



A report on the status of the participation of persons with disabilities in
ABA Section, Division and Forum Leadership positions.



The Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law

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- The American Bar Association
- The Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law
- 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 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. In 1999, the ABA House of Delegates voted to expand its Goal IX to include persons with disabilities along with women and minorities.

introduction

The *Goal IX Survey* gathers information about the participation of persons with disabilities, as well as women and minorities, in ABA Section, Division and Forum leadership positions. In addition, this year the Commission on Mental & Physical Disability Law recommended that the ABA President's Office begin to include a question regarding disability status on applications for presidential appointment positions, and to begin maintaining statistics on the number of presidential appointees who are lawyers with

disabilities. The application form already includes questions regarding gender and race/ethnicity status. There are approximately 975 presidential appointments. The Commission also contacted the Board of Governors and learned that in 2002-2003 there were no Board of Governors members who were identified as having disabilities. The 2002-2003 *Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law Goal IX Report* presents the findings of the *Survey*, and also provides recommendations. In addition, the Commission's efforts with respect to Goal IX, and other ABA entities' disability diversity efforts are highlighted.

According to current census data, there are approximately 49.7 million persons with disabilities over the age of five in the United States, which is nearly one in five Americans, or 19% of all Americans. ABA Membership statistics for this year indicate that approximately 4,979 lawyers have identified themselves as having disabilities, out of 351,375 lawyers who are ABA members (approximately 1.4%). The ABA lawyers with disabilities identified as having the following types of disabilities: mental (30), speech impairment (42), learning (62), visual impairment (167), neurological (200), hearing impairment (381), orthopedic/mobility (481), and other (3,616). The *Goal IX Survey* data reveal that lawyers with disabilities hold only 30 ABA leadership positions, while there are approximately 15,000 leadership positions within the ABA. 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. Journal*, Feb. 2002.) 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 2002 enrollment survey of all ABA accredited law schools revealed that law schools provided accommodations for 2,655 law students with disabilities out of a total of 132,885 law students (1.9%). 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 or in the ABA.

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 2002-2003 *Goal IX Report* presents findings and recommendations 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. It also highlights the Commissions efforts with respect to Goal IX, and other ABA entities disability diversity efforts as well.

methodology

This was the inaugural year of the Goal IX on-line *Survey*. The effort to put the *Survey* on-line was spearheaded by the Commission on Racial & Ethnic Diversity. The online *Survey* duplicated the substance of the paper *Survey* used in past years, with the exception of the exclusion of a question regarding the number of meetings program chairs and faculty who were women, minorities and lawyers with disabilities. This year, the question focused solely on the CLE programs faculty. The on-line survey instrument consisted of 52

quantitative questions including sub-parts. In addition, entities were invited to submit narratives and plans addressing their 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 on Racial & Ethnic Diversity was responsible for coordinating the survey data collection process. This responsibility is rotated each year among the Commission on Racial & Ethnic Diversity, the Commission on Women, and the Commission on Mental & Physical Law. Each Commission analyzed the data that pertained to it separately, and prepared separate reports of its findings.

findings

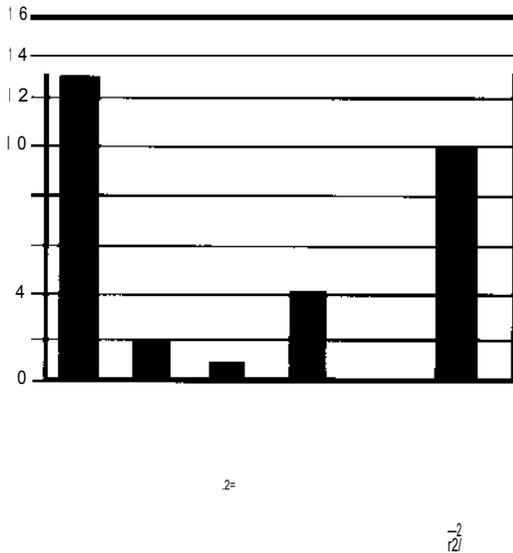
This report analyzes the Commission's findings with respect to the number of ABA Section, Division and Forum Leadership positions that are held by lawyers with disabilities, and the number of such entities that have at least one lawyer with a disability in a leadership role. ABA Sections range in size from about 3,600 members to more than 60,000. Section memberships are comprised of lawyers and judges with common professional interests, and address professional development, improvement of laws, and continuing education through its committees and publications. ABA Divisions differ from sections in their internal structure. Examples of ABA Divisions include the Law Student Division, the Senior Lawyers Division, and the Young Lawyers Division. ABA Forums explore and monitor new areas of the law as they develop. 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.

The Number of ABA Section, Division and Forum Leadership Positions Held by Lawyers with Disabilities

This year, the *Survey* responses identified a total of 30 ABA leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities, representing an increase from 24 from

last year.' Nevertheless, the percentage based on the 15,000 leadership positions at the ABA (.2%) remains quite low, even acknowledging that only 1.4% of lawyers in the ABA identifies themselves as having a disability.

Leadership Positions Held by Lawyers with Disabilities



The number of primary leadership positions ("Elected Officers", "Chairs", "Chairs-Elect", "Appointed Leaders", and "Council Members") held by lawyers with disabilities was 13, up from 10 last year.' These positions are considered the most influential within the Sections, Divisions, and Forums. The degree of involvement by lawyers with disabilities in these positions helps demonstrate the commitment of ABA entities to the full and equal participation by lawyers with disabilities in the legal profession.

Turning to Committees and Subcommittees, we find that there were 2 Committee Chair positions held by lawyers with disabilities. In addition, there were 1 Committee Member, 4 Vice Chairs', and 0 Subcommittee Chairs. We find that the number of Committee Chair positions held by lawyers with disabilities remained the same as last year, and that the number of Committee Vice Chairs increased by one from last year. The IR&R Section, the Public Contract Law Section, the Law Practice Management Section, the Business Law Section, and Public Contract Law Section were

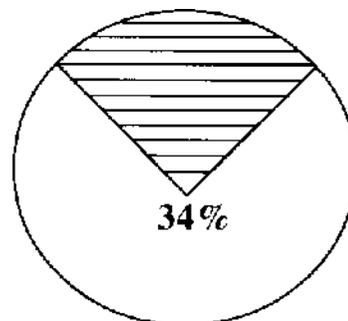
the ABA entities that had Committee and Subcommittee positions held by lawyers with disabilities.

Finally, turning our attention to ABA CLE programming, we find a slight increase in the number of CLE faculty positions held by lawyers with disabilities, from 9 last year to 10 this year. It is encouraging to find lawyers with disabilities in such highly visible positions in the legal profession. The entities that included lawyers with disabilities in these positions were: the Environment, Energy and Resources Section, the Labor and Employment Section, and the Dispute Resolution Section.

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

There were a total of 32 ABA Sections, Divisions, and Forums responding in this year's Survey. Eleven out of the 32 entities (34%) had at least one leadership position held by a lawyer with a disability. For comparison purposes, it is important to note that this year's Survey data did not include the number of Annual and Mid-Year Meeting Chairs and Faculty positions, which were held by lawyers with disabilities. Since 1998, we have seen a steady increase in the number of ABA entities that included at least one lawyer with a disability in leadership positions, from a low of 20% in 1998-1999, to a high last year of 43% for 2001-2002. Thus, although there was an apparent decrease in 2001-2002 to 2002-2003 from 43% to 30%, this can likely be explained in part by the fact that chairs and faculty for ABA meetings (other than CLEs) were not included in this year's survey.

ABA Entities with Lawyers with Disabilities in Leadership Roles



11/32 responding entities included lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles

The following ABA entities included lawyers with disabilities in leadership positions this year: the Law Practice Management Section, the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities, the Public Contract Law Section, the Senior Lawyers Division,

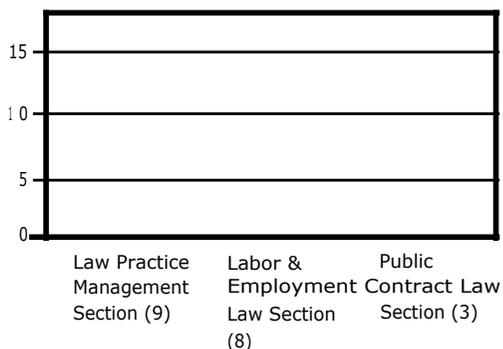
the Business Law Section, the Health Law Section, the Tort and Insurance Law Section, the Labor and Employment Law Section, the Young Lawyers Division, the Environment, Energy and Resources Section, and the Section on Dispute Resolution.

Entities with Leadership Positions Held by Lawyers with Disabilities

	W	A	W	Q	U	U	U	A	U	U
Tort & Insurance Practice	0	0	0	1	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Antitrust Law	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Taxation	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Real Property	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Environment Energy & Resources	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	2
Family Law	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Judicial Division	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
International Law	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Law Practice Management	2	4	0	0	N/A	0	1	2	0	0
Senior Lawyers Division	0	0	0	1	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Public Utility	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Law Student Division	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Government & Public Sector	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Science & Technology	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Forum on Franchising	0	11	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Forum on Air & Space	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Health Law	0	0	0	1	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Forum on Affordable Housing	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
General Practice	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Individual Rights & Responsibilities	1	0	0	0	N/A	1	0	0	0	0
Labor & Employment Law	0	0	0	1	N/A	0	0	0	0	7
State & Local Government	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Intellectual Property	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Business Law	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	1	0	0
Litigation	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Legal Education	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Dispute Resolution	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	1
Young Lawyers Division	0	0	0	1	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Forum on Construction Industry	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Public Contract Law	1	0	0	0	N/A	1	0	1	0	0
Administrative Law	0	0	11	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Justice	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	0

The top three entities with the highest number of leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities were: the Law Practice Management Section (9), the Labor and Employment Law Section (8), and the Public Contract Law Section (3). Of these sections, Labor and Employment Law have the largest number of members (22,000), followed by the Law Practice Management Section (15,281), and the Public Contract Law Section (2,817).

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



○ Showcasing ABA Entities that Embrace Disability Diversity Through Their Long-Range Goals, Plans, and Initiatives

In addition to the quantitative data analyzed above, survey respondents also are invited to submit narratives and diversity plans, which describe their entities' goals, initiatives and programs with regard to diversity. Last year, in direct response to the survey data which indicated that some entities were not including lawyers with disabilities in their diversity plans—despite the fact that Goal IX was amended in 1999 to include lawyers with disabilities—the Commission's Chair disseminated letters suggesting ways in which entities could amend their plans to include lawyers with disabilities. This year, of the 32 Survey respondents, only 20 submitted information on long-range diversity goals, as compared to last year when 25 out of 33 responding entities provided such information. This year, of those that submitted long-range data, 13 entities (65%) specifically mentioned lawyers with disabilities in their diversity goals, initiatives and programs, representing an increase from last year where 48% of the entities that provided long-range data specifically mentioned lawyers with disabilities. Seven of the 13 entities also made the Commission's Honor Roll—the Section of

Labor and Employment Law, the Health Law Section, the Section of Dispute Resolution, the Senior Lawyers Division, the Young Lawyers Division, the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities, and the Business Law Section. In addition, six other ABA entities deserve recognition for their disability diversity efforts.

The General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Section (GPSSFS) recognized that "diversity encompasses more than racial, ethnic and gender concerns." GPSSFS seeks to actively recruit lawyers with disabilities to foster an atmosphere of inclusion to assist in retaining lawyers with disabilities once they become Section members, to encourage the participation of lawyers with disabilities on all educational program panels and on any task forces that are created, and to provide lawyers with disabilities with the opportunity and training to take on leadership roles at both the committee and council levels. GPSSFS encourages joint programming with the Commission on Mental & Physical Disability Law, and the coordination of efforts and resources with the Commission to assist in the Section's recruitment efforts.

Promoting diversity in the profession and ensuring equal opportunity and inclusion for law students regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity in membership, leadership and activities, is the diversity mission of the Law Student Division (LSD). LSD was instrumental in assisting the Commission with its publicity efforts for a Roundtable Discussion for law students with disabilities in the Washington, D.C. area earlier this year. In its diversity plan, LSD seeks to actively recruit law students with disabilities, to foster an atmosphere of inclusion, to identify and remove all barriers to the full and meaningful participation of law students with disabilities, to actively seek participation of law students with disabilities in division programs, task forces, and working groups, and to provide law students with disabilities the opportunity and training for leadership roles.

For many years, the Section of Real Property, Probate and Trust Law "has attempted to increase the diversity of its membership and leadership, and to increase the participation of women, lawyers of color and other minorities in the activities of its Section and committees." The Section continues to work toward its diversity goals, seeking to actively recruit lawyers with disabilities, to foster an atmosphere of inclusion, to seek the participation of lawyers with disabilities on panels and task forces, and to

provide lawyers with disabilities the opportunity for leadership roles.

In adopting its Diversity Policy on April 8, 2000, **the Family Law Section resolved to "enthusiastically embrace the concept of diversity as a strength for the Section."** But it was back in 1991 when the Family Law Section first adopted **its goal of increasing the diversity and participation of its membership.** To this end, the Section works to actively recruit lawyers with disabilities, and seeks the participation of lawyers with disabilities in its panels, working groups, and opportunities for leadership roles.

Consistent with the goals set forth in its Equal Opportunity Policy, the Antitrust Section is "committed to encouraging diversity in its membership and leadership." Indeed, the Section "recognizes the value of having its membership, leadership, publications and programs reflect a number of different perspectives, including but not limited to those of minority lawyers, women lawyers, young lawyers, (and) lawyers with disabilities...."

Simply put, "increased diversity" is one of the long-range goals of the Government and Public Sector Lawyers Division. Pursuant to this goal, the Division plans to request that organizations making nominations for Council positions strongly consider lawyers with disabilities among other under-represented groups.

honor

The Commission believes an increase in the number of ABA entities that include lawyers with disabilities in their leadership and diversity helps to fulfill the ABA's commitment under Goal IX of ensuring the full and equal participation by lawyers with disabilities. The Commission is pleased to recognize seven ABA entities for their outstanding contributions in including lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles, and in diversity plans, goals and initiatives. The following entities have demonstrated the ABA's commitment to lawyers with disabilities in the legal profession, and serve as models for other entities to emulate.

Section of Labor and Employment Law. The Section of Labor and Employment Law is a new addition to the Commission's Honor Roll this year, having expanded its Diversity Plan last year in order to include lawyers with disabilities among

its targets for recruitment and leadership. The Section recognizes that diversity goals are vital to the future of the Section, and therefore strives to actively recruit lawyers with disabilities, foster an atmosphere of inclusion, seek the participation of lawyers with disabilities, and provide lawyers with disabilities with opportunities and training to take on leadership roles. The Section plans to solicit lawyers with disabilities for CLE programs and meetings, and to coordinate resources with the Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law with regard to recruitment efforts, joint promotions, and membership drives. The Section of Labor and Employment Law had 7 leadership positions occupied by lawyers with disabilities.

Health Law Section. The Health Law Section is another new addition to the Commission's Honor Roll. The Section supports Goal IX by working to ensure that its programs and activities are proactively inclusive of lawyers with disabilities at every level. In addition to working to actively recruit lawyers with disabilities, and, working to ensure and design products, services and activities are specifically developed for diverse audiences, the Health Law Section's strategic plan, bylaws and policies will support diversity. The Section will also work to provide diversity training and resources. In 2002-2003, the Section had one leadership position occupied by a lawyer with a disability.

Section of Dispute Resolution. The Section of Dispute Resolution is also a new entity on the Honor Roll. The Section's diversity goal is to increase the participation of lawyers with disabilities and others in the Section's membership, committees, task forces, working groups and leadership. Activities proposed to achieve the Section's diversity goals included: identifying persons with disabilities and encouraging them to participate in the Section's programs so that they can have the opportunity to advance to leadership positions; providing mentoring to take on leadership roles; having diverse panels in Section programming; including diversity reports in the Section's publications; and sponsoring Section and Annual Meeting programs with persons with disabilities. This year, the Section had one leadership position occupied by a lawyer with a disability.

Senior Lawyers Division. The Senior Lawyers Division made the Commission's Honor Roll again this year. The Division's Goal 12 provides for the increased participation by lawyers with disabilities on committees and in leadership of the Division.

The Division's objectives include: identifying lawyers with disabilities within the Division and encouraging them to be active in the Division, so that they can be advanced promptly to leadership positions; initiating appropriate ABA policy involving diversity and full implementation of Goal IX; involving the Division with other ABA entities in order to welcome lawyers with disabilities into the Senior Lawyers Division, and coordinating diversity efforts with the Commission on Mental & Physical Disability Law. This year, the Division had one leadership position occupied by a lawyer with a disability.

Young Lawyers Division. The Young Lawyers Division also made the Commission's Honor Roll for the second year in a row. The Division's diversity goals include: actively recruiting lawyers with disabilities; fostering an environment of inclusion for lawyers with disabilities; identifying and removing barriers to the full and meaningful participation of lawyers with disabilities; actively seeking the participation of lawyers with disabilities; and providing lawyers with disabilities opportunities for training to take on Division leadership roles. The YLD had one position occupied by a lawyer with a disability this year.

Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities. The Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities made the Honor Roll for the second time by continuing to strive for diversity in its leadership positions and ensuring that the inclusion of persons with disabilities is an integral part of its efforts. IR&R has a substantive committee that focuses on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, much of the Section's work focuses on the legal and public policy issues that women, minorities and persons with disabilities face. IR&R had 2 positions held by lawyers with disabilities.

Business Law Section. The Business Law Section adopted its first diversity plan in 1999, which was updated in 2002. The plan serves as a road map to assist and encourage members and leaders of the Section to ensure the full and equal participation of lawyers of color, women lawyers, lawyers with disabilities and others. The plan specifically provides for the development of recruitment/retention materials with a focus on lawyer with disabilities, among other groups. In addition, Section members with disabilities may request a mentor from the Section membership. The section had one leadership position held by a lawyer with a disability.

conclusions & recommendations

The Commission was encouraged to find that the number of ABA leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities (30) increased this year, but remains concerned that the percentage based on the 15,000 leadership positions at the ABA (.2%) is so low. In addition, the survey data revealed that the leadership positions held by lawyers with disabilities were concentrated in a smaller number of responding ABA entities. As stated, however, in this year inaugural year of the on-line survey, a question regarding Meetings Chair and Faculty was not included on the survey. In past years, several Meetings Chair and Faculty positions from various ABA entities were held by lawyers with disabilities, and thus, this could be a factor in why the data this year revealed an apparent decrease in the number of ABA entities with lawyers with disabilities in leadership roles. Finally, the Commission noted a slight increase in the actual number of ABA entities that included lawyers with disabilities in their long-range diversity plans, goals and initiatives (13), The Honor Roll members are especially noteworthy for their demonstrated commitment to disability diversity by

c o n t'd

the Commission co-sponsored diversity activities including a minority and non-minority forum, and programs 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 participated in the programs, and addressed 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 establishing 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 meaningful contributions to the legal profession.



commission members

Honorable Richard B. Teitelman, Chair. Judge Teitelman, of the Missouri Supreme Court, was appointed to the American Bar Association's Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law in 2001 by President Paul and reappointed by President A. P. Carlton. He is also the Chair of the Supreme Court of Missouri's Task Force on Disabilities. Judge Teitelman is legally blind, He received his law degree from the Washington University School of Law.

Robert Burgdorf, Member. Professor Burgdorf is a professor of law at the University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law. He directs the School of Law's legislation clinic and teaches disability rights law and constitutional law. Professor Burgdorf is a long-time activist in disability policy, and was an author of the original draft of the Americans with Disabilities Act, He is the author of the first law school casebook on disability rights issues, and of the treatise, Disability Discrimination in Employment Law. Professor Burgdorf received his law degree from the University of Notre Dame School of Law in 1973.

Harold J. Bursztajn, M.D., Member. Harold J. Bursztajn, M.D., maintains an active patient practice, consults nationally, and is currently a senior clinical faculty member at Harvard Medical School and co-Directs the Program in Psychiatry and the Law at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center. Dr. Bursztajn is a Harvard Medical School (1977) honors graduate.

Madeline Cohen, Member. Madeline Cohen is an Assistant Federal Public Defender in Denver, Colorado. Previously, she was a litigation associate with several large, international law firms, where her work included disability-related employment litigation. Ms. Cohen has Usher Syndrome, a congenital condition that causes both severe hearing loss and retinitis pigmentosa, a degenerative retinal condition involving progressive vision loss. Ms. Cohen is a graduate of Stanford Law School.

Joan Durocher, Member. Joan Durocher is a staff attorney at the National Council on Disability, an independent federal agency that makes recommendations to the President and Congress regarding ways to promote equal opportunity for

all people with disabilities. She is also Vice-chair of the Committee on Diversity for the ABA Section of Business Law. Ms. Durocher received her J.D. from the University of Maryland School of Law.

William J. Edwards, Member. Mr. Edwards is a deputy public defender with the Los Angeles County Public Defender. Mr. Edwards currently serves on the faculty of the National Academy for Equal Justice for People with Developmental Disabilities at Temple University in Philadelphia. In 1997, Mr. Edwards was the recipient of the Rosemary F. Dybwad International Fellowship sponsored by the National Association of Retarded Citizens.

James Ellis, Member. James W. Ellis is Regents Professor of Law at the University of New Mexico, where he has taught since 1976. Professor Ellis worked at the Yale Psychiatric Institute and at the Mental Health Law Project (now the Bazelon Center) before entering teaching. He has served as President of the American Association on Mental Retardation, He is the principal author of briefs in thirteen cases in the Supreme Court of the United States (including *City of Cleburne v. Cleburne Living Center, Penn/ v. Lvnaugh*, and *Universit^y of Alabama v. Garrett*), and argued in *Atkins v. Virginia*. In addition, Professor Ellis was the inaugural recipient of the ABA's Paul G. Hearne Award for disability rights advocacy, In 2002, The *National Law Journal* named Professor Ellis the "Lawyer of the Year." Professor Ellis is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley (Boalt Hall).

Eric W. Iskra, Member. Eric W. Iskra is an employment attorney in the Charleston, West Virginia law firm of Spilman Thomas & Battle, PLLC, located in Charleston, West Virginia. Mr. Iskra is the Vice Chair of the ABA's Young Lawyers' Division's Labor and Employment Law Committee, and the ABA's Fellow to the Section on Labor and Employment Law. Mr. Iskra graduated from Wake Forest University School of Law (J.D.).

Scott LaBarre, Member. Scott LaBarre owns and operates LaBarre Law Offices P.C. (LLO). LLO specializes in employment law, disability rights, Social Security appeals, personal injury claims, estate planning, and some business law. Mr. LaBarre was general counsel for the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado. From 1996 until June 2002, he served as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Denver. He currently serves as the President of the National

Association of Blind Lawyers. Mr. LaBarre has served as the Committee/Liaison Director to the ABA's Young Lawyers Division, and as Vice Chairman and Member of the ABA-YLD Bar Leadership Team. Mr. LaBarre received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Minnesota in 1993.

Charles Lamb, Member. Charles W. Lamb serves as a member of the Indigent Defense Committee for Terrell County, Georgia. For the past four years, Mr. Lamb has worked as a judicial law assistant, and in June 2003, will be joining the law firm of Beauchamp & Associates in Albany, Georgia. Mr. Lamb is a member of the ABA's Young Lawyers Division, the ABA Litigation Section, the Law Practice Management Section and the General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Section. Mr. Lamb sustained a C6-7 incomplete spinal cord injury (quadriplegia) as a result of a 1989 diving accident. Mr. Lamb is a 1998 graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law.

Susan M. Mussman, Member. Mrs. Mussman is a partner with the Pittsburgh office of Kirkpatrick & Lockhart, LLP. She practices in the nonprofit organizations, tax exempt organizations and health care areas. She is the adoptive mother of three grown children with mental retardation and other disabilities. Mrs. Mussman is a 1984 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law (*cum laude; Order of the Coif*).

Linda Parks, Member. Linda Parks is a managing partner with the law firm of Hite, Fanning and Honeyman L.L.P. She is chair of the Commission's Paul G. Hearne Award for Disability Rights Selection Committee and is also an appointed member to the Select Committee of the ABA House of Delegates. She received the 2000 Jennie Mitchell Kellogg Circle Attorney of Achievement Award, and the 1997 Louise Mattox Attorney of Achievement Award. Ms. Parks received her Juris Doctor from Washburn University School of Law (Cum Laude) in 1983.

Laura Rovner, Member. Laura L. Rovner is an Associate Professor of Law and Director of Clinical Programs at the University of North Dakota College of Law. In the Fall 2002 semester, she founded The Civil Rights Project where she supervises students who are representing clients in federal and state courts and before administrative agencies. Previously, Professor Rovner was awarded an Equal Justice Fellowship the National Association for Public Interest Law to work with a national organization representing the interests of deaf and hard of hearing people.

She serves as the Vice-Chair of the ABA Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Professor Rovner received her J.D. from Cornell Law School, and an LL.M. from the Georgetown University Law Center.

Stephen J. Schanz, **Member**. Stephen J. Schanz has engaged predominantly in a healthcare related practice since the early 1980s. Mr. Schanz has lectured and written extensively on domestic and international medical-legal topics. In 2002, Mr. Schanz founded Legalook Corp., which markets a patented legal information search service known as "Comparalaw." Mr. Schanz has a J.D. from Pepperdine University School of Law, and a LL.M. in Health Law from Loyola University Chicago.

Deirdre M. Smith, **Member**. Deirdre Smith is a member of the Trial Services Group at the law firm of Drummond Woodsum and MacMahon in Portland, Maine. Her varied practice includes representing Deaf Mainers in several litigation matters. In addition, Deirdre regularly counsels schools and businesses on complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Deirdre served two terms on the Board of Directors of the Maine Center on Deafness. She is the 1998 recipient of the Clifton Rodgers Award for her advocacy on behalf of the Deaf community. Deirdre is a graduate of the University of Maine School of Law (J.D. 1994, summa cum laude).

Commission Liaisons. Sharon Gerstman and Michelle Carpenter

acknowledgements

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notes

¹ Figures do not include the number of Meetings Chairs and Meetings Faculty occupied by lawyers with disabilities.

Note that with respect to Council Members, the survey data only indicated that there were no accommodations provided for council members. The data did not indicate the precise number of lawyers with disabilities who held council member positions. However, last year, there were 0 Council Member positions occupied by lawyers with disabilities.

= Includes 1 Vice Chair appointed by the current Chair.