

**American Bar Association  
Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar**

**Annual Report of the Managing Director  
August 2018**

Article III, Section 4 of the Section's Bylaws calls for an annual report of the Managing Director at the annual business meeting. This brief report is pursuant to this requirement.

**Accreditation**

Currently, there are 204 ABA-approved law schools offering the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree. Three are provisionally approved. In the 2017-2018 year, the Council and Accreditation Committee took actions related to the status of approved law schools with respect to the granting or withdrawing of provisional or full approval; imposition of sanctions; acquiescing in significant major changes; granting of variances; and findings of non-compliance with core standards related to admissions, academic program, bar examination outcomes, and finances. The most significant of these actions were:

- Arizona Summit Law School: removal of accreditation (on appeal)
- Appalachian: finding of non-compliance with core standards
- Atlanta's John Marshall Law School
- Charlotte Law School: formal withdrawal of accreditation; school closed
- Florida Coastal School of Law: finding of non-compliance with core standards (appealed)
- Golden Gate University Law School: finding of non-compliance with core standards (appealed)
- Lincoln Memorial University: finding of non-compliance with core standards
- Texas Southern University: finding of non-compliance with core standards
- Thomas Jefferson School of Law: place on probation

The appropriate processes continue for each of these schools. Each may subsequently be found to have cured the identified matters of non-compliance, in which case the school will be returned to good standing; or, the school will be directed to take further steps to address the matters of non-compliance and potentially be subject to further Council action, including sanctions and removal of approval.

Further, during the 2017-2018 year, four schools that had been found out of compliance with core standards took steps to bring themselves back into compliance: Ave Maria School of Law, North Carolina Central University School of Law, Valparaiso University School of Law, and WMU Thomas M. Cooley School of Law.

During the past year, dozens of provisional, follow-up, fact-finding and regular site visits were conducted by volunteers from the bench, bar, and academy. Most of these visits and the rosters of the site team members will be reported in the Section's Annual Report published in the fall.

**Standards for Approval of Law Schools**

The Council, Accreditation Committee, Standards Review Committee, and Staff of the Managing Director's Office spent considerable time in the 2017-2018 year on revisions to the Standards and Rules. These matters are the subject of Resolutions 111A-E, which will be before the ABA House of Delegates at its August 6-7 meeting. The Managing Director's Office issued additional Guidance Memos intended to outline for schools and the broader legal education community how the Standards are or may be applied to law schools.

The Standards Review Committee page on the Section website continues to provide the most complete and current information on the Standards and the ongoing process of their review, updating, and improvement.

### **Robert J. Kutak Award**

The Robert J. Kutak Award is given annually by the Section to recognize outstanding contributions to legal education in the United States. The 2018 recipient is the Honorable Solomon Oliver, Jr. Judge Oliver is former Chair of the Section, former member of the Council, Accreditation Committee, and Standards Review Committee, and he is currently serving as a Delegate from our Section to the ABA House of Delegates. Judge Oliver has rendered substantial and important service in many other ways to legal education, the judiciary, and the profession. The award was presented to him at a reception during this ABA Annual Meeting.

### **Thanks**

The Section and the Accreditation Process depends on volunteers. On behalf of my colleagues in the Managing Director's Office, we are grateful for the leadership provided this year by Council Chair Maureen O'Rourke and the hard work of each Council member. We also appreciate the work done by the Accreditation Committee, chaired this year by Scott Bales, and the Standards Review Committee, chaired by Pamela Lysaght. We are also thankful to the several hundred others who volunteered their time to serve on site visit teams and Section committees.

### **Further Information**

The annual report of the Section, which will be published in the fall, will detail additional Section activities and accomplishments related to the work of committees, training of volunteers, and collaboration with other legal education organizations.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry A. Currier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barry Currier, Managing Director