ABA COALITION ON RACIAL & ETHNIC JUSTICE’s (COREJ)

*Digital Justice Initiatives (DJI) Hackathons

*ABA COREJ REPORT on “JusticeHacks” September, 2017

*COREJ’s Digital Justice Initiative is a project of the ABA Pathways to the Profession Goal III Working Diversity Group. This Report is submitted by Rachel Patrick, Director of the ABA Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice.

The ABA Coalition on Racial & Ethnic Justice (COREJ) launched a new project during the 2017 bar year titled the “Digital Justice Initiative: Police & Communities of Color Building Alliances.” After a series of high-profile fatal shootings and killings of African-American men by police officers eroded the public confidence in the police, particularly in communities of color, the entire country was confounded by the lack of solutions to resolve the problems through traditional means i.e. studies, meetings, conferences and public forums.

GOALS

COREJ’s “DJI Police & Communities of Color Project (Project)” brings together communities of color, the legal sector, law enforcement and the technology and innovation industry from a new perspective. The goals of the DJI Project is to bring these groups together to resolve the conflicts between communities of color and law enforcement through technology. COREJ will: (1) collect and analyze national, state and local data to determine the core issues underlying the tensions between communities of color and their police forces; (2) hold public dialogues through Hackathons (see definition below) that propose solutions and concrete strategies that develop action plans and practical ways to resolve the issues with the assistance of the key stakeholders; (3) develop a collaborative initiative that utilizes the talents, resources and knowledge of the legal community, communities of color, technology communities, and law enforcement entities; and (4) the ideas and technology solutions (including apps) developed during each Hackathon will be evaluated for inclusion in a best practices resource guide to be used by local governments, law enforcement agencies, communities of color, bar associations, the legal community and other interested stakeholders.

DEFINITION OF HACKATHONS

The centerpiece of the project are social justice Hackathons. A social justice hackathon is any event of any duration where people come together to solve problems. A Hackathon solution can come in many forms. Solutions can be mobile apps, and new and/or streamlined processes and procedures. COREJ’s innovative Hackathons will leverage data, technology, communities of color, and law enforcement with legal insights through the ABA. A positive way of viewing “Hackathons” is to look at them as creative problem solving events.
Thus far, two successful Hackathons have been held by COREJ in Miami and New York City. A principal goal of the hackathon series is to increase awareness of and identify challenges to bringing the community and law enforcement together through technology. This innovative project addresses issues of immediate and critical interest to the public and the legal profession by providing concrete strategies to develop practical ways to save and prevent the loss of life. Ultimately, through this series of activities, the DJI project seeks to promote a sense of empowerment in the communities, and facilitate engagement with diverse partners and stakeholders that may not be currently aligned. Currently COREJ is planning to hold at least two-three more Hackathons.

DJI, as a part of Past President, Paulette Brown’s Pathways to Diversity Goal III Working Diversity Group, will be working closely with another significant initiative that was initiated by President Brown and President Linda Klein; The ABA Task Force on Public Trust in the American Justice System (Currently re-named by President Hillarie Bass as the ABA Working Group on Building Public Trust in the American Justice System). This Working Group is also focusing on responses to police shootings and discussing race and the role of police in local communities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF COREJ’S DJI HACKATHON PROJECT

A. “JusticeHack Miami”

“Justice Hack Miami” was the first successful Hackathon to be held by COREJ’s DJI project. Over 200 plus diverse participants attended this dynamic and highly successful day and a half event that was held February 3-4, 2017, during the ABA MidYear Meeting in Miami at Venture Café Miami. The event attracted community members and leaders, lawyers, technologists, undergraduate students, and students of the police academy, several law enforcement representatives, law students, law professors, bar association leaders, ministers and judges.

There were five apps submitted for the judges and audience review and three of the apps were selected as winners. The winners received an award and certificates. One of the winning teams has been meeting and discussing strategies for refining and updating the app. Videotapes of all five apps will be made available in the “DJI JusticeHack” Final Report that will be available in December 2018. The names of the winning teams also will be highlighted along with the apps in the Final Report. This Report will be widely distributed to the participants, constituent entities that were sponsors, partners and co-sponsors, community groups, law enforcement entities, bar associations, and interested and concerned groups.

A brief videotape of the Hackathon is available on COREJ’s website and it provides an overview of the event. The winning app for the event was featured in an article titled “Students Part of 1st Place Win at ABA JusticeHack Miami.” The Number One winning app was appropriately titled “Juvo”. An article is available on “Juvo” by clicking on this link http://www.law.miami.edu/news/2017/march/students-part-1st-place-win-aba-justicehack-miami
PRIMARY DELIVERABLES FROM JUSTICEHACK MIAMI:

1. A winning app titled “JUVO” that is an artificially intelligent chat application designed to help individuals, particularly immigrants, who are fearful of law enforcement to have more productive and meaningful interactions with law enforcement. Unique features of the app is its ability to speak to the user in a friendly style and to anonymously report an incident and connect the user to a local law enforcement officer. The app is currently being refined by members of the winning team, and an updated rendition will be available for the public’s use at the end of December 2017.

2. An article and brief video of the app JUVO is on line at the COREJ website.

3. The collaboration of approximately 200 diverse individuals in the Miami community around the issue of resolving conflicts between law enforcement and communities of color was successful and well received:
   a. Practical and tangible solutions were discussed and will be recommended at future Meetings of community leaders and law enforcement leaders.
   b. Concrete Recommendations, and invaluable solutions are available for distribution and discussion in the Final Report. The Final Report will be widely distributed nationally, and a special edition will be publicized to the Miami community and law enforcement.

4. Sponsors of JusticeHack provided funding for breakfast and snacks, free resources and brochures, volunteer resource (techies, students, experts) and other supplies and materials for the event. The sponsors are open to working closely and committed to continuing follow-up meetings with the communities of color and law enforcement.

5. Sponsors of Justice Hack Miami were: Venture Café Miami, Community Justice Project, Blue1647, National Leaders Council Miami, Knight Foundation, Cambridge Innovation Center Miami, ABA Commission on Women, and all of the ABA Diversity Center entities.

6. The evaluations received from the majority of the 200 participants stated that the event was highly successful, dynamic, creative, educational, incredibly helpful and practical.

B. “JusticeHack New York City”

“JusticeHack NYC” was held on Saturday, August 12, 2017 at the “state of the art” Fordham University School of Law in conjunction with the ABA Annual Meeting.
This dynamic, interactive, and highly successful all day Hackathon attracted approximately 160 plus diverse participants from communities throughout the city and lawyers from across the country. Participants at this event included community leaders, industry leaders, students, experts from law enforcement and legal communities, coders, designers, programmers and other technologists. The primary focus of the event was on the key issue of “resolving conflicts/friction between communities of color and law enforcement.”

**PRIMARY DELIVERABLES OF JUSTICEHACK NYC**

1. COREJ raised $5,000 from key sponsors for the event

2. Key Sponsors of the event included:
   a. Paul Weiss Law Firm NYC
   b. North Carolina Central University School of Law,
   c. Dechert LLP
   d. Drucilla Stender Ramey
   e. Legal Server
   f. Lillian Moy
   g. Asian American Bar Association of New York City
   h. Fordham University School of Law for hosting the Hackathon in their state of the art facility.
   i. JUST TECH
   j. Venture Café Miami


4. Six Applications were created at the event: All six Apps are captured on videotape
   a. Three Winning Apps were: First Prize – **I Am Stopped** (PowerPoint of App is attached) app to alert family & friends, explains to person what to do and records what is being said by all parties
      Second Prize – **Motion & Noise: Smart Policing** app. Body cameras are automated, App takes officers blood pressure and heart rate and starts a motion activated alarm if these are out of control, and prevents officer from using gun
      Third Prize – **VERBIS** app was designed for hard of hearing and deaf person. Camera is held over person to detect if sign language or interpreter is needed for stopped individual; alert flashes notifying appropriate organization and officer of status.
   b. Teams are currently meeting by conf calls to determine next steps for refining and updating apps for use by public (A Virtual Hack is being planned)
c. The non-winning three Apps: **Geo-Craft** – Game designed for officers and youth to provide positive interaction between the two groups; **SIT Stress Innoculators Training** – Keep Police officers calm during stops. App is a wearable technology device; and **CIVEX** app is a Civility Index app which encourages and prompts police to be civil during police stops.

5. Participation by six deaf participants who had excellent experiences with the assistance of Interpreters, CART services and other participants in the group. This diverse group was the 3rd Place Winners “VERBIS”.

6. Fantastic participation of five NYPD Officers – Excellent evaluations of the officers by participants. A videotape of the Officer who was the ambassador for the NYPD. Follow-up with the NYPD is being discussed by COREJ for upcoming Hackathon.

7. Videotape and videographer filmed the entire Hackathon; edits will be available in several months. Great photos of the entire event are available, and will be placed on the COREJ website.


**NEXT STEPS OF THE COREJ/DJI HACKATHONS**

COREJ is in the process of developing a Final Report with Recommendations which will consist of information regarding the findings, solutions, and available apps that were created and designed at each of the Hackathons. The final Report will provide an assessment and evaluation of the Hackathons and whether additional Hackathons are needed in other parts of the country. The Final Report will be completed in September, 2018.

a. Strategy Session Planned at next Business Meeting of COREJ November 10-11, 2017 in Chicago. Meeting will discuss how to collaborate with key ABA entities to get the apps in the hands of the public; fundraising with tech companies to assist with the upgrade and refining of the winning apps; and working with Innovation Center, Legal Services, etc.

b. Plans are underway for the next Hackathon at North Carolina School of Law in April, 2017.

c. Plan are currently underway for a Hackathon in Chicago in August, 2018 at the ABA Annual Meeting.

d. Quarterly Updates will be published on the progress of the DJI Project and upcoming Hackathons.

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