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## A 'Perilous Moment' for Legal Education

### Stormy Weather at Legal Ed Summit, ABA LSAT Hearing

Despite being held in Miami, the mood at the Summit on the Future of Legal Education and Entry to the Profession earlier this month was anything but sunny, according to [law.com](#). During the first panel, James Leipold, executive director of the National Association for Law Placement, warned that this is "a perilous moment" for legal education and that law schools should resist the temptation to increase their enrollment in the fall. Disagreement cropped up early in the conference, over whether law schools have been proactive enough in making structural changes to address the marketplace shifts and other challenges that law students and new lawyers face. At the same time, in Washington, D.C., the ABA's public hearing regarding a proposal to do away with the LSAT requirement for applicants to ABA-accredited law schools also sparked some discord and concern for the future.

### Washington Supreme Court Issues Nation's First Rule Against Implicit Bias in Jury Selection

As in other states, Washington has long had a rule against excluding jurors based on racial animus. Earlier this month, the Washington Supreme Court took a step further, issuing a new rule aimed at eliminating implicit bias: Attorneys can now challenge the exclusion of a potential juror if an "objective observer" might view the exclusion as being connected to race. One proponent of the new rule is ACLU volunteer attorney and past Washington State Bar Association President Sal Mungia, who says there are often times when an attorney may cite a "race-neutral" reason for excluding a potential juror but still might have subjected that juror to more scrutiny because of his or her race or ethnicity. [The Stranger](#) has more details, including how the idea for the rule first arose, and how it might apply in some hypothetical situations.

Speaking of the state of Washington, last week, Bar Leader Weekly reported on an opinion regarding a bar applicant whose character and fitness had been challenged. We wrote that the Washington State Bar Association Character and Fitness Board had requested a "bright-line rule" from the Washington Supreme Court regarding the number of years of sobriety without a relapse, for applicants with a history of prior substance abuse. In fact, the parties debated the merits of such a rule, but the bar counsel never requested it. Bar Leader Weekly regrets this error.

### To Increase Public Trust, Should the Court System Look Within?

These days, the judicial branch and its independence face a barrage of challenges from legislators, special-interest groups, and even the president. But judges and others inside the court system should resist the urge to focus only on these external forces and overlook some real changes that need to be made, writes Jesse Rutledge of the National Center for State Courts. A 2017 NCSC survey found that only 58 percent of Americans believe that the phrase "fair and impartial" describes the courts well, Rutledge writes at [ABA Journal](#), and a 2015 NCSC poll found that only 32 percent of African-Americans believe that the courts provide equal justice to all. Rutledge shares three strategies to help judges, bar leaders, and fair courts advocates increase public trust.

## 5 Tips to Help Your Op-Ed Get Published

It's a tough world for those trying to get media coverage, writes Jennifer R. Farmer at [ragan.com](http://ragan.com): PR professionals now outnumber journalists four to one, and those reporters who remain often have a lot of demands on their time and attention. That's where the good, old op-ed comes in, Farmer says?many publications are now very receptive to short, well-written opinion columns bolstered with provable facts. But if you want your op-ed to see the light of day, it's important to get familiar with the publication, its audience, and its guidelines. What five things does Farmer say you need to know before you put pen to paper (or hands to keyboard)?



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