DIVERSITY PLAN
FOR
FORUM ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LAW

The Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Development Law ("Forum") is committed to advancing the goal of diversity in all Forum activities. The Forum's membership shares the passion of strengthening the affordable housing and community development environment of our nation's communities. The Forum recognizes that these are diverse communities and we strive to mirror that same diversity. The Forum is committed to promoting full and equal participation in all Forum activities and leadership to lawyers of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations and gender identities and of lawyers with disabilities.

The ABA has adopted a Diversity Plan and encouraged its Sections, Divisions, Forums and Commissions to create their own diversity plans. This diversity plan will set forth the ideals and goals of the Forum’s commitment to diversity. Upon adoption this diversity policy will become a part of the Forum’s Operating Policy and Plan.

I. The ABA Mission

The ABA mission is “to serve equally our members, our profession and the public by defending liberty and delivery justice as the national representative of the legal profession.”

The ABA has adopted Goal III which is to “Eliminate bias and enhance diversity”. The stated objectives of Goal III are:

- Promote full and equal participation in the association, or profession, and the justice system by all persons; and
- Eliminate bias in the legal profession and the Justice System.

II. Forum Commitment

The Forum is committed to strengthening diversity within the Forum and providing opportunities for full and equal participation by:

1. Recruiting and promoting diverse membership and participation in Forum programs and activities;

2. Increasing diversity in leadership of the Forum;

3. Creating a diverse pool of speaker and moderators for conference and teleconference panels;
4. Create a diverse pool of journal authors and work to ensure that the content of publications appeals to diverse communities;

5. Promoting diverse membership through law student and young lawyer outreach efforts; and

6. Raising awareness of the value of diversity within the profession.

III. Forum Activities

The Forum’s diversity and inclusion activities shall include but not be limited to the following:

**Diversity Survey and Database.** The Forum will conduct a survey of its membership to identify minority and women lawyers and create a speaker’s database for its conferences and other leadership opportunities. The database will also serve as a resource for panelists with other ABA entities as well as media spokespersons. The Forum will update the database every 2 years to assure current information is maintained.

**Law Student Initiative.** The Forum hosts a panel of lawyers at law schools across the country to introduce students to the various practice opportunities within the areas of housing and community development. These panels also provide an opportunity for the Forum’s lawyers to increase its diversity through this introduction to students. The Forum will continue its commitment to the presentation of diverse panelists for the Law Student Initiative.

**Forum Fellowship.** The Forum will design a fellowship program to increase the participation and create a pipeline of minority lawyers by providing opportunities for participation at its annual conference. This fellowship would (i) waive conference registration fees and Forum dues, (ii) reimburse travel, and (iii) pay a portion of the fellows ABA dues for three (3) years. Fellows would be assigned mentors within the Forum to encourage their continued membership and involvement.

**Women in Housing.** The Forum will create a “Women in Housing” event to be held during the annual conference. This event will allow women to network with other women within the profession and address issues of concern to women.

**Forum Leadership.** The Forum remains committed to identifying and recruiting diverse candidates for potential leadership positions. The Forum leadership will endeavor to appoint diverse members for leadership roles for activities undertaken by the Forum.

**LGBT Inclusion.** The Forum will work to create an environment that is inclusive and encourages participation by its members regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.
IV. Diversity Committee

The Forum will establish a Diversity Committee whose task will be to implement the Forum Diversity Plan and track the efforts of the Forum. The Chair of the Diversity Committee will serve as an ex-officio member of the Governing Committee and will be expected to report at each meeting on the Forum’s diversity efforts in promoting full and equal participation within the Forum. The Committee will also coordinate with other ABA groups to share ideas and best practices in an effort to promote diversity.

The Diversity Committee will establish criteria to evaluate its progress and the implementation of its goals. The information will be submitted to the Forum’s Governing Committee on a quarterly basis. All data will be submitted to each ABA group monitoring the progress of the ABA’s achievement of Goal III. These reports include:

- Persons with Disabilities Participation
  *Report issued by the Commission on Disability Rights*

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Participation
  *Report issued by the Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*

- Racial and Ethnic Diversity
  *Report issued by the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession*

- Women in Leadership Positions
  *Report issued by the Commission on Women in the Profession*

V. Annual Report

The Diversity Committee will present an Annual Diversity Report at the first Forum’s Governing Committee meeting following the new bar year but no later than October of each year. This report will provide information regarding the Forum’s diversity efforts and its progress on the implementation of the Forum Diversity Plan.

*No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive.*

*Mohandas K. Gandhi*
# Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Development Law

## Summary of Diversity Efforts

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<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Assigned To</th>
<th>Recommended Action</th>
<th>Target Implementation Date</th>
<th>Priority Status</th>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity Survey &amp; Database</td>
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