Law Firms Challenged Over Lack of Diversity & Inclusion

Stats from NALP Show Continuing Barriers to Diversity and Inclusion for New Lawyers

"Whatever law firms think they're doing to improve diversity and inclusion, it's clearly not enough," writes Staci Zaretsky at Above the Law. Zaretsky attended the annual convention of the National Association for Law Placement last month and was struck by some stats presented by NALP Executive Director James Leipold, regarding the JD class of 2016. Leipold’s slides showed that men continue to have an advantage over women in private practice and in business, Zaretsky says, and that people of color are more likely to be employed in sectors of the legal field other than private practice and clerkships. In fact, only 38.9 percent of African-American law school graduates work in private practice for their first jobs. How does that compare with the figures for new law grads of other races and ethnicities, and what else did Zaretsky take away from this presentation?

Attendees at ABA Workshop Brainstorm Ways to Increase Lawyer Wellness

By now, few stakeholders would disagree that wellness is a critical issue for the legal profession and that some changes need to be made. But what changes, exactly? and what will help ensure that they actually happen? Brainstorming sessions at a recent ABA workshop attended by more than 60 law firm leaders, senior risk managers, and executives from malpractice carriers yielded several practical insights, writes Mindy L. Rattan at Bloomberg Law Big Law Business. For example, perhaps malpractice carriers can help change law firm culture by focusing on wellness during underwriting. And is autonomy over one’s schedule an important key to increased well-being? Rattan offers a detailed synopsis of this workshop? including remarks from ABA President Hilarie Bass and President-elect Bob Carlson? and of the ABA’s ongoing work in this area.

State Bar of Arizona Launches Find-a-Lawyer Web Portal

Even if someone can afford to pay a certain amount for legal assistance, finding a lawyer can be daunting and many people are most comfortable using their computer, tablet, or smartphone for this task. To address these consumer needs and help increase access to justice, on May 1, the State Bar of Arizona launched its new Find-a-Lawyer web portal, in partnership with Legal Services Link. Consumers anonymously post their legal need and whether the amount they can pay is low, medium, or high. Interested lawyers then email the consumer directly, and the consumer decides which one to hire. More than 8,000 Arizona lawyers have updated their profiles and are ready for a match, writes Tim Eigo, editor and blogger at the bar association. Read more about the new portal at AZ Attorney.

Khan Academy, LSAC to Debut Free LSAT Prep Program

On June 1, nonprofit education platform Khan Academy and the Law School Admission Council will launch a free online LSAT prep program, according to ABA Journal. This program, announced in 2017, adds to Khan Academy’s current roster of test prep resources for the GMAT, the MCAT, and the SAT. Prospective test takers are advised to use the program? which includes questions from more than 30 practice tests? for 30 minutes per day, and perhaps longer as the LSAT date approaches. Who helped develop the program?
and how well do Khan Academy founder Salman Khan and LSAC president/CEO Kellye Y. Testy think it can level the playing field for students who can't afford a traditional prep course?

**ABA Partnership Awards Deadline Fast Approaching**

Is your bar association doing innovative work in the area of diversity and inclusion? The ABA Partnership Awards Program celebrates bar association projects and programs directed at increasing the participation and advancement of lawyers of color as well as other underrepresented constituents: lawyers with disabilities, women lawyers, and lawyers who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Applications are due June 6, and the awards will be given at ABA Annual Meeting in August 2018. Don't miss out? apply today!

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