABA Law Student Division’s services, programs, projects and publications.

3. Add national affiliate liaisons as appropriate to the Division’s Board of Governors. Current Law Student Division policies and procedures, Article 202.3(a) provides that “an organization qualifies for trial affiliation if it appears that:
 - (1) its membership is limited to law students or it is the self-governing law student division of an organization whose membership is essentially limited to lawyers;
 - (2) its membership includes at least 250 law students;
 - (3) its membership includes law students at least twenty-five schools;
 - (4) its membership includes law students in a majority of the circuits or a reasonable equivalent in the case of an international organization;
 - (5) its student governing body formally requests affiliation and that body's student presiding and recording officers submit their written certificate to that effect; and
 - (6) its objects are compatible with those of and it supports and encourages membership in the Association and the Division, evidence of which its chief student executive or presiding officer submits (A) his or her written certificate to that effect and (B) the organization's Constitution, Bylaws, charter, mission statement or equivalent organic document. The Board of Governors should be guided by the Law Student Division's Goal IX in granting affiliation.
 - (7) If a law student organization seeking trial affiliate status does not meet a requirement of a subsection of this paragraph, but the American Bar Association recognizes an affiliate organization of the lawyer members whose membership includes a law student section or is substantially similar to a law student organization, the Law Student Division’s Assembly or Board of Governors may suspend the requirements of subsections (1), (2), (3), and/or (4) or this rule by a two-thirds vote.”

4. Develop a mentoring program for law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students. Have Division officers, delegates and board members commit to introducing newcomers to everyone.
5. Encourage and recognize contributions by law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students in the *Student Lawyer* magazine.

Speakers/Articles

6. Promote and encourage participation by lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBT lawyers on Law Student Division substantive law and career programs. Use existing ABA speakers bureau database to promote lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBT lawyers.

Appointments

7. Ensure continuity of the diversity plan despite changes in administration.
 - Appoint the Vice Chair and/or Diversity Chair within the Division whose primary goal is to carry out the Division's Diversity Plan and promote Goal IX of the ABA. Goal IX duties shall be as follows:
 - Monitor that Goal IX is accomplished
 - Ensure all committees are keeping Goal IX in mind in selecting speakers/writers for programs
 - Work with the ABA Membership Marketing Department to recruit more law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities and LGBT law students.
 - Assist Law Student Division staff in completing Goal IX report card
 - Promote law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities and LGBT law students to general bar sections
 - Act as a Goal IX liaison to the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession and the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession.
 - A Division representative shall be funded to attend meetings and events of other national bar associations to promote the ABA Law Student Division and encourage participation.
 - The Vice-Chair shall be responsible for monitoring that Goal IX is being accomplished. He/she shall be responsible for reviewing the Division database of law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students and work with current Law Student Division staff in completing the Division's Goal IX report card.

Conferences, Career Development Seminars and Circuit Meetings

8. The Division shall make all reasonable efforts to make newcomers, law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students alike, feel welcome and included in all aspects of the meeting or activity.
 - Conduct a newcomer's reception at the Annual Meeting and during circuit meetings in conjunction with the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession (CREDIP), Commission on Women in the Profession (COWIP), and the Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law (CMPDL).
 - Ensure that the Vice-Chair and Diversity Chair introduce newcomers to people in the Division, especially to the officers and Board of Governors.

- Prior to the meetings, have the Chair or Chair-Elect send a welcome letter to the newcomers listing the reception and program.
 - Mail a welcome letter from the Division Chair to each registrant in advance of the Annual Meeting.
 - Delegate to the Membership Committee the responsibility for contacting each pre-registrant to the Annual Meeting to answer any questions and encourage them to attend events that will enhance their meeting experience.
 - Continue to sponsor a First-Timer's Reception at the Annual Meeting with Division officers, delegates and board members available to welcome newcomers and encourage participation in Division activities.
 - Follow-up with a letter from the Division Chair to all first-time attendees to the Annual Meeting, circuit meetings and other Division-sponsored events thanking them for attending, asking them to complete a brief satisfaction survey about the function, and inquiring as to what the Division can do for them to enhance their experience at the next meeting.
9. Have a diversity-training component at each SBA conference for SBA Presidents and ABA School Representatives to bring back to their law school for implementation.
10. The Division shall have at least once a year a presentation on how law schools or SBAs can work with specialty bar associations. The purpose of this is to create an ongoing relationship with a specialty bar.
- Ask the representatives from minority bar associations that sit in on the Division's Board of Governors meetings to recommend events and to help introduce representatives to members during their events.
 - Invite the Chairs of local minority student bar associations and SBAs of local law schools to networking receptions during Division Board of Governors Meetings, Circuit Meetings and the Annual Meeting.
11. Encourage joint programs with CREDIP, COWIP and COMPDL during the Annual Meeting. Substantive programming should be highly encouraged.
- The Division shall fully utilize the ABA speakers bureau database to obtain speakers for its career development and leadership training programs.
 - Develop programs, which will address the concerns and issues of law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students.
 - Coordinate with various sections to implement diversity plans and working on projects with them.
12. The Division shall hold seminars geared toward the professional development of law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students.
13. Strongly encourage diverse panels in all Division-sponsored programming and diverse participation in all publications.
- Delegate to the Programs Committee the responsibility of ensuring Division programming includes diverse panels.
 - Delegate to the Circuit Governors the responsibility for presenting diverse panels and encouraging diverse attendance at circuit meeting and events.

- Delegate to the Publications and Operations committee the responsibility of providing diverse participation in Division publications, including editorial boards and authors.
- Delegate to the Student Editor of the *Student Lawyer Magazine* the responsibility of soliciting articles and commentaries from a diverse array of contributors.

14. Encourage and develop a “diversity dialogue” program during the Annual Meeting.

Outreach to Specialty Bar Association

The Division’s diversity commitment extends beyond its organization. External efforts shall involve:

15. The Chair, Chair-Elect and/or Diversity chair shall, whenever possible, attend specialty bar association meetings to establish a presence which will eventually equate to the affiliate’s reciprocal active involvement with the Division.
 - a. The Division shall add the specialty bar association’s mailing and email address to its own list serves to receive Division mailings.
 - b. The Division shall make all reasonable efforts to meet and/or invite specialty bar association leaders to Law Student Division events when they are meeting in that organization’s/leader’s state or circuit.
16. Develop programs/meetings/projects with specialty bars either through the Chair or the Membership Director of the specialty bars.
17. Send an introduction/welcome letter to the Chair of the specialty bar and include a copy of the Law Student Division’s Diversity Plan.
18. Contact and reach out to the following organizations:
 - a. National Asian Pacific Law Students Association (NAPLSA)
 - b. National Black Law Students Association (NBLSA)
 - c. National Hispanic Bar Association – Law Student Division (NHBA-LSD)
 - d. National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (NLGLA)
 - e. National Native American Law Students Association (NNALSA)
19. Coordinate with CREDIP, COWIP and COMPDL plans for assisting SBAs and ABA School Representatives with diversity training for its membership. Invite a speaker from one of these three ABA Commissions to do the training.

Community Outreach

20. Develop a seminar career guidance seminars geared with an emphasis on the issues of concern to law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities, and LGBT law students. Such seminars should include prominent judges and lawyers volunteering their time and expertise to answer questions.
21. Identify a need within a certain community and provide that assistance. For example, continue building on the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program already successful in many law schools to bring income tax assistance to the elderly, those with language barriers, disadvantaged and those with disabilities.

Law School Outreach

22. Develop a Model Diversity Plan and promote its adoption and support by Student Bar Associations at each ABA-approved law school.
23. Maintain a database of diversity programs that can be implemented at law schools.