The ABA’s oldest racial and ethnic diversity entity is celebrating 30 years!!! Since 1986, the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession has been on the forefront of facilitating change for racially and ethnically diverse lawyers within the ABA and the legal profession as a whole.

Though the inception of the Commission represented the strides made by minority lawyers in the ABA since the first black members were admitted into the organization in 1950, the important and expansive role of the Commission still plays an integral role in the legal profession today.

What many people do not know about the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession is the robust amount of firsts that derive from the past thirty years. For example, in 1984 the original name of the Commission was the ABA Taskforce on Minorities in the Legal Profession and was the first entity in the ABA that mobilized around the issues that affected minority lawyers. Two years later the Commission on Opportunities for Minorities in the Profession was formed and was chaired by Dennis Archer, the first African American to serve as President of the ABA.

The Commission has been the premiere platform for a vast array of programs and committees that specifically address the often complex issues that racially and ethnically diverse lawyers face. Programs such as the Minority Counsel Program, was amongst the first in the country to promote the retention of minority lawyers in large firms throughout the United States. Harry Pearce, former General Counsel of General Motors and Commission Leadership Member, wrote a symbolic letter advocating for the program and overall retention of minority lawyers to every firm that General Motors had a business relationship with.

Over the years, the Commission has also been instrumental in advocating for the female lawyers. Collaborations with the Commission on Women in the Profession have resulted in the formation of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
From the Chair

Greetings,

Welcome to The Innovator, the newsletter of the ABA’s Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession. In August of 2016, the Commission will celebrate its 30th anniversary. The ABA Board of Governors established the Commission in August of 1986 and originally named it “The Commission on Opportunities for the Minorities in the Profession.” The Commission’s purpose was to pursue what came to be known as Goal III of the four ABA goals: “Eliminate bias and enhance diversity.” When originally formed, the Commission consisted of 16 members including former Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti, Ambassador Mari Carmen Aponte and the ABA’s second African American president, Robert Grey. The Commission’s first chairperson, Dennis Archer, would later serve as the ABA’s first African American president.

With 30 years of operation, one might ask whether there is still a need for the Commission. Clearly, the answer is yes. While progress has been made on some fronts, there is still a great deal of work to be done. As Paulette Brown, the ABA’s first African American female president, pointed out in the November 2015 edition of the ABA Journal, “only 12 percent of our profession is racially and ethnically diverse, making it the least diverse of all comparable professions.” Demographers point to evidence that the United States is becoming majority-minority—a nation in which racial and ethnic minorities comprise a majority of the population. However, as Professor Deborah L. Rhode, pointed out in a May 27, 2015, Washington Post article, the legal profession is not keeping up with the nation’s demographic shifts. Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans and Asian Americans make up less than “7 percent of law firm partners and 9 percent of general counsels of large corporations. In major law firms, only 3 percent of associates and less than 2 percent of partners are African Americans.”

Researchers point to several factors to explain the underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in the profession. However, as Professor Rhode has noted, “unconscious bias and exclusion from informal networks of support and client development remain common.” There is much work to be done. We hope to use this newsletter to keep you informed of the Commission’s efforts to achieve ABA Goal III by increasing awareness and advocating for policies to eliminate bias and enhance diversity. Please join us as we strive to transform Goal III from goal into reality.

Will A. Gunn
Chairman, ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession
Creating the Blueprint for the Road Ahead in Diversity & Inclusion

KAREN CLANTON

“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood…Make big plans; aim high in hope and work.”

This sentiment uttered by famous architect Daniel Burnham in many ways describes President Paulette Brown’s agenda for diversity. President Brown has endeavored to take a comprehensive—hence 360-degree—look at the state of diversity and inclusion in the profession. The Diversity and Inclusion 360 (DI360) Commission was created to lead the inquiry and produce a body of work that will move the needle in meaningful, real ways.

This is no small task for a commission that must complete its work in one bar year. When President-elect Brown assembled the group of soon-to-be-commissioners in late June to give them the charge, she shared anecdotally about what is seldom considered a positive virtue: impatience. She expressed impatience with the seemingly same conversations we’ve been having collectively about the same challenges—implicit bias, barriers and inequality—for nearly 30 years. The impact of these challenges is devastating. There is an increasing lack of confidence in the fairness of our judicial system. The profession loses potential talent when its pipeline is diverted by a school-to-prison pipeline that deprives it of promising young minds. Diverse members of the profession are often not afforded the same opportunities and economic success as they would be in a true meritocracy, and this is particularly problematic in AmLaw 100 firms, where attrition rates are high and promotions to the highest level of partnership are slow.

The impatience was understood and shared by those around the table. It in fact serves as an important motivator and provides context for the passion, commitment and sense of urgency with which the DI360 Commission is approaching its work. In President Brown’s view, the American Bar Association (ABA) has an obligation to continue pressing on this issue. What better way to do this than to address it through a presidential-level commission that sheds light on what the ABA and others in the profession are already doing, advances what is working and determines the next steps to be taken.

Working Groups

The DI360 Commission created four working groups to take on the 360-degree review. The Pipeline Working Group addresses the barriers facing diverse students at critical points along the pipeline: K-12, College/Pre-Law, and Law School/Bar Passage. The Implicit Bias Working Group explores what can be done about implicit bias in our judicial system and is focused on creating training materials for judges, prosecutors and public defenders on that topic. The Economic Case Working Group seeks to expand economic opportunities for diverse attorneys by working with organizations closely allied with general counsels and by considering recommendations that would encourage corporate law departments to increase their legal spend with diverse attorneys. The Diversity & Inclusion Working Group seeks to examine what the ABA can do to lead efforts around diversity and inclusion for the profession.

Each of these topics is significant enough to have independent commissions. Some have in the past and some currently do. The DI360 Commission’s role is not to duplicate or complicate those efforts. Its role is to buttress those efforts by collaborating and lending additional resources and ideas.

Deliverables

President Brown made it clear that the DI360 Commission’s role is to ask tough questions, develop practical tools, partner with thought leaders in each area and hold the ABA itself to its own high standards. So with that charge, the DI360 Commission is examining a range of questions that include: What can be done to address implicit bias? Is there a standard instrument that can assist law departments and law firms in consistently benchmarking diversity? Is the military an additional pipeline for bringing diversity into the profession? What are best practices to ensure that ABA entities are consistently creating and executing strategic diversity plans? In addition, the DI360 Commission is researching and crafting policy proposals for how to approach diversity and inclusion in continuing legal education and how to urge greater economic opportunities for diverse lawyers, with meaningful standards and metrics.

The DI360 Commission’s set of deliverables at the end of the bar year will seek to offer insight into these (and many more) questions. The answers will take shape in a range of tools—video, toolkits, a web portal, databases and policy resolutions. The objective is to create tools that can be used. Much of what President Brown aims to accomplish is action-oriented. While she places a high
value on thought leadership in diversity and inclusion, she stressed that the contribution of the DI360 Commission is to create resources for the person in the trenches who, for example, may need to know whether there is a pipeline program for third graders in Ohio that offers lessons in financial literacy. (One of the deliverables planned by the Pipeline Working Group is a searchable database that would list pipeline programs across the country.)

Blueprint
Although the DI360 Commission will conclude its work at the end of the bar year, the work itself will continue on. The practical tools that are created must be sustained in order to remain useful. The difficult questions raised must be grappled with until answers emerge. The partnerships forged must deepen and grow. Thus, the overarching concept of what the DI360 Commission will leave behind is a blueprint of the way forward.

The DI360 Commission anticipates that many of its initiatives will ultimately be sustained by those with whom it will partner, including the ABA’s Diversity Center, whose entities have been intricately involved in the DI360 Commission’s work—through shared staff and formal liaison relationships.

Although the plan is big, the DI360 Commission is up for the task. Through collaboration and commitment, a plan can be mapped that will move the profession forward.

Karen Clanton is the Director of Internal Communications at Perkins Coie LLP and serves as the Reporter for the Diversity and Inclusion 360 Commission. Ms. Clanton is a seasoned writer and project manager who leads complex editorial projects, counsels on strategic communications and oversees the law firm’s intranet. She received her B.A. from Georgetown University, studied Literature for one year at King’s College, University of London and received her J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law.

30 Years of Excellence | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Multi-Cultural Women’s Attorney Network (MWAN) in 1989 and the publication Dear Sisters, Dear Daughters: Words of Wisdom from Multicultural Women Attorney’s Who’ve Been There and Done That in 2000.

Today, the Commission works in conjunction with three other groups under the umbrella of the ABA’s Racial and Ethnic Diversity Center. The Commission along with the Coalition on Racial and Ethnic Justice, the Commission on Hispanic Legal Rights & Responsibilities and the Council for Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline, hosts programs and events that specifically address the challenges of minority lawyers and law students. In 1991, in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Commission’s mission statement: “promote the appointment for minorities to the judiciary and judicial clerkships,” the Commission developed the model for the now successful Minority Clerkship Program that is facilitated by the Council for Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline.

For 20 years the Commission has honored the efforts and accomplishment of lawyers who promote racial and ethnic diversity in the legal profession both nationally and locally through the Spirit of Excellence Awards. Past honorees of the Spirit Awards have included Federal Judges from almost every district, as well as Civil Rights activists. The Spirit Awards not only honor the amazing work of various legal professionals, but provides an opportunity for ABA-Midyear attendees to interact with them also.

In 2015, the Commission revised its Goal III Report, which assesses diversity successes and challenges within the ABA and provides a comprehensive list of the initiatives that work to eliminate bias and enhance diversity. Goal III uses raw data and percentages to chronicle the incline of minority lawyers in general membership and leadership roles within the ABA. According to Goal III since 2012, an average of 35 percent of minority lawyers have been appointed by past presidents of the ABA for leadership positions. In contrast, the percentage for minority leadership in specific entities such as the ABA Section on Energy, Environment, and Resources and Family Law have an average of 8 percent; and an only slightly higher 11 percent for the Business Law Section.

The rich history of the Commission is a testament to how far racially and ethnically diverse lawyers have come within the ABA and the legal profession, but the work is far from over. The Goal III Report merely highlights the continuous challenges for minority lawyers within the organization. That data coupled with

the general decline or lack thereof minority lawyers in major legal institutions nationally showcase the importance of the Commission and its advocacy efforts. Even in 2015, there is still a large population of first generation minority law students and young lawyers who lack the personal and professional knowledge necessary to successfully run the legal career “marathon.” The same fearless spirit that pioneers of the Commission embodied to institute bold changes in the past are needed on behalf of today’s minority lawyers also. The members and leaders of ABA entities are also leaders within their respective communities and should carry the Commission’s mandate to promote diversity and inclusion with them to influence organizations outside of the ABA as well.

Cheers to 30 years of meaningful work on behalf of minority lawyers worldwide!

Ravay Smith is a recent graduate of the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law and a 2015-2016 ABA Young Lawyers Division Emerging Leader. She recently finished a clerkship with Judge Herbert Dixon Jr. at the District of Columbia Superior Court. After sitting for the February bar exam in Maryland, she plans on pursuing a career in Energy or Environmental Law.
The Changing Face of Legal Services Delivery

Cultural Competency in the Practice of Law

AASTHA MADAAN

The ABA’s Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services was created with the mandate to improve access to lawyers and legal services for those of moderate incomes—those who do not qualify for legal aid yet lack the resources for full legal representation.

In order to improve access to lawyers and legal services to people in an increasingly diverse society, lawyers need to embrace cultural competency in their practice. According to the National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC), cultural competence “embraces the principles of equal access and non-discriminatory practices in service delivery.” Cultural competency is achieved by identifying and understanding the needs and help-seeking behaviors of individuals. More importantly, the practice of cultural competency is driven in service delivery systems by client preferred choices, not by culturally blind or culturally free interventions (emphasis added).

The legal industry is primarily a service-based industry, and the foundation of the practice of law is communication with clients. Understanding the needs of clients, and the cultural differences that may arise during communications with clients can make the delivery of legal services effective.

With these guiding principles in mind, below are some practices and policies that every lawyer can learn and implement in an effort to become culturally competent.

Learn What “Culture” Means

In order to be mindful of the cultural differences and similarities in clients, it is important to be mindful of the characteristics that can define different cultures. Culture is often described as the combination of a body of knowledge, a body of belief, and a body of behavior. Culture not only refers to the superficial features of a person, such as their appearance, but also refers to a person’s personal identity, language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions that are often specific to ethnic, racial, religious, geographic, or social groups.

While appearances and linguistic differences are clear indicators for the need to be culturally competent, other characteristics such as personal identification can be difficult to ascertain. One example of this is simply the way that we refer to people. If a client introduces herself using a certain name or other specific way, keep that in mind. Be mindful of the way a client refers to himself or herself, and if you are unsure of how to refer to him or her, ask, do not assume!

Recently, in a seminar that I attended about providing legal counsel to homeless youth, one of the speakers mentioned that in her non-profit practice, they found that young homeless clients are more likely to feel comfortable if they are sitting closer to the exit than the attorney. Due to past experiences, she said, homeless youth are likely to distrust authority, and are less likely to have open conversations in uncomfortable environments—environments that are too ostentatious or too restrictive.

In learning what “culture” means, it is best to learn what it means in the context of the community that you serve.

Value Diversity

Diversity is a catch-all word for the notable characteristics in a person. Diversity has many avatars, and learning how to convey information to diverse clients can be a career-defining action. A little bit of research and understanding can go a long way. Conveying information to clients so that it is easily understood is an invaluable skill, whether conveying to someone with limited English proficiency or literacy skills, an individual with disabilities, or someone who has never dealt with an attorney before.

Similarly, valuing diversity within the legal profession is just as important. We can learn important lessons in cultural competency through each of our colleagues, whether they are disabled, ethnically diverse, or bring a different perspective to the table. Making the effort to attend events for diverse bar associations can be the first step in learning cultural competency in the legal profession. LGBT bar associations; ethnic bar associations, such as National Bar Association, Asian American Bar Associations; and religious bar associations, such as J. Reuben Clark Bar Association are some of many safe places to ask questions about certain diverse groups in order to increase cultural competency.

Build and Nurture Relationships

While speaking with colleagues about cultural competency recently, I found that one of my colleagues was in favor of learning about a client’s culture or values beforehand, and making it a topic of conversation in the first meeting to build a rapport. Another colleague, a female attorney, disagreed and said that she would proceed the same way with any client, and not make a client conscious of the differences in his or her background.

I believe the right answer is to set boundaries in conversation, along with a personable tone; and then assess each client’s reaction and comfort level before asking questions that could be perceived as personal, such as country of origin, family background, education, etc. In certain situations, such as discovery during litigation, questions about background may be inevitable. In other legal services, such as contract review or negotiations, the same questions can be irrelevant and intrusive. This can lead to distrust, especially in clients who come from backgrounds where law enforce-
Cultural competency will continue to play an important role in the future of the legal profession, both for attorneys and for clients. Once we acknowledge the importance of cultural competency, and the fact that cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period, we can begin to learn and improve the ways in which we interact with clients.3

Aastha Madaan is the founding attorney of Madaan Law, P.C., an estate planning and business law firm in Southern California. Aastha is an advocate for access to affordable legal services to everyone, no matter their financial status, and she is dedicated to providing diligent and compassionate services to her clients.

2 Id.

The Litigation Section Making Strides in Diversity

U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE KAREN WELLS ROBY

The Section of Litigation is the largest section of the American Bar Association and it continues its long-standing commitment to diversity as part of its core mission, consistent with the goals of the comprehensive Diversity Plan. The Section strongly supports the full and equal participation of women, persons of color or differing sexual orientations, and individuals with disabilities in ABA leadership, its membership, and the profession at large.

The Section has continued to excel in advocating for and advancing attorneys of color, women and LGBT attorneys to positions of true leadership and authority. Women and women of color have frequently occupied our past chairs position. Additionally, several self-identified members of LGBT groups hold leadership positions in the Section. The Section has increased its diverse members in leadership in FY2014 to 170 including Executive Council and Council members, or 34.38% of total Section Leadership.

Nearly half of the eighteen members Executive Committee are composed of women and women of color. This Committee includes Vice-Chair, Secretary, Budget Officer, Revenue Officer, Content and Publications Officer.

With seventeen women on the thirty-six member Executive Committee and Council of the Section, nearly 50 percent of our governing body is female. Additionally, the Diversity Committee is a permanent Committee of the Council and collaborates with the Section’s Diversity Committee of which five of the nine member leaders are diverse. The five-member Advisory Committee on Nominations, which recommends a slate for future top Leadership positions the following year, includes one white female and an African American male.

To further demonstrate the Section’s commitment to diversity, the leadership established the Diversity Leadership Award in 2008. This award recognizes the long standing, continuing, and exceptional dedication of individuals or entities who have demonstrated a commitment to promoting full and equal participation in the legal profession through the encouragement and inclusion of women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and/or persons of differing sexual orientations and gender identities. Since its creation several individuals and entities have been recognized for their commitment to diversity. For example, in 2014, the Philadelphia Diversity Law Group (PDLG) received the coveted award. The PDLG is a consortium of Philadelphia’s leading law firms and corporate law departments committed to fostering participation of a more diverse group of lawyers in the Greater Philadelphia region in order to make our legal profession stronger, more pro-

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The section of Antitrust in 2000, continues to rank highly with law students, judges and JIOP alumni.

JIOP allows underrepresented students an opportunity to intern in a judge’s chambers. The internships provide a learning experience that includes “real-world” situations and allows students to work with judges who provide guidance, education, inspiration and increased confidence for the student. The experience assists these students in the development of their research and writing skills. JIOP participants often credit this internship experience as helpful in finding jobs following law school graduation.

In the summer 2015 the program added a new JIOP location—New York—and successfully placed 10 students. Students receive $2,000 to offset some of the expenses associated with the placement. In summer 2015, the program placed 194 students with 176 participating judges. Applicants to the program represented 131 different law schools. Students placed in the program represented 131 different law schools. JIOP processed and coordinated screening interviews for over 700 applicants providing students with an important first contact.

The 2016 program will result in the placement of 175 students, with 11 orientations planned for summer 2016.

JIOP held 11 orientations and receptions in cities with four programs held and sponsored by the courts. More than 900 lawyers, judges, and members of the legal community attended one of these events. Supplemental programming and student mentoring took place in several JIOP locations.

The JIOP mentoring circle program ran in 9 cities. This program is run by JIOP alumni and includes volunteer alumni mentoring this year’s students,
and hosting other social and networking activities. In addition, students and alumni are connected to JIOP through both LinkedIn and Facebook pages along with JIOP’s twitter feed.

JIOP increased the number of cities from 2 to 11 with successful judicial recruitment, local law community involvement and fundraising efforts to offset any additional costs. The JIOP committee supported the increased placements by raising more than $390,000 this year to support the program.

The program, co-sponsored by the ABA Section of Intellectual Property law, places students with special skills or a background in intellectual property in internships with judges who hear IP cases. There were 131 IP-specific applicants to this year’s program, with 36 of those students placed in an IP-focused internship with judges in several JIOP locations.

JIOP is involved in local law communities as sponsors, speakers and hosts of supplemental programming for students. JIOP collaborates with state judge associations, state and local bar associations and legal foundations.

JIOP’s continued its partnership with the Judicial Clerkship Program (JCP), giving JCP students an opportunity to use the skills gained during their training. This year, 257 applicants were JCP participants with 76 JCP students receiving JIOP positions. JIOP also continued its partnership with the Judicial Resource Committee—Just the Beginning a pipeline program, allowing students in certain cities to benefit from both programs. This year 18 students participated in both programs.

JIOP alums lead several committees and hold leadership positions in the Young Lawyers Division, the Section of Intellectual Property and the Section of Litigation. They redesigned JIOP’s website and formed an alumni and social media committee, held some of the most popular attended webinars and roundtables, and started a committee newsletter that is extremely successful and well-received. Profiles of JIOP alums appear on the alumni page of the website.

JIOP’s former participants are brought into the Section in various ways. For example, last year, one of the Section’s quarterly publications, Litigation News, which is written entirely by its editors had its editorial board contact 26 interested Judicial Internship Opportunity Program (JIOP) alumni (lawyers from diverse or low income backgrounds that had previously been vetted by Section members, then given a stipend to serve as clerks for judges around the country) to invite them to participate in a “write on” contest that consisted of interviewing current editorial board members and writing an article on what it is like to be a Litigation News editor.

The technique allowed board members to see candidates’ interviewing technique as well as their writing style. Of eight JIOP alumni who participated in the write on, five were chosen and appointed to the Litigation News board. The effort resulted in a more diverse editorial board than the publication has ever had before. Similar activities take place with other committees and publications throughout the Section.

Additionally, the Minority Trial Lawyer Committee’s co-chairs are JIOP alums, their editorial staff and newsletter editor are JIOP alums and a JIOP alum just won the Section’s awards of content and website development. The Sections Access to Justice Committee has nine volunteer JIOP alums working to further the work of that committee along with many others.

JIOP continues to be an important part of the Section’s goal to increase and contribute to the diversity pipeline both within the Section of Litigation, the ABA and the legal profession.

The Section of Litigation has a multifaceted approach to improving diversity in the ABA and the Profession. Each year it chips away at the systemic problem and is making progress which is visible in our programing, leadership, committee focus, affinity programs and by the support it receives from its governing council.

The Honorable Karen Wells Roby is a United States Magistrate Judge for the United States District for the Eastern District of Louisiana and has served on the court for sixteen years. She serves as Co-Chair of the ABA Section of Litigation’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee and is a former Co-Chair of the Section of Litigation’s Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee. She also serves as Editor of the ABA Diversity and Inclusion Committee’s Newsletter. She is a Commissioner on the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession. Judge Roby also serves on the Executive Committee of the ABA’s National Conference of Federal Trial Judges.

The Collaborative Bar Leadership Academy (CBLA) is a collaborative effort among the American Bar Association, Hispanic National Bar Association, National Bar Association, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, and the National Native American Bar Association. The CBLA will strengthen the pipeline of diverse bar association leaders through leadership training and professional development programs. The CBLA benefits current and future bar leaders, the bar association community, and the legal profession overall and lays the foundation for further collaborative efforts by the sponsoring bar associations to foster diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. Stay tuned for more information!
Young Lawyers Division an ABA Leader in Diversity and Inclusion

DAQUIRI J. STEELE

When it comes to diversity and inclusion, one of the most dynamic entities in the ABA is the Young Lawyers Division (YLD). Achievement of such a distinction is not without effort. With the support of Walmart, the premier sponsor for the YLD’s diversity programs, the YLD implements many diversity initiatives in its quest to continually increase diversity and inclusion both in the Division and in the profession.

The YLD Diversity Team consists of a Director; two Vice-Directors; two members at large; the Chairs of the YLD’s diversity committees; the national representatives for the five YLD national affiliates—the National Bar Association, the National LGBT Bar Association, and the National Native American Bar Association; and the YLD liaisons to the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession, Commission on Women in the Profession, Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Council on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline, and Commission on Disability Rights. The YLD currently has four committees related to diversity. They are the Minorities in the Profession, Public Education, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and Women in the Profession committees. The Division is in the process of creating a new Committee on Disability Rights, which will join the ranks of the diversity committees.

What Do Lawyers Do? Pipeline Project
This bar year, the YLD implemented the What Do Lawyers Do? Pipeline Project, a program aimed at exposing students at Historically Black Colleges & Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions to the various aspects of practicing law, including the variety of practice areas and practice settings. The program shows participants that not all lawyers function like the ones depicted on television. It also provides basic information to students concerning the process of applying to law school. The YLD held its inaugural What Do Lawyers Do? program in October 2015 at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law, and invited students from Arkansas Baptist College.
and Philander Smith College, as well as students affiliated with the National Association of Black Men United to attend. The YLD is planning to host its next What Do Lawyers Do? program in conjunction with the ABA Midyear Meeting in San Diego, California.

**YLD Scholars Program**

One of the staples of the YLD’s diversity initiatives is the YLD Scholars program. Designed to promote the participation of minority, solo/small firm, government, private sector, and military attorneys in the YLD, the Scholars Program provides scholars with an appointment to a YLD committee, board, or team; partial funding to attend YLD conferences; and mentorship. Former YLD scholars have gone on to contribute greatly to the Division, holding positions such as Chair, Diversity Director, Communications Director, and YLD Representative to the Board of Governors.

**EMBRACING Diversity Challenge**

The EMBRACING Diversity Challenge, formerly known as the Next Steps Diversity Challenge, recognizes and awards young lawyer organizations affiliated with the YLD for their implementation of programs that increase diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. The term “EMBRACING” in the Challenge’s title is an acronym describing actions the proposed programs should seek to accomplish with respect to diversity. The initial components of the acronym are as follows: Expose, Motivate, Broaden, Recognize, Advocate, Communicate, Include, Network, and Grow. To participate, YLD affiliates submit diversity program proposals and implement the programs. The top programs are showcased at the YLD Spring Conference and receive a sub-grant to expand their program.

**Diversity Expo**

In February 2015, the YLD the Diversity Team hosted a Diversity Expo at the Midyear Meeting in Houston, Texas. ABA entities were invited to participate in the Expo and showcase their diversity initiatives. The event was such a success that the YLD incorporated the Diversity Expo into its Diversity Plan, making it an annual event at each Midyear Meeting. The event not only promotes annual collaboration between the YLD and other ABA entities, but it also ensures the YLD membership is informed about opportunities available in other sections, divisions, and forums.

**Diversity Dialogue**

At every Midyear Meeting, the YLD presents a Diversity Dialogue in which a pertinent diversity and inclusion issue is discussed. Afterwards, the YLD composes a White Paper on the issue discussed. Past topics have included implicit bias, diversity and mentoring, and the gender gap in the legal profession. This year’s Diversity Dialogue will be held in San Diego, California.

**Conference Programming**

The YLD is committed to diversity programming, and this commitment is evident in the range and depth of its diversity programming. At its 2015 Fall Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas, the YLD held a “Charting Our Future: Civil Rights in Voting and Education” luncheon that featured Minnie Jean Brown-Trickey, a member of the Little Rock Nine. Topics of discussion included a historical overview of the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School and current hot topics in civil rights. The luncheon was followed by a tour of Little Rock Central High School and a CLE on voting rights and education that was conducted in the School’s auditorium. Additional diversity programming at the Conference included “ADA at 25: A Discussion of the Progress in Reasonable Accommodations and Equal Access,” a program celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and “A Right to Discriminate or Religious Liberty: The Return of Accommodation Battles in Civil Litigation,” which discussed recent court rulings that address the conflict between freedom of religion and discrimination against minority groups, such as Muslims and members of the LGBT community.

“From Surviving to Thriving: LGBTQ in the Work Place,” a program the YLD hosted in the at the 2015 ABA Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, focused on the laws, rules, and practical issues that still confront LGBT professionals. The YLD also held a CLE program entitled “Forty Years Later: What is the State of Young Native American Lawyers in the Legal Profession.” This program discussed issues confronting young Native American attorneys across all practice settings.

At the 2015 Midyear Meeting, the YLD hosted a luncheon entitled “Firsts: A Conversation with Trailblazers of the Bar.” The luncheon was held in recognition of Paulette Brown’s historic role as the first woman of color to serve as ABA President, and featured a panel of distinguished ABA trailblazers who shared their personal experiences in the ABA and addressed the state of diversity in the bar. At that same Midyear Meeting, the YLD also sponsored a program named, “After the JD: Perspectives on Diversity in the Legal Profession.” The program centered around the American Bar Foundation’s “After the JD” Study, which examined what participants were doing 12 years into their careers, whether they were still satisfied with their decision to become a lawyer, and whether women and minorities were achieving professional success and satisfaction at the same rate as their peers.

The aforementioned constitutes just a few of the YLD’s diversity and inclusion initiatives. The Division remains committed to developing new programs and improving upon existing ones.

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Daiquiri J. Steele is a Commissioner on the ABA Commission for Racial & Ethnic Diversity in the Profession. She is also a Vice-Director of the ABA YLD Diversity Team and a member of the ABA YLD Resolutions Team and Credentials Board. She currently practices civil rights law for the federal government in Atlanta, Georgia.
Commissioner Spotlight

Meet the Commissioners! Be sure to check out the “Commissioner Spotlight” section in each issue of The Innovator and read about the ABA members who service as Commissioners on the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession.

Helen Kim

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ON THE COMMISSION? I am currently serving my second year of a three-year term, but I previously served on the Commission from July 2008 - June 2011.

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT SERVING ON THE COMMISSION? Harnessing the ideas, energy and experience of so many talented lawyers who are committed to promoting and advancing the career opportunities of racial and ethnic minorities in our profession. I come away energized and inspired every time we meet.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A FIRM/ORGANIZATION LOOKING TO INCREASE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AMONG ITS ATTORNEYS? Increasing diversity and inclusion is good for business and our communities. As our country and communities continue to diversify — with many markets becoming majority minority — so must our legal profession. If the diversity of law firms and other legal organizations, including our judiciary, in-house corporate counsel and government attorneys, doesn’t mirror the diversity of the communities we serve, we risk the loss of trust and faith in our legal system.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MIDNIGHT SNACK? Dark chocolate!

WHAT IS YOUR DREAM VACATION? I love traveling with my family; I love to explore new places and share good food and new experiences with my husband and kids. I cherish that quality time together, which is so hard to find.

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR HIDDEN TALENTS? Once upon a time, I dreamed of becoming a concert pianist. I have a masters degree in classical piano performance, and I still play piano from time to time, mostly chamber music.

IN WHAT OTHER ABA ENTITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED? (PLEASE INCLUDE ANY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.)
- Section of Litigation, Member 2003-2015
- Judicial Division, Member 2008-Present; Council 2011-2014; Vice-Chair, 2014-2015; Chair-Elect, 2015-2016
- Senior Lawyers Division, Member 2008-Present; Council 2011-2014; Vice-Chair, 2014-2015; Chair-Elect, 2015-2016
- Litigation Section, Member 2008-2015
- Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section
  - Member & Judicial Division’s Liaison, 2008-2012
  - JD-TIPS Task Force, Vice-Chair
  - Governor Law Committee and Vice-Chair
  - Intellectual Property Committee; TIPS Fellows, Member
- Justice Kennedy Commission, Member 2003-2004
- Criminal Justice Standards Updating Subcommittee, 1996-1997
- Judicial Division Member, Finance & Nondues Revenue Committee Member, Strategic Planning Committee
- National Conference of State Trial Judges (NCSTJ)
  - Vice-Chair, 2004-2005, Chair-Elect 2005-2006; Chair 2006-2007, Immediate Past Chair 2007-2008
  - Chair, Long Range Planning Committee, 2004
  - Chair, Criminal Justice Committee, 2002-2004
  - Chair-Elect, Executive Committee
  - Maryland Representative, 2001 & 2003-Present
  - 50th Anniversary Planning Committee Member
- Section of Dispute Resolution, Member
- Section on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Member
- Standing Committee on Gun Violence, Chair 2010-2013, Member 2008-2013
- American Bar Foundation, Life Fellow

Judge William D. Missouri

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ON THE COMMISSION? This is my third year on the Commission. I was appointed to the Commission by Past ABA President, James R. Silkenat, in 2013.

IN WHAT OTHER ABA ENTITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED? (PLEASE INCLUDE ANY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.)
- Criminal Justice Standards Updating Subcommittee, 1996-1997
- Judicial Division Member, Finance & Nondues Revenue Committee Member, Strategic Planning Committee
- National Conference of State Trial Judges (NCSTJ)
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- Section of Dispute Resolution, Member
- Section on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Member
- Standing Committee on Gun Violence, Chair 2010-2013, Member 2008-2013
- American Bar Foundation, Life Fellow
- Standing Committee on Gun Violence, Chair 2010-2013, Member 2008-2013
- American Bar Foundation, Life Fellow

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR HIDDEN TALENTS? What is one of your hidden talents? A banana and a glass of milk

WHAT IS YOUR DREAM VACATION? My dream vacation is one where I would travel to London with my children and grandchildren and have time to visit and discuss the significance of all the historical and literary landmarks.

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR HIDDEN TALENTS? My dream vacation is one where I would travel to London with my children and grandchildren and have time to visit and discuss the significance of all the historical and literary landmarks.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ALL THE HISTORICAL AND LITERARY LANDMARKS? Once upon a time, I dreamed of becoming a concert pianist. I have a masters degree in classical piano performance, and I still play piano from time to time, mostly chamber music.
Racial & Ethnic Diversity
Calendar of Events

DECEMBER 7–9, 2015
National American Indian Housing Council
Legal Symposium
The Venetian | Las Vegas, NV

FEBRUARY 5, 2016
ABA Diversity Initiative Expo Sponsored
by the ABA Young Lawyers Division
Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego | San Diego, CA

FEBRUARY 6, 2016
Spirit of Excellence Awards
Noon – 2:00 p.m. | ABA Midyear Meeting
Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego | San Diego, CA

FEBRUARY 18–20, 2016
National Bar Association Commercial Law Section
Corporate Counsel Conference | Scottsdale, AZ

MARCH 16–18, 2016
Hispanic National Bar Association
Corporate Counsel Conference
& Moot Court Competition
Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino | Las Vegas, NV

NOVEMBER 3–6, 2016
2016 National Asian Pacific
American Bar Association Convention
Hilton San Diego Bayfront | San Diego, CA

NOVEMBER 14–16, 2016
ABA Section of Litigation
Professional Success Summit:
Minority Counsel Business Generation
& Skills Training Conference
Ritz Carlton | Atlanta, GA