ABA Criminal Justice Section Diversity Plan

The ABA Criminal Justice Section (CJS) will take specific measurable steps to increase the diversity of its membership and leadership in accordance with the Section’s Diversity Mission Statement. These steps will include actions regarding: appointments, orientations, mentorship, programming, and outreach. Additionally, the plan establishes a Diversity Officer to help the Section implement and comply with the Diversity Plan.

Appointments
1. The ABA CJS Chair shall make such Section and Committee leadership appointments as to ensure diversity.
2. The ABA CJS Chair shall also ensure diversity on the Nominations Committee.
3. The ABA CJS First Vice-Chair shall act as “Diversity Officer” and have the primary goal of carrying out the Diversity Plan and promoting Goal III of the ABA. He or she may work with the Section Director to have staff assigned to help implement the Diversity Plan and report on its progress.

Orientations
1. To encourage unequivocal support and participation of ABA CJS Officers, Council Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons in implementing the Diversity Plan, a copy of the plan will be provided to all ABA CJS Officers, Council Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons at the beginning of each new bar year. Committee Chairs will distribute the plan to their respective committee members.
2. During committee chairs webinar at the beginning of each new bar year, the chair shall stress the importance of diversity and its long-term benefits to the ABA CJS.

Mentorship
1. The ABA CJS encourages Officers, Council Members, Committee Chairs and Committee Liaisons to serve as mentors to incoming and interested lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) members.
2. The ABA CJS encourages every Committee to include as a high priority goal to address a pertinent issue – such as recruitment, retention, or participation – to lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities, and LGBT members.
3. Past ABA CJS Officers, Council members, and Committee Chairs will contact lapsed ABA CJS members in their communities, when asked by the Diversity Officer.

Programming: Conferences, Meetings and Other Events
1. The ABA CJS shall make all reasonable efforts to make first-time lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members alike, feel welcome and included in all aspects of their meetings, events and activities, by doing the following:
   a. Including in the follow up to conference registrations an optional check-off box for attendees’ background and personal information (such as whether they are new members or first time attendees, persons or color, women, persons with disabilities or LGBT members). This information shall be used only by ABA CJS staff to identify these attendees for the purpose of ensuring their inclusion in meetings, events, and other activities;
   b. Holding a reception for all first time members (regardless of color, sex, disability, or LGBT identity) at the Annual, Midyear and other National conferences or including their participation in an existing reception by special invitation;
   c. Ensuring that at social events, CLE’s and other Section sponsored activities lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members are introduced to other members of the ABA CJS, especially to the ABA CJS Officers, Council Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee Liaisons;
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d. Ensuring that the ABA CJS Chair or Diversity Officer sends a welcome communication to first-time lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members prior to the ABA Annual, Midyear and other National Conferences, regarding programming, receptions and other activities; and
e. Encouraging joint and substantive programming with minority bar associations and professional organizations at the Annual, Midyear and other National Conferences. This programming shall be designed to address the issues and concerns of lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members.

2. The ABA CJS shall encourage participation of lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members on ABA CJS programs.

3. The ABA CJS shall utilize the existing speaker’s bureau database to promote lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members.

4. The ABA CJS shall encourage and seek active involvement of lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members in ABA CJS’s publications.

5. The ABA CJS shall develop events specifically focused on issues that engage lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members.

Outreach

1. Where opportunities arise, the ABA CJS shall coordinate efforts to interact with bar associations or other professional organizations specifically serving or addressing issues pertinent to lawyer and associate members of color, women, members with disabilities and LGBT members.

2. The ABA CJS shall, whenever possible, participate annually in a “joint booth” ABA project at the national meetings of national minority bar associations to provide materials about ABA CJS services, programs, projects, and publications.

3. The ABA CJS shall, whenever possible, inform the Section Council organizational representative of the national criminal justice affiliates and the national affiliate representatives of ABA affiliate benefits.

4. The ABA CJS Chair, ABA CJS Chair-elect, or the Diversity Officer shall, whenever possible, attend the national meetings of the national minority bar associations, including the national affiliates, in an effort to establish an ABA CJS presence at these associations.

5. The ABA CJS shall make all reasonable efforts to communicate with national minority bar association leaders located in the city where the Annual, Mid-Year or other National conference is being held. Whenever possible the ABA CJS Chair, ABA CJS Chair-elect, or Diversity Officer shall do the following:
   a. Send an introduction/welcome letter to the Chair, Leader or President of each national minority bar association, and include a current copy of the ABA CJS’s Diversity Mission Statement and Plan; and
   b. Invite leaders of these national minority bar associations to attend ABA CJS Council events.

6. The ABA CJS shall make all reasonable efforts to provide assistance or support to the Law Student Activities Committee and Student Liaisons of the Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committees for outreach efforts to law students of color, women law students, law students with disabilities and LGBT law students.

7. The ABA CJS shall make all reasonable efforts to assist in the promotion and understanding of diversity through public education.

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1 NAAG, NACDL, NDAA, NLADA
2 Hispanic National Bar, National Asian Pacific American Bar, National Bar, National Native American Bar
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**Diversity Officer**

The Diversity Officer shall be responsible for ensuring that the ABA CJS is complying with the Diversity Plan and accomplishing ABA Goal III duties by doing the following:

1. Ensuring all ABA CJS committees are keeping Goal III in mind when selecting speakers/writers for programs and publications;
2. Ensuring that the ABA CJS Council membership and leadership reflect diversity;
3. Working with relevant ABA CJS Committees to recruit more lawyer and associate members of color, women, persons with disabilities, and persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities; and
4. Assisting CJS Staff in conducting a periodic survey of ABA CJS membership to inquire into membership needs, expectations, and to assess efforts made to achieve diversity.

**Plan Interpretation and Modification**

Nothing in this plan is meant to be duplicative of programming or outreach already conducted by the ABA CJS and its staff.

Details of this plan should not be construed to limit the ability of the CJS to identify new opportunities to promote diversity or to alter the plan to promote its effectiveness during a given year. This plan may be subject to amendment or modification during each annual meeting of the ABA CJS by a majority of the ABA CJS Council present.