

GOAL IX

COMMISSION ON
MENTAL AND PHYSICAL DISABILITY LAW

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American Bar Association

The Goal IX Report

About the American Bar Association, the Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law, and Goal IX

The American Bar Association (ABA) was founded in 1878 by 100 lawyers from 21 states. Today, the ABA has over 400,000 members and is the largest voluntary professional association in the world. The ABA provides law school accreditation, continuing legal education, information about the law, programs to assist lawyers and judges, and initiatives to improve the legal system for the public. The original ABA constitution stated that the primary mission of the ABA was "the primary advancement of the science of jurisprudence, the promotion of the administration of justice and a uniformity of legislation throughout the country." Today, the ABA's primary mission is "to be the national representative of the legal profession, serving the public and the profession by promoting justice, professional excellence and respect for the law." To this end, the ABA has 11 stated goals, one of which is Goal IX: "to promote full and equal participation in the legal profession by minorities, women and lawyers with disabilities."

Stemming from the ABA's long history of promoting reform of the justice system, in 1973, the ABA established the Commission on the Mentally Disabled to focus on the advocacy needs of people with mental disabilities. After the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Commission broadened its mission to serve all people with disabilities and therefore changed its name to the Commission on Mental & Physical Disability Law. The Commission's mission is to "promote the ABA's commitment to justice and the rule of law for persons with mental, physical, and sensory disabilities and their full and equal participation in the legal profession." The Commission is composed of lawyers and other professionals, many of whom have disabilities. It was in 1999, that the ABA House of Delegates voted to expand its Goal IX to include persons with disabilities along with women and minorities. This year, the Commission was one of several ABA entities that petitioned the Association to file an amicus brief with the United States Supreme Court to bar the execution of defendants with mental retardation. The Commission also was a co-sponsor of a House of Delegates' resolution that urges state and federal court-houses and proceedings to be fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

Introduction

This is the fourth year in which the Commission has participated in a Goal IX leadership survey of ABA sections, divisions, and forums. The *Goal IX Survey gathers* information about the participation of persons with disabilities, as well as women and minorities, in ABA leadership positions. The 2002 *Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law Goal IX Report* presents the findings of the survey, and also provides recommendations.

In this year's *Goal IX Survey*, we used a common definition of the term "disability" in order to provide guidance to respondents as they sought to identify lawyers with disabilities. The *Survey* defined a disability as "a mental or physical impairment or condition that limits one or more major life activities such as seeing, hearing, walking, caring for oneself, learning, breathing, or working." We also provided some examples of disabilities which included "epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, AIDS, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, visual and hearing impairments, mental retardation, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities." Further, the *Survey also* stated that "alcoholism is included [as a disability] although the current use of illegal drugs is not included." Moreover, the *Survey* continued to instruct the respondents that "[d]isabilities may be inferred from self-identification, direct observation, or other reliable data."

According to ABA Membership, current statistics indicate that we are able to identify approximately 4,645 lawyers with disabilities out of 365,064 lawyers who are ABA members (approximately 1.3%). The *Goal IX Survey* data reveal that only 38 out of approximately 15,000 (.24%) ABA leadership positions are held by lawyers with disabilities. The Commission acknowledges that there are several underlying factors that may help to explain the low degree of participation by lawyers with disabilities in the ABA. First, there are unique issues concerning diversity initiatives and lawyers with disabilities, as many people think of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity when they hear the term "diversity." (See Margaret Graham Tebo, "Quite Able," *A.B.A. J.*, Feb. 2002, at 64.) Indeed, it has been observed that it may not be possible

to aggressively promote diversity in the same manner as can be done with respect to women and minorities, because the overwhelming percentage of disabilities are not visually apparent. (See Kevin H. Smith, "Disabilities, Law Schools, and Law Students: A Proactive and Holistic Approach", 32 *Akron L. Rev.*, 86-87 (1999). Moreover, stigmas and/or perceived stigmas attached to being disabled may discourage individuals with disabilities from identifying as such.

Second, although there has been an apparent rise in the number of students with disabilities enrolled in law school, the number remains quite low. According to the ABA Office of the Consultant for Legal Education & Admissions to the Bar, an unpublished 2001 enrollment survey of all ABA accredited law schools revealed that law schools provided accommodations for 2,500 law students with disabilities out of a total of 127,610 law students (approximately 2%). This suggests that few persons with disabilities attend law school to begin with, and thus there are few lawyers with disabilities in the legal profession. We should note that assuming about 2% of all law students are provided with accommodations, the fact that the ABA can identify only 1.3% as members is what you might expect.

Lastly, lawyers with disabilities are more likely to work in the government or public interest, which generally tend to offer lower salaries than in the private sector. The National Association of Law Placement's survey of year 2000 law school graduates indicated that the mean salary of law school graduates with disabilities was about \$6,000-\$7,000 less than the mean average for both full-time and part-time law school graduates without disabilities. Thus, a reasonable inference could be made that some lawyers with disabilities may not choose to become ABA members because of the cost of membership, or a perception that the ABA is not relevant to them.

The 2001-2002 *Goal IX Report* presents findings, including recommendations, in order to assist ABA entities with their efforts to adhere to the ABA's commitment to diversity by enhancing the participation of lawyers with disabilities pursuant to Goal IX.

I. Methodology

The survey instrument had 33 quantitative questions with sub-parts, and three open-ended questions addressing entities' long-range diversity goals and initiatives. Respondents also were permitted to include attachments, such as copies of their diversity plans, goals, and strategies, in order to supplement their answers.

This year, the Commission was responsible for distributing the surveys to the ABA sections, divisions, and forums. This responsibility is rotated each year. Each entity analyzed the data that pertained to it separately, and prepared separate reports of its findings.

II. Background

1. Total Number of Lawyers with Disabilities in Leadership Roles

The *2000 Goal IX Report* indicated that there were a total of 42 ABA leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities.

2. Total Number of ABA Entities That Have Lawyers with Disabilities in Leadership Roles

The *2000 Goal IX Report* indicated that there were 13 entities with at least 1 person with a disability represented in a leadership role, out of a total of 41 entities that participated in the *Goal IX Survey*.

3. Long-Range Goals and Initiatives

The *2000 Goal IX Report* revealed that only 6 of the 41 responding entities mentioned activities to increase participation by lawyers with disabilities in their long-range goals and initiatives. Several entities specifically mentioned diversity initiatives geared toward women and/or minorities, but did not include persons with disabilities.

III. Findings & Discussion

This report analyzes the Commission's findings with respect to the total number of ABA leadership positions that are held by lawyers with disabilities, and the total number of entities that have at least one lawyer with a disability in a leadership role. In addition, this report examines the long-range diversity goals and initiatives of the ABA entities, and attempts to discern the extent to which entities are striving to increase leadership opportunities for lawyers with disabilities in the legal profession pursuant to Goal IX. It is important to note that this year's *Survey and Report* focus on ABA sections, divisions, and forums only, whereas last year's data included information from other entities such as our Commission. Therefore, while comparisons to last year and/or previous years' data and statistics allow us to make broad generalizations about the participation of lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles, such comparisons are to be understood in their contexts.

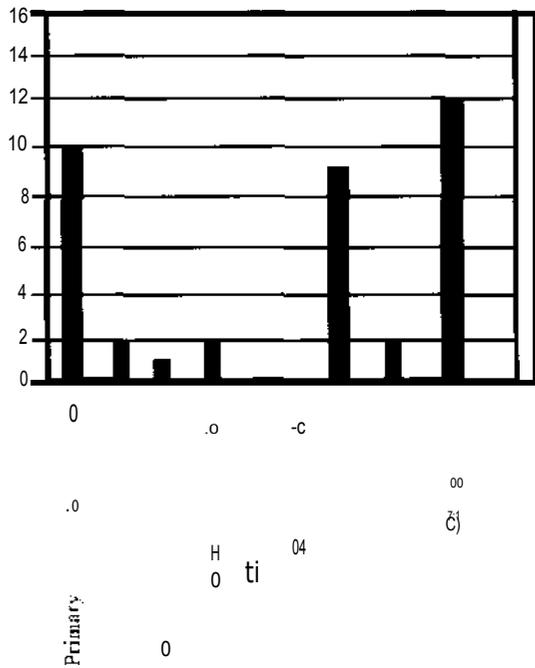
1. Total Number of ABA Leadership Positions Held by Lawyers with Disabilities

This year, the *Survey* responses identified a total of 38 ABA leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities, as compared to a total of 42 identified last year. This figure must be considered in light of the fact that unlike last year, this year's *Survey and Report* did not include data from ABA entities other than sections, divisions, and forums. For example, if you merely add our Commission members with disabilities the total is 46. Nevertheless, the percentage based on the 15,000 leadership positions at the ABA (.24%) remains quite low, even acknowledging that only 1.3% of lawyers in the ABA identify themselves as having a disability.

The number of primary leadership positions ("Elected Officers", "Other Leadership Positions", and "Council Members") held by lawyers with disabilities was 10, which was the same number as last year. The number of Committee Chairs held by lawyers with disabilities totaled 2 this year, as

compared to 7 from last year. In addition, there were 1 Nominating Committee Chair, 2 Committee Vice Chairs, 0 Subcommittee Chairs, 0 CLE Program Chairs, 9 CLE faculty, 2 Meetings Chairs, and 12 Meetings faculty this year

Leadership Positions Held by Lawyers with Disabilities

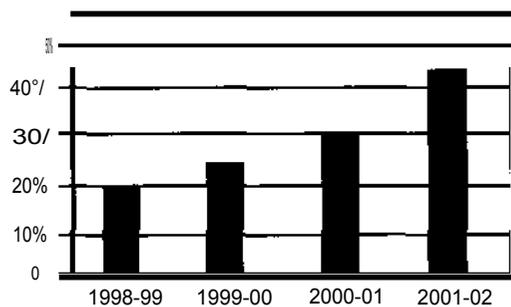


It is important to note that several entities indicated that, at the time of the *Survey*, their Subcommittee Chairs had not yet been made. Overall, the figures from the *Survey* indicate that there was little change in the degree of participation by lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles, with a few notable exceptions. First, the number of Committee Vice Chairs decreased from 6 last year to 2, the number of CLE faculty increased from 3 to 9, and most dramatically the number of Meetings faculty increased from 5 to 12. The increases in both the CLE faculty and Meetings faculty categories indicate a greater degree of participation by lawyers with disabilities in ABA outreach programs. However, despite the encouraging increases in these categories, the overall results are mixed, as there were apparent decreases in the Committee Vice Chair, Subcommittee Chair, and CLE Program Chair categories. As aforementioned, any comparisons to prior year's findings must be considered in light of the fact that this year's survey and report focused only on sections, divisions, and forums.

2. Total Number of ABA Entities with Lawyers with Disabilities in Leadership Roles

There were a total of 33 entities responding in year's *Survey*. Only sections, divisions, and forums were surveyed, and in addition data for all of the different conferences was supplied in one *Survey* response for the Judicial Division. Fourteen out of the 33 entities (43%) had at least one person with a disability represented in leadership positions. This figure represents an increase from the previous three years. The 1998-99 *Goal IX Report* revealed that 10 out of approximately 50 participating entities (20%) had at least one person with a disability in a leadership role, and in 1999-2000, 10 out of 39 participating entities (24%) had persons with disabilities in leadership roles. Last year, 13 out of 41 responding entities (30%) had persons with disabilities in leadership roles.

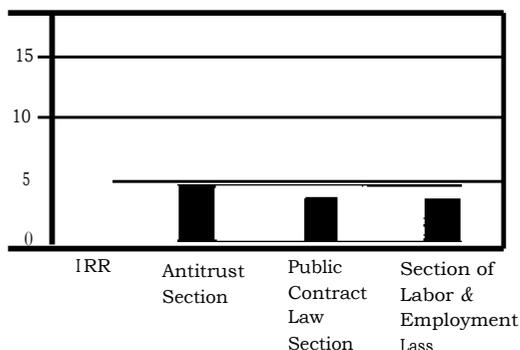
ABA Entities with Lawyers with Disabilities in Leadership Roles



The following sections included lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles this year: the Public Contract Law Section, the Section of Real Property, Probate and Trust Law, the Section on Antitrust Law, the Section of Environment, Energy & Resources, the Section of Labor & Employment Law, the Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities, the Health Law Section, the Business Law Section, the Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice Section, the Tort and Insurance Practice Section (TIPS), and the Section of State and Local Government Law. In addition, the following divisions included lawyers with disabilities in leadership positions: the Judicial Division, the Young Lawyers Division, and the Senior Lawyers Division. The entities with the highest number of leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities

were the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities (IR&R) (9), the Antitrust Section (5), the Public Contract Law Section (4), and Section of Labor and Employment Law (4).

Entities with Highest Number of Leadership Positions Held by Lawyers with Disabilities



3. Long-Range Goals and Initiatives

Three open-ended questions examined the degree to which ABA entities have goals, initiatives, and diversity plans aimed at increasing the participation of lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles. Of the 33 responding entities that participated in the *Survey*, 12 entities specifically included lawyers with disabilities, which represented an increase from the previous last two years when only 6 (2000-2001), and 3 (1999-2000) entities specifically mentioned lawyers with disabilities. Finally, several entities specifically mentioned diversity initiatives geared toward women and/or minorities, but did not include persons with disabilities. There were 8 responding entities that did not provide any information on long-range goals and initiatives.

The following entities specifically mentioned lawyers with disabilities in their long range diversity goals, objectives, and plans: the Section of Taxation, the Section of Dispute Resolution, the Government and Public Sector Lawyers Division, the Section of Family Law, the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities, the Communications Law Forum, the Young Lawyers Division, the Section of Administrative Law & Regulatory Practice, the Senior Lawyers Division, Public Utility Communications & Transportation Law, and the Sec-

tion of Intellectual Property Law. For example, the Section of Taxation "recognize[d] that diversity encompasses more than racial, ethnic and gender concerns," and acknowledged that much still needs to be done to fully address all of the concerns. For starters, the Taxation Section actively recruits lawyers of color, women lawyers, younger lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and lawyers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

The primary goal of the Section of Dispute Resolution's diversity committee is "No increase the participation of lawyers of color, women lawyers, GLBT lawyers and lawyers with impairments or disabilities in membership, on the committees task forces, working groups and in the leadership of the Section." Dispute Resolution also identified specific activities and actions necessary to achieve its goal such as identifying and encouraging women, persons of color, GLBT and persons with impairments or disabilities to join its section. Similarly, the **Government** and Public Sector Lawyers Division states "increased diversity" as one of its long-range goals. Pursuant to this goal, the division also states that it plans to specifically request that organizations that make nominations for Council positions strongly consider persons with disabilities among other under-represented persons. The Section of Family Law "enthusiastically embraces the concept of diversity as a strength for the Section," and actively recruits lawyers with disabilities. The section also adopted a Diversity Plan in order to help to "ensure the full and equal participation for ... lawyers with disabilities." The Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities has a substantive committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as a Task Force that focuses on "the legal and public policy issues that women, minorities and persons with disabilities have faced since law school."

The Communications Law Forum strives to "achieve diversity in Forum leadership and participation of ... lawyers with disabilities at its educational programs and conferences." The Young Lawyers Division's commitment to diversity is codified in its bylaws and is promoted throughout all of the division's activities. The division's commitment to lawyers with disabilities is evident in its diversity goals, internal efforts, and external efforts. One goal is to actively recruit lawyers with

disabilities. One example of an internal effort is to seek the active participation of lawyers with disabilities in diversity training programs. One example of the division's external efforts is its effort to reach out to law students with disabilities through turbo e-messaging. The Administrative Law & Regulatory Practice Section has "a strong interest on the part of Section Leadership to encourage more participation by women, minorities and persons with disabilities."

The Senior Lawyers Division has formally adopted a goal to "[i]ncrease the participation of lawyers with color, women lawyers and lawyers with impairments or disabilities in the membership, on the Committees and in the leadership of the Division." In its diversity plan, Senior Lawyers identified specific activities such as compiling a roster of women, minorities, and persons with impairments or disabilities who are willing to appear on division programs. The Business Law Section seeks the participation of lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, gay and lesbian lawyers, younger lawyers, and law students on panels, task forces, and working groups. Public Utility Communications and Transportation Law has a long-range goal to increase the participation of women, minorities and persons with disabilities. Finally, the Section of Intellectual Property Law strives "to develop recruitment/retention materials with a focus on lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and younger lawyers."

Despite the increase in the number of entities that specifically include lawyers with disabilities in their long-range diversity goals, there are other entities that have apparently not yet articulated the ABA's interest in promoting the full and equal participation in the legal profession by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. For example, one entity stated that it "supports the efforts to fulfill the ABA mandate to promote the full and equal participation by women and minorities in the profession and within the ABA," but did not mention lawyers with disabilities. Another entity has an objective by which it strives to reflect the gender and racial diversity of its entity in its leadership and activities, but makes no mention of lawyers with disabilities. Several other entities describe its diversity efforts in general terms, and some specifically mention women and minorities,

but neglect to mention persons with disabilities.

The number of entities that specifically mentioned lawyers with disabilities in their long-range diversity goals and plans doubled from last year. It is clear that more and more entities are becoming aware that the ABA's mandate under Goal IX to promote full and equal participation in the legal profession includes lawyers with disabilities. It is unclear why several entities have omitted lawyers with disabilities in their diversity plans. But perhaps one reason is that this is only the fourth year that the Commission has been included in the Goal IX diversity initiative. As the Commission continues its work in the area of disability law and raise awareness of issues concerning lawyers with disabilities, we are confident that more ABA entities will unambiguously manifest the ABA's interest in promoting the full and equal participation in the legal profession by women, minorities, and lawyers with disabilities, in their long-range diversity goals.

Honor Roll

This is the first year that the Commission has identified ABA entities for inclusion on an Honor Roll. The following entities are models for all ABA entities in terms of working to fulfill the ABA's goal of including lawyers with disabilities in its diversity efforts pursuant to Goal IX: the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities, the Young Lawyers Division, the Senior Lawyers Division, and the Business Law Section. The entities on this roll not only have at least 1 lawyer with a disability in a leadership role, but also specifically include lawyers with disabilities in their long-range goals, initiatives, and objectives. The entities have made a thorough effort based on their long-range goals and objectives to include lawyers with disabilities in their goals and plans.

Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities

The Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities has a substantive committee that focuses on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, the section's Task Force on Diversity focuses on the legal and public policy issues that women, minorities, and persons with disabilities have faced since law school. Moreover, the sec-

tion strives for diversity in its leadership positions and in other areas to help ensure that the inclusion of persons with disabilities is an integral part of its efforts. The Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities filled 9 leadership positions with lawyers with disabilities.

Young Lawyers Division

The Young Lawyers Division (YLD) strives to promote diversity in the profession and ensure equal opportunity and inclusion for lawyers regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity in the membership, leadership and activities of the division. The YLD thoroughly includes lawyers with disabilities throughout its diversity plan, and in its goals, and internal and external efforts. For example, YLD strives to provide lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBT lawyers with opportunities and training to take on leadership roles in the division. In addition, YLD is committed to developing a mentor program for lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBT lawyers. Finally, YLD has made efforts that allow lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and LGBT lawyers to cultivate their own business through community group involvement. Moreover, YLD filled two leadership positions with lawyers with disabilities.

Senior Lawyers Division

The Senior Lawyers Division (SLD) formally adopted a goal "No increase the participation of lawyers of color, women lawyers, and lawyers with impairments or disabilities in the membership, on the Committees and in the leadership of the Division." The SLD diversity plan specifically includes lawyers with disabilities throughout its plans in its objectives, long-range goals, and action plan. For example, the SLD strives to seek the participation of lawyers of color, women lawyers, and lawyers with impairments or disabilities on panels, task forces, and working groups. In addition, the SLD works to identify women, persons of color, and persons with impairments or disabilities within the division so that they can be advanced promptly to leadership positions. Finally, the division resolves to sponsor networking and social events at Annual Meeting for women, minorities, and per-

sons with impairments. The SLD had 1 leadership position filled with a lawyer with a disability.

Business Law Section

The Business Law Section (BLS) actively recruits lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, gay and lesbian lawyers, younger lawyers, and law students. It strives to foster an atmosphere of inclusion for these lawyers, and provides them with opportunities and training to take on leadership roles at both the committee and section levels. The BLS plans to develop a mentoring program whereby attorneys with disabilities can specifically request that they be paired with other attorneys with disabilities. Finally, the BLS solicits information regarding special needs and accommodations from lawyers with disabilities. The BLS had 1 leadership position occupied by a lawyer with a disability.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The Commission's findings with regard to the degree of participation by lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles appears to be mixed. On one hand, the total number of leadership positions filled by lawyers with disabilities appears to have dropped from 42 last year to only 38 this year. On the other hand, the total number of ABA entities with lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles appears to have increased. However, as noted, these figures must be considered in the light of the fact that this year the *Survey and Report* only focus on sections, divisions, and forums. For example, if we had included the number of our Commission members with disabilities, then the total would be 46, which would indicate a slight increase from the prior year. Finally, with respect to long-range goal and initiatives, we are encouraged by the fact that 12 entities now specifically include lawyers with disabilities in their long-range goals, up from only 6 last year. Generally, the Commission is encouraged by the results of this year's *Survey*, particularly in terms of the long-range goals, but also believes that much work remains to be done in order to increase the participation by lawyers with disabilities in the

legal profession. Therefore, we provide the following recommendations:

1. ABA entities that do not have any lawyers with disabilities in leadership positions are encouraged to actively recruit such lawyers for leadership positions in sections, divisions, and forums.

2. ABA entities that currently have lawyers with disabilities in leadership positions are encouraged to continue to do so in future years.

3. ABA entities are encouraged to specifically include lawyers with disabilities in their long-range diversity goals and initiatives.

4. ABA entities that did not provide any long-range diversity information are encouraged to do so in the future.

5. ABA entities are encouraged to coordinate with the Commission for diversity programs and projects.

6. ABA entities that include lawyers with disabilities in a substantive manner in its diversity plan, and have at least 1 lawyer with a disability in a leadership position should be included in our Commission's Honor Roll.

The Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law

Publications & Services

Since 1976, the Commission has published the *Mental & Physical Disability Law Reporter*, books, and articles. A complete list of the Commission's publications is available on-line at www.abanet.org/disability.

Mental & Physical Disability Law Reporter

For more than 20 years, the *Reporter* has provided analyses of key disability law developments, and coverage of leading state and federal court decisions, legislation, and regulations. The *Reporter* is an invaluable resource for advocates, lawyers, judges, disability professionals, universities, and libraries. Topics included in each bi-monthly issue include access, Americans with Disabilities Act, advocacy issues, community services, confidentiality, education, employment, insurance/private disability coverage, mental health rights and services, Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare.

On-Line Resources

Web Boards

The Commission has two essential disability web boards available on-line which allow subscribers to exchange and disseminate information with other subscribers and expert staff. One is the Law Reporter Web Board, which allows subscribers to access current issues of the *Reporter* about a month before it is published. The other is the Special Alerts Web Board, which allows subscribers to track the latest and most important disability law developments (i.e. case law, legislation, and regulations) as they occur.

Web Site

The Commission's web site includes excerpts from the Web Boards, and the current issue of the *Reporter*. In addition, the Commission's state-by-state directory of lawyers practicing disability law is available on-line, which provides referrals to disability lawyers, law firms, federal agencies,

and organizations. The web site also highlights Commission news and activities, and the recent activities of the Subcommittee on Lawyers with Disabilities. There are also links to other useful disability sites.

Directory of **Lawyers Practicing Disability Law**

This first-of-its kind on-line directory is a must-have resource for referrals and networking. It provides more than 5,000 listings of lawyers, law firms, and organizations for individuals seeking representation on disability law-related claims. It is organized by state and covers all 50 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Disability Law and Policy: A Collective Vision (1999)

This publication presents recommendations to guide policy-makers in formulating a disability rights agenda for the new millennium. Part I reviews the disability rights movement from the 1960s to the present day. Part II presents recommendations and commentary on issues related to employment, health, housing and community support, treatment/habilitation, education, criminal justice, and court access.

Mental Disabilities and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Second Edition (1997)

Written for lawyers, advocates, teachers, consumers, employers and employees, this handbook examines the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) from the legal and nonlegal practitioner's points of view. The handbook covers Titles I-III and provides summaries of leading court decisions affecting individuals with mental disabilities. A general overview of the ADA and its key concepts is followed by sections addressing employment and related insurance issues, access to state and local government programs and services, public accommodations and housing, and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

Handbook on Mental Disability Law 2002

Intended for attorneys and judges new to mental disability law practice, mental health professionals, advocates, and law students. This primer covers 1) mental disability terms and definitions; 2) ADA-related mental health issues involving employment, housing, education, health, and insurance; 3) institutional rights and de-institutionalization; 4) professional liability concerns; 5) sexually violent predators; 6) civil and criminal commitment; 7) diminished culpability; and 8) rights in jails and prisons. *Available Aug. 2002.*

Handbooks on Psychiatric and Psychological Evidence and Testimony

Provides lawyers, judges, and forensic experts with comprehensive, in-depth treatment of psychiatric and psychological evidence and testimony keyed to specific mental health law standards. Both handbooks contain information on mental health law concepts and principles; and clinical dimensions. The *Civil Law Handbook (2001)* addresses incompetency and informed consent, dangerousness to self and others, care and treatment standards, and mental impairment and mental harm. *The Criminal Handbook (2000)* addresses incompetency to stand trial; diminished culpability including the insanity defense; dangerousness in sentencing; and criminal commitment proceedings.

Technical Assistance and Referrals

For technical assistance and referrals, or if you are a lawyer who wants to register for the databases and lawyers with disabilities and lawyers who practice disability law, email cmodl@abanet.org or call (202) 662-1571

Special Projects

Mentor Program for Law Students with Disabilities

The Commission is developing a mentor program pairing law students with disabilities with

practicing attorneys who serve as mentors. The mentors may or may not have disabilities, depending on the preferences of the mentees. The mentors can provide a source of guidance concerning law school, careers, and issues such as reasonable accommodations. The Commission works directly with individual law schools, and also welcomes students from around the country to contact the Commission directly if they are interested in being paired with mentors.

The Paul G. Hearne Award for Disability Rights

Each year, the Paul G. Hearne Award for Disability Rights is awarded to an individual who or organization that has performed exemplary service in furthering the rights, dignity, and access to justice for people with disabilities. Paul G. Hearne was an activist, a philanthropist, and a leader for all people with disabilities, and the Commission awards the honor to one that carries on Hearne's vision and life work. The 2002 award recipient is Robert Perske, an advocate, scholar and leader for disability rights.

The Awards Ceremony and Reception

Each year, the Commission sponsors an award ceremony to honor the recipient of the Paul G. Hearne Award, and a reception for lawyers with disabilities. The reception is held during the ABA Annual Meeting, and is attended by ABA leaders, lawyers with disabilities, and other disability rights lawyers and advocates. The 2002 reception will be held in during the Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

The Diversity Programs

Each year, the Commission co-sponsors diversity programs with the Commissions on Racial & Ethnic Diversity, and Women during the ABA Annual Meeting. In 2001, the Commission co-sponsored a panel program called "Full and Equal Participation in the ABA: Opportunities for Lawyers Who are Minorities, Women or Disabled." At the 2002 Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., the Commission will co-sponsor diversity activities including a minority and non-minority forum, a program called "Building a Legal Career through Bar

Association Activities", and "Full and Equal Participation in the ABA: Opportunities for Minorities, Women and Lawyers with Disabilities." Lawyers with disabilities participate in the programs, and address the audience from their unique perspectives.

Bar Association Committees and Lawyer Groups

The Commission strives to establish relationships with state and local bar associations that have disability law committees, and lawyer groups that focus on disability law. The Commission actively encourages state and local bar associations to establish disability law committees. We currently maintain a list of state and local bar association disability law committees, and national and state lawyer groups that focus on disability law. The list serves as a valuable resource to anyone who is interested in learning about what bar associations and lawyer groups are doing in the area of disability law.

Database of Lawyers with Disabilities

The Commission is updating its Database of Lawyers with Disabilities, not to be confused with

our Database of Lawyers Practicing Disability Law. The Commission maintains the confidentiality of the members in the database, and informs members of Commission activities such as the award ceremony and reception, and its publications.

Scholarship for Law Students with Disabilities

The Commission maintains a list of scholarship opportunities for law students with disabilities that are provided from sources outside of the ABA. This is a valuable resource for law students with disabilities who are in need of financial assistance to attend law school. In addition, the Commission is actively involved in creating a scholarship for students with disabilities to encourage them to attend law school, and to provide some financial assistance in order for them to pursue their goals of attending law school and eventually making meaning contributions to the legal profession.

Acknowledgments

The Commission thanks the Commissions on Racial & Ethnic Diversity, and Women, for their collaborative effort with the ABA's Goal IX initiative. Thank you to all of the sections, divisions, and forums that contributed data for this report.

Chair

The Honorable Richard Teitelman

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