

## SUGGESTED GOALS FOR MSBA DIVERSITY PLANNING TASK FORCE

Date: October 19, 2009

**Suggested overarching goal/theme for MSBA Diversity Planning:** To promote diversity within the profession so that ultimately the profession reflects the society that it represents. It is important to insure not only that people are treated justly, but to promote a vision of the Bar so that people **believe** they are being treated justly.

**The following are the aspirational goals that are suggested the MSBA pursue.** Following an inventory of the MSBA programs and services, benchmarking will be undertaken to determine how to get the MSBA from its present condition to achieve those goals using SMART (Specific, Measured, Agreed upon, Realistic, Timetable [for achieving]) goals.

1. **Initial discussion of meaning of diversity and whether the definition of diversity needs to be expanded, revised or altered as we develop aspirational goals for MSBA and its diversity initiatives.** The goal is to make the definition as concrete as possible but also expandable. Examples of values that might be considered in adopting a more expansive definition of diversity is: diversity of political philosophy, diversity in experience, culture, values, work-life balance, generational differences (committee members feel free to add additional ideas as you've thought about them). The goal of the diversity definition should promote the value of all people—inclusiveness.
2. **Pipeline work (or Attract, Recruit and Retain).** Pushing the reach of current efforts to schools (elementary, high schools, colleges, law schools, etc.). MSBA should coordinate with other groups doing similar reach-out efforts and begin to target more populations in more places that need, or that we think could benefit from, outreach work to improve the pipeline. And then also do some follow-up research to figure out how many people are being reached and what, if anything, are the outcomes of that outreach work. There also needs to be some work on identifying populations and determining whether any group within the MSBA identifies different diverse populations. We will want to improve identification to make sure that targeting can be effective.
3. **Vehicles for communication and collaboration.** Do we have/can we develop structures that promote diversity inclusiveness? For example, are we looking for a broader mechanism to promote diversity, collaboration and inclusiveness than the minority bar summit? Possibly linking with affiliates and parts of the MSBA to create something that could be called the Diversity Inclusion Summit. Further, each diversity vehicle should have its own benchmarks to measure its effectiveness in promoting diversity and inclusiveness. Particularly important is setting up infrastructure to reach beyond just the Twin Cities anticipating growth and collaboration between MSBA and affinity groups.

4. **Creating supportive structures.** Evaluating what needs exist in order to improve retention of diverse attorneys, candidates, in the legal profession of Minnesota. How can the MSBA support retention? Identify needed structures, how the structures should track retention, and figure out what's working and what's not in terms of retaining diverse candidates (for example, looking at issues such as daycare, mentoring and benefits). Ultimately the benchmarks should help to solve the question, "What is needed to support non-Minnesotan diverse people to stay in the state?"[SB: I also thought that the reverse might be also interesting to look at. What is necessary to support Minnesota or non-diverse/majority people in the state.] Figuring out the prevalence of mentoring in MSBA efforts and also partnering agencies. Possibility of using a measure of mentoring as an indicator of diversity or inclusiveness.
5. **Promote diversity at all levels within and around the Bar,** from management positions and all Bar-affiliated positions downward.

**Back-end Processes to be evaluated as the process continues.**

1. **Comparison of diversity at a statewide or regional level?** Should the MSBA and bar promote diversity to reflect the state, region, both, or something else? This process will be sensitive to the issues of regional versus statewide diversity in developing benchmarks.
2. **Accountability.** Need a mechanism if we are not going to undertake an exhaustive auditing process to make sure our initiatives work. The idea is to come up with some sort of self-audit reporting mechanism and that can be easily done, kept concise, used year after year and with continued use and familiarity, becomes easy to use. Tools that should provide the format to measure diversity now but tools can also be altered or extended pretty easily to measure other things as needs become necessary. And the concept of providing a carrot for having the MSBA and other groups that are held accountable to provide this annual self-reporting mechanism, such as offering free participation in a CLE.
3. **How do we measure retention** in terms of people who want to stay in Minnesota, not only people who are able to stay in Minnesota. In measuring the impact of retention efforts, we should know how many people are just here because they have a job, and how many are interested in remaining in the state long-term and why each group feels as they do.
4. **Contact other entities to figure out what benchmarks they already use and see what benchmarks might be useful for the MSBA.** Contact corporations, government officials, law offices to see what benchmarks they use to promote diversity. Suggest looking up Dupont – they had a policy that might be interesting if we can get a hold of it – General Mills and other entities.
5. **Survey marketing on MSBA websites.** Developing metrics to encourage communication regarding diversity issues at the Bar in the state. Recognize that

early on might just get a lot of complaints, but it's also a valuable tool to evaluate extreme outcomes to see what exactly is going on out there, in sort of a safe, anonymous opportunity. The key thing is if we do a survey, it would require follow-up with a committee to actually look at the issues that are coming up in the evaluations and plan programming to address the serious issues that do come up through those forms. The hope, eventually, is to encourage greater response, not just people with an ax to grind, but survey metrics could be an important tool to at least figure out where issues still arise that people may not be willing to talk about publicly. Information that comes in from the surveys could help develop further evaluation metrics when evaluating diversity.

GP:2661439 v1