Introduction

The Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section (TIPS) of the American Bar Association (ABA) is committed to diversity and inclusion, and demonstrates this commitment by promoting equal participation by minorities, women, attorneys with disabilities and LGBT attorneys in the Section and in the legal profession as whole. Diversity strengthens the Section by providing its members with unique and valuable perspectives from exceptionally skilled, knowledgeable and experienced attorneys across a variety of practice areas.

TIPS diversity goals are set forth in the Section’s Long Range Strategic Plan (Rev. May 2011), and in Goal 4 of its Bylaws (Revised 2014) which states, “TIPS will advance diversity in the profession.” This goal is aligned with the ABA’s stated Goals in this regard which provide that, “[t]he ABA will eliminate bias and advance diversity.” (Goal III Rev. 2008)

Recognizing the value of diversity and inclusion, TIPS established the Standing Committee on Diversity in the Profession (the Diversity Committee) to assist the Section in meeting its diversity goals. The Diversity Committee has the following Mission Statement (adopted by TIPS Council, Fall 2013):

*It is the mission of the TIPS Diversity Committee to advance diversity and inclusion at all levels within the Section, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, economic status and other diverse backgrounds. The TIPS Diversity Committee will work closely with TIPS leadership to promote the Section’s diversity goals, support the general committees, and promote the value of having diverse professionals and groups included in all Section activities.*

The Diversity Committee is pleased to present the following TIPS Diversity Plan. It is intended to build upon the goals set forth in the Section’s Long Range Strategic Plan, and highlight the important roles played by leadership and staff members that will be instrumental to the successful execution of the Plan and the furtherance of the Section’s goals.

To further the Section’s goal of advancing diversity throughout the profession, the Plan incorporates the following long range goals and objectives:
1. Raise awareness that diversity and inclusion are valued within the Section;
2. Maintain and increase diversity in the Section’s membership;
3. Maintain and increase diversity in the Section’s leadership;
4. Balance programs, publications and activities to include diverse contributors; and
5. Maintain and formulate strategic alliances to further promote diversity and inclusion within the Section.

I. RAISE AWARENESS THAT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ARE VALUED WITHIN THE SECTION

One of the fundamental principles upon which TIPS is built is the premise that the inclusion of diverse members from varied backgrounds is a source of great strength for the Section. The specific acts identified below will aid this spirit and continue to foster the Section’s goals.

1. The Diversity Plan will be available on the TIPS website for review by all Section members. (Staff Liaison)

2. A copy of the Diversity Toolkit, a list of diversity contacts and resources, and updates to the Nuts and Bolts Handbook will be provided to all current and incoming General Committee Chairs and Chair-Elects during Orientation or General Committee Board meetings. (SCOPE and Correlation Committee and General Committee Board Chair)

3. A copy of the Diversity Toolkit will be distributed to Standing Committee Chairs at the beginning of each bar year. (Staff Liaison)

4. The Section Chair is encouraged to communicate the critical importance of diversity and inclusion, the necessity for implementing the Diversity Plan and the Diversity Committee’s role to all TIPS members. (Section Chair and Staff Liaison)

5. The Diversity Committee will provide content for the TIPS Diversity webpage which will be updated regularly to include diversity materials and events available to all Section members. (Technology Manager and Diversity Committee Staff Liaison)

6. The Diversity Committee’s website will include a link to the ABA diverse speaker’s database. (Diversity Committee Staff Liaison)

7. The Diversity Committee is encouraged to seek administrative and financial support from the TIPS Council to facilitate the Section’s diversity and inclusion policies, including education outreach projects, CLE programs and external affinity bar association outreach. (Diversity Committee)
8. The Diversity Committee Chair will provide a report on the Committee’s activities to TIPS Council at each of the Council’s annual four in-person meetings. (Diversity Committee Chair)

II. MAINTAIN AND INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE SECTION’S MEMBERSHIP

General members are the lifeblood of the Section. TIPS members rely on the exceptional programs and content provided by the Section to help them succeed and prosper in their individual practice areas. The Section’s programs and content are enhanced by the inclusion of talented and knowledgeable diverse members who provide important perspectives making the continued addition of these members even more important to TIPS. The following are steps to be taken to reach this Section goal.

1. The Orientation Committee Chair will encourage each of the General Committees to invite diverse non-TIPS lawyers, law students and young lawyers to TIPS meetings and programs. (Orientation Committee Chair)

2. The Standing Committee on Law Students will distribute information on scholarship opportunities to diverse law students. (Standing Committee on Law Students)

3. The TIPS Diversity Officer will coordinate with the Chair of the Standing Committee on Law Students to send personal invitations to the Dean of Students of targeted law schools informing them of scholarship opportunities available to diverse law students and inviting them to join Section meetings and programs. (Targeted law schools are those schools which have a geographic proximity to the locations where the TIPS meetings and programs will be held). (Diversity Officer and Standing Committee on Law Students)

4. The Standing Committee on Law Students, the Task Force on Outreach to Young Lawyers and the Membership Committee will collaborate with the Diversity Committee to develop materials and initiatives geared towards diverse lawyers with practice areas encompassed under the TIPS specialties. (Standing Committee on Law Students, Task Force on Outreach to Young Lawyers, Membership Committee)

5. The Diversity Committee Newsletter Editor will reach out to the Diversity Chairs of the Young Lawyer Division and Law Student Division for article submissions that can be published and promoted in TIPS publications. (Diversity Committee Newsletter Editor)

6. The Diversity Committee will use available technology and social media to market diversity events to all lawyers within the ABA. (Diversity Committee)
III. MAINTAIN AND INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE SECTION’S LEADERSHIP

1. Each General Committee Chair shall appoint a Diversity Vice-Chair to serve as a liaison between the General Committee and the Diversity Committee. (General Committees)

2. General Committee Diversity Vice-Chairs should participate in the Diversity Committee’s monthly conference calls, and serve as a resource to their Committee for all diversity-related programming and panelist needs. (Diversity Vice-Chair of each General Committee)

3. The General Committee Diversity Vice-Chairs should report resource requests and their individual Committee needs as a Diversity Committee agenda item during monthly calls. (Staff Liaison and General Committee Diversity Vice-Chairs)

4. The Diversity Committee will continue to support the Scope and Correlation Committee’s “Success Worksheet”, which includes diversity as an important evaluative component for each General Committee. (Scope and Correlation Committee)

5. General Committee and Standing Committee Chairs are encouraged to identify diverse candidates or those who have a demonstrated or stated commitment to diversity and inclusion when recommending Committee succession plans and Committee vice-chair appointments. (General and Standing Committee Chairs, Staff Liaison)

6. Information on the path to Section leadership and the nomination process for Council elections will be communicated to all TIPS members annually through email, in a TIPS publication, webinar, or as part of an in-person workshop. (Scope and Correlation or Orientation Committee)

IV. BALANCE PROGRAMS, PUBLICATIONS AND ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE DIVERSE CONTRIBUTORS

1. The CLE Board will continue to incorporate the inclusion of experienced and knowledgeable diverse participants in TIPS CLE programs. (CLE Board)

2. The Editorial Boards will continue to include experienced and knowledgeable diverse authors in TIPS publications. (Editorial Boards)

3. The Diversity Committee will publish a quarterly diversity newsletter that will focus on a particular ABA Goal III entity, highlight expert authors and/or highlight a diverse General Committee member. (Diversity Committee)
4. The Diversity Staff Liaison will reach out to ABA Goal III entities about upcoming TIPS diversity programs and/or webinars for purposes of potential marketing and ad space in publications which may thereafter be presented to the Section Chair and Finance Officer for consideration. (Diversity Staff Liaison)

5. The Diversity Committee will publish an annual dashboard that provides a comprehensive review of the Diversity Plan action items in the summer issue of the diversity newsletter. (Diversity Committee Chair, Newsletter Editor)

V. MAINTAIN AND FORMULATE STRATEGIC ALLIANCES TO FURTHER PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WITHIN THE SECTION.

1. The Diversity Committee Chair will develop and/or support ongoing external affinity bar association outreach efforts to encourage external affinity bar association members to join the Section and become active members. (Diversity Committee Chair)

2. The Diversity Committee Chair may request funding to continue the Section’s representation at external affinity bar association meetings. (Diversity Committee Chair)

3. The Diversity Committee Chair will encourage and explore sponsorship of collaborative programming and communication between TIPS and national external affinity bar associations. (Diversity Committee Chair)

4. At least annually, the Diversity Committee Chair and Diversity Officer will identify and contact the leadership of national affinity bar associations that align with TIPS Goal 4, and provide them with information on TIPS membership, benefits and diversity goals. (Diversity Committee Chair and Diversity Officer)

5. With the assistance of the ABA Diversity Center, the Diversity Committee Staff Liaison will assist with the creation and/or submission of TIPS-related materials to be sent to ABA Goal III entities and external affinity bar associations. (Staff Liaison)

6. The Diversity Committee may request funding for attendance at events and programs presented by the ABA’s Goal III Commissions and Groups including the Spirit of Excellence, Margaret Brent Luncheon and Stonewall Awards Reception. (Finance Committee and Diversity Committee Chair)

7. The Diversity Committee Chair is encouraged to make recommendations to the Section Chair-Elect for an individual or individuals to serve as Section representatives to ABA Goal III Commissions and groups. (Diversity Committee Chair)
8. The Diversity Committee Chair may request funding for Staff to compile TIPS-related diversity materials as part of the ABA Diversity Center’s Joint Exhibits Program. (Diversity Committee Chair and Staff Liaison)

9. The Diversity Committee may seek administrative and financial support from TIPS Council to participate in outreach to schools or organizations in underrepresented and underprivileged areas to encourage diverse students to pursue a career in the legal profession. (Diversity Committee)

Finally, it is the intention of the Diversity Committee that the Section’s Diversity Plan be assessed on an ongoing basis. Every three years the Diversity Committee, in coordination with the Section Diversity Officer, will conduct a formal review of the Section’s Diversity Plan incorporating new ideas, information and resources as it continues to promote the goals of diversity and inclusion into the Section.

Submitted by the TIPS Diversity Committee
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