DIVERSITY PLAN FOR
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION FORUM ON FRANCHISING
(Adopted February 12, 2013)

I. ABA Forum on Franchising (“Forum”) - Commitment to Diversity.

The Forum’s Goal III (one of only four Forum Goals), states: “[t]o promote full and equal participation of minorities, women, and other under-represented groups in Forum activities.” In the fall of 2010, the Forum’s Governing Committee approved the creation of the Forum’s Diversity Caucus, with the following mission:

The mission of the Diversity Caucus of the Forum on Franchising is to develop and implement initiatives to support the Forum’s diversity goals of (1) increasing the number of diverse members in the Forum, (2) growing the representation by diverse members on the Forum’s divisions and committees, (3) continuing to develop a strong base of diverse writers and speakers for the Forum, and (4) creating a growing pool of diverse members ready to assume leadership positions for the Forum. We also strive to raise awareness of the value of diversity in the profession.

The Forum’s Diversity Officer oversees the Diversity Caucus along with a 6 member Steering Committee. Each member on the Steering Committee has a 2 year term running from August to August.

In June 2011, the ABA adopted an Association-wide Diversity Plan and encouraged the Forum to create its own diversity plan. This Diversity Plan strives to fulfill that recommendation and address the proposals and concerns that have been raised through the Forum’s Diversity Caucus.

II. Purposes of the Diversity Plan

This Diversity Plan is intended to assist the Forum with achievement of Goal III as it applies to the Forum by attempting to ensure full and equal participation in the Forum by all eligible persons (including attorneys, paralegals, law professors, and law students) and to eliminate bias in the Forum and ultimately, the ABA. Through the implementation of this Diversity Plan, the Forum hopes to foster the recruitment and retention of diverse lawyers and law students in the Forum, and their potential advancement to leadership roles; enhance opportunities for diverse individuals to participate in Forum activities and programs (including, without limitation, the Annual Meeting, webinars, editorial boards, divisions, caucuses and committees, and authors), including the provision of accommodations to persons with disabilities; promote a culture of inclusion that attracts diverse members of the profession to the Forum; educate Forum members and leaders about the benefits and importance of diversity; and, by building diversity within the Forum, support the Forum’s efforts to promote diversity in academia, the judiciary, and public and private legal workplaces. This Diversity Plan encourages full and equal participation in the Forum by qualified diverse individuals.

III. Objectives, Goals, and Recommendations for the Diversity Plan

This Diversity Plan sets forth numerous objectives, broad goals, and implementation recommendations, including:

A. Achieve wide dissemination of the Diversity Plan within the Forum, and public availability of the Diversity Plan, including:
   1. Disseminate the Diversity Plan, including online access to the Diversity Plan.
   3. Ensuring accessibility of the Diversity Plan to members with disabilities.
B. Promote and track diversity within the Forum’s leadership, including:
   1. Governing Committee.
   2. Senior Appointed Leadership (editors, division chairs).
   3. Committees.

C. Promote diversity in the Forum’s leadership development processes.
   1. The Diversity Officer will identify diverse candidates for potential leadership positions.
   2. The Diversity Caucus (through the Steering Committee) will identify pathways to leadership for diverse members, will share information regarding involvement and leadership opportunities with diverse members, and will endeavor to recommend diverse members for potential leadership roles for activities undertaken by the Forum.

D. Review and Update this Diversity Plan on an annual basis.

E. Promote diversity in the Forum’s membership.
   1. The Marketing and membership solicitation materials should be welcoming to diverse populations. To the extent possible, the Forum (through the Diversity Caucus) will engage in marketing, recruitment and outreach efforts to affinity bars and other professional organizations, legal communities, and law schools to promote diversity.
   2. The Forum will develop formal or informal liaison relationships with the diversity-focused entities of the ABA (e.g., the Goal III entities), and appoint persons who will be active liaisons between those ABA entities and the Forum.
   3. Develop a web page on the Forum’s website for the Diversity Caucus.

F. Promote diversity in programming.
   1. Implement strategic actions to improve diversity among speakers, moderators, and attendees.
   2. Ensure program content appeals to diverse communities, consistent with the sponsoring entities’ subject matter specialties, if any.
   3. Ensure program venues and materials are accessible to participants with disabilities.

G. Promote diversity in publications (hard copy and electronic).
   1. Implement strategic actions to increase diversity in ABA members responsible for editorial policy and content of publications.
   2. Ensure content of publications appeals to diverse communities, consistent with the sponsoring entities’ subject matter specialties, if any.
   3. Ensure content of publications are accessible to persons with disabilities.

H. Promote diversity in the Forum’s events (e.g., annual meeting), including diversity of speakers. Develop an annual event where diverse members of the Forum can meet and discuss diversity issues.

I. Enhance the current tracking and reporting of progress in diversity efforts. Disseminate materials on diversity efforts prepared by ABA and the Forum.

J. Develop mentoring programs that target diverse lawyers and that are designed to advance diversity within the Forum.

K. Promote the Forum’s diversity accomplishments.