

MEMORANDUM

JENNER & BLOCK

JUNE 22, 2008

Jenner & Block LLP
Chicago
New York
Washington, DC

To: ISBA Assembly

From: E. Lynn Grayson, Chair
2007-2008 Task Force on Diversity

Re: Task Force on Diversity

Subject: June 2008 Status Report

Initiated by President Joe Bisceglia in late 2007, the Task Force on Diversity's mission is to implement the ISBA Diversity Pipeline Project recommendations and to promote greater diversity in the Illinois legal community statewide and within the ISBA. The Task Force's work to date has been successful in fostering increased opportunities for diverse attorneys as well as continuing to raise awareness of the critical importance of a truly diverse bar in Illinois.

In large part, the Task Force's work has been conducted by three key subcommittees: 1) Diversity Pipeline Project, 2) Illinois Legal Community, and, 3) ISBA. A brief status report for each subcommittee is provided below.

Diversity Pipeline Project

(Co-Chairs: Alice Noble-Allgire, Andy Fox, Tracy Prosser and Venu Gupta)

Relating to the Diversity Pipeline Project report dated March 9, 2007, this subcommittee's mission is to "support improved educational opportunities for diversity students and encourage all efforts for diversity students to enter the legal profession." Through its evaluation and assessment of existing pipeline initiatives, the subcommittee recommends the ISBA implement a new initiative known as the "100 Future Leaders Program" to increase the number of diverse students considering a law career. The subcommittee also recommends continuation of law-related education outreach efforts to reach students in grade school through law school. The recommended action plan will be detailed in the Task Force's final report.

Illinois Legal Profession

(Co-Chairs: Sonni Williams and Gwen Rowan)

This subcommittee's mission is to "promote greater diversity within the Illinois legal community including support of the Commission on Professionalism of the Illinois Supreme Court and to overall raise awareness of the importance of diversity to the legal profession." This subcommittee successfully created and conducted the first ever statewide diversity survey to ascertain how Illinois attorneys feel about the legal profession, their satisfaction with law as a career, and their role in the bar overall. A statistically significant survey was conducted

statewide, supported by a number of local and diversity bar associations. The results currently are under review and will be included in the Task Force's final report.

ISBA

(Co-Chairs: Patrice Ball-Reed, Deborah Cole)

This subcommittee's work is focused on the ISBA as an organization with its overall mission to "increase the participation, leadership and membership ranks of diversity attorneys within the ISBA." This subcommittee created the first ever ISBA report card assessing the diversity of the Board of Governors, Assembly, Committees and Section Councils and ISBA professional staff. Likewise, these findings will be incorporated into the Task Force's final report.

Moving Forward

The 2007-2008 Task Force members, led by the co-chairs identified above, have worked diligently on a number of projects and outreach activities aimed at positive change within the Illinois legal profession. The Task Force's work will be summarized in greater detail in a final report to be issued shortly.

Incoming ISBA President Jack Carey has requested that the Task Force continue its work through the coming year. The new 2008-2009 Task Force will be appointed following the Annual Meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the status report or the work of the Task Force overall, please feel free to contact the subcommittee co-chairs identified above or me.

ELG/pr