

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sylvia James, NALP Vice-President for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
and DEI Section Board Liaison

FROM: Laké Laosebikan-Buggs (Elon University School of Law)
LaNitra S. Webb (O'Melveny & Myers)
NALP 2025-26 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Section Co-Chairs

DATE: March 26, 2025

RE: DEI Section Quarterly Board Report #4

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Section's fourth quarter meeting was held on February 26, 2026, and attended by 22 members. The meeting provided an opportunity for members to check in and share how they are feeling, how their work has or has not been impacted by the external environment, and to support each other.

As of March 2026, the DEI Section has 675 members, which is a 1% decrease from January 2026 when there were 680 members.

Members have shared their appreciation of NALP's acknowledgement that the AEC's Florida location is problematic for LGBTQ+ and other marginalized identities and that efforts will be made to encourage support of MBE/LGBTQ+-owned businesses.

At the end of this quarter, LaNitra Webb will be stepping down from her role as Co-Chair of the Section after two years of service. Laké has kindly agreed to continue serving as Co-Chair of the DEI Section and will be joined by new Co-Chair, Eva Landers, Manager of Inclusion & Engagement at Jenner and Block.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

The Administration's attacks on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion seemingly stalled for a few months; however, law firms remain a target. Some firms have retrenched on their DE&I programs entirely resulting in layoffs and/or functional shifts away from DEI and towards more traditional HR processes. Within schools, depending upon the jurisdiction of the university, some have had their programs curtailed due to state legislative anti-DEI edicts.

NALP's recent "[Report on Diversity in U.S. Law Firms](#)" noted, "230 fewer law offices provided demographic information... representing the loss of data for roughly 47 firms and 31,000 lawyers." The external environment remains bleak for those attempting to do the work of inclusion and belonging, and it is impacting the number of members in the section, the willingness and ability of NALP members (or their organizations) to be associated with DEI content for RFPs and articles, and in one case, we lost a Vice Chair due to a DEI-specific RIF.

WORK GROUP UPDATES:

Annual Education Conference/*Bulletin*+ Article and Webinar Planning

No report submitted as external environment resulted in Vice Chair's employment RIF.

Disability & Neurodiversity Inclusion

Vice Chairs: **Beka Anardi**, Senior Recruiter, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP and **Marti McCausland** Assistant Director, Center for Career Planning & Professional Development, University of Oregon School of Law

On January 27th, a webinar was held titled "Bookmarked, Part 3: Narratives in Disability and Neurodiversity" where Six readers discussed *Being Huemann* by Judy Heumann and Kristen Joiner, *Faster than Normal*, by Peter Shankman, and four children's books.

Additionally, an article was submitted for the April issue of the NALP *Bulletin*+ highlighting interviews members have conducted with neurodiverse and disabled lawyers. The group is also ideating RFP topics for the upcoming PDI and AEC review periods.

Members attending the 2026 AEC intend to gather informally for lunch or coffee.

Gender Non-Binary Inclusion

Vice Chairs: **Deshawn Cook**, Senior Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, Williams & Connolly and **Jasper Katz**, Associate Director Career Strategy and Professional Development, Temple University Beasley School of Law

The Gender Nonbinary Workgroup met on February 24, 2026, with seven members in attendance and discussed our vision for the year. The group also discussed the upcoming AEC and elevated their concerns regarding the conference being held in Florida. President Alison Ashe-Card joined and was able to communicate information for our group and the LGBTQIA+ Affinity Group that addressed said concerns. This information has been communicated via NALP Connect to the LGBTQIA+ Affinity Group and will be shared more broadly with the DEI section of NALP.

Later this year, the group intends to host a session on ways to support nonbinary people both at schools and in law firms. Group members are reviewing panelists and the topics the panel could cover.

The workgroup is scheduled to meet again on March 26, 2026 at 3pm ET.

LGBTQ+

We are actively seeking a Vice Chair to fill this vacancy and submitted another interest request in NALP Connect.

Native and Indigenous Peoples in the Legal Profession

Vice Chair: **Jennifer Mencarini**, Director of Cultural Engagement, Fox Rothschild

The Native and Indigenous Peoples in the Legal Profession Task Force disbanded following the [Glossary of Terms](#) published in the December 2025 *Bulletin+*. There are no further updates forthcoming.

Well-Being Champion

Champion: **Nada Llewellyn**, Global Head of Inclusion & Wellbeing, Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer (US) LLP

At the February 26, 2026 DEI Section Meeting, Nada led a wellbeing exercise which consisted of encouraging members to meditate on an inclusive moment they were proud of – whether it was something they observed in others, a change they were able to implement at work, or a change in their own behaviors. Once the members had a moment in mind, they entered it into the chat without pressing send. Once all the members entered their moment into the chat, Nada directed the members to press send at the same time, resulting in a solid wall of positive, inclusive actions and behaviors to counter the difficulties of the current moment.