



Diversity & Inclusion Committee: 2020–2021 Update

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The American Bar Association has a long-standing and unwavering commitment to eliminating bias and enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization and throughout the legal profession and the justice system. The Forum on Air & Space Law shares that commitment. As law-

yers, we must transform this commitment into action to advance equality, fairness, and the rule of law and to ensure that our profession reflects and benefits from the rich diversity of the society we serve. In the Forum, we recognize the value and benefit of diversity in our specialized bar and have aligned our efforts with ABA's Goal III—to eliminate bias and enhance diversity,”—which is an ABA foundational pillar.

Historically, our practice area has not been particularly diverse. Forum Chair Jennifer Trock, however, is focused on walking the walk and promoting Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) initiatives across the Forum's activities. This year we created a D&I Committee to lead actions set forth in the reinvigorated D&I Plan. We also are active members of ABA's Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Council to directly promote and provide additional D&I resources from ABA's vast work in this area.

As members of the ABA's Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Council, we are working with other ABA sections to share best practices, expand resources, and drive more involvement in D&I efforts. ABA has an extensive library of resources you can utilize for your own development and/or for that of your organization. For example, you can take an implicit bias test developed by psychologists at Harvard, the University of Virginia, and the University of Washington to help educate the public about implicit biases and help measure them. The tests are anonymous, complimentary tools that can be used to examine your own potential biases in many areas, such as race, gender, ethnicity, body weight, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. You can also access videos on topics such as “How to be an Ally” and tool kits such as a “Model Entity Evaluation Self-Assessment Tool.”

The ABA also offers CLE programs on a host of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics, most of which are free as a benefit of ABA membership and qualify for state bar D&I requirements. In addition, the ABA

will also continue to update the ABA Racial Equity in the Justice System webpage, which offers a significant collection of complimentary non-CLE webinars, articles, training, and other tools focused on improving equity in our workplaces, legal profession, justice system, and society. I encourage you to visit the ABA Diversity Resources webpage to learn about these efforts and for access to various projects and toolkits.

The Forum D&I Committee is building upon last year's accomplishments by, for example, establishing the first D&I Committee and creating specific content for our programs. The latter included a panel on Diversity, Inclusion & Elimination of Bias in the Air & Space Industry. Through this panel, for the first time in our annual program, we focused on D&I specifically and spoke on building inclusive workplaces that empower employees to bring their diverse experiences to bear and on how organizations need to focus on inclusive practices that will attract, retain, and promote talented, diverse employees. Our expert panelists provided perspectives from airlines, manufacturers, government regulators, and law firms on eliminating bias, D&I policies, hiring, inclusion, retention, D&I trends, and D&I efforts and best practices during challenging times. We also presented a program on Equity and Inclusiveness in Aerospace since the Apollo space mission. There were great discussions on the history of black representation in space and the impact of the civil rights movement on national and international space law, and the panelists offered strategies for lawyers to foster inclusion in commercial contracts as well as the workplace.

As we move into 2021, Forum D&I initiatives include expanding our Committee members to ensure that the Committee is broadly diverse and building our own ABA Connect page to share more information and regular updates on D&I topics. We all have heard that if you can't measure it, you can't improve it. In order to do so, we are encouraging all Forum members to complete their My ABA Profile to be added into the aggregated Forum demographics. Please ensure that your My ABA

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profile (which connects to the ABA membership database) includes your demographic information so that we have an accurate count of our ABA members. Note: *all information provided is completely confidential* and will not be shared with unauthorized parties. Information on your demographics will only be shared in the aggregate (no names or any other signifiers attached) in order to better understand ABA membership and leadership information as a whole.

Another focus is to encourage more diversity in our *Air & Space Lawyer* issues. We want more diverse lawyers contributing articles. Please consider writing or partnering on an article. Choose a topic in consultation with Editor David Berg (airberg600@gmail.com), and receive extra bonus points for writing about diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts in our industry.

Please watch for more programing, including interactive opportunities. If you are interested in joining our Committee, writing an article, or working on programming, please just let us know. A diverse mix of voices leads to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone!