

MEMORANDUM

October 21, 2009

TO: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director
Dana Morris, NALP Board Liaison
NALP Board of Directors

FROM: Kisha Nunez, Chair
Diversity Section

RE: Diversity Section Second Quarter Report

This report is an update of the activities in Diversity Section for the second quarter of the NALP year. Even through a demanding recruiting season we remain busy and focused on our tasks. To that end, I hosted a number of conference calls with the group at large and also specific workgroups to solidify our plans of actions and also to conduct environmental scanning. The results of those calls and our work to date are outlined below.

2010 NALP Annual Conference RFP Work Group

As a follow-up to my report from last quarter, of the eight proposals submitted by our section for the 2010 Annual Conference, five have been accepted. Those conference programs are:

1. Diversifying the Law School Applicant Pool - Tools for Success
2. Going Beyond Diversity: Inclusiveness is the Key to Solving the Diversity Dilemma
3. Coaching Diverse Attorneys for Career Success
4. The Good, the Bad and the Ugly—The Case for Affinity Groups
5. Diverse Attorney Recruiting Challenges and Strategies

2010 Diversity Reception at the Annual Conference

Joel Chanvisanuruk, GLBT Section Chair and I spoke with José Bahomonde-González, Chair of the Conference Planning Committee about the Diversity Reception. Plans have already been set in motion by the Conference Planning Committee to seek a speaker, so it was concluded that our role would be to assist them in anyway we can as we near the conference date, either through staffing the reception or in offering feedback on potential speakers.

2009 NALP Bulletin Articles

Per my last report, I was pleased to learn that all eight of our bulletin article submissions were accepted. As of October, two have been published, they are:

1. Practical suggestions for improving diversity in tough economic times:
how to do the most with minimal resources

By Melanie Priddy and Karen Hester

2. How can we best maintain momentum and focus on diversity in marketing law firms to law schools? Best practices for reaching out to diverse students in law schools.

By Kristine McKinney and Katy Anderman

Diversity Leadership Workgroup Update

The Diversity Leadership Workgroup has begun work on its main goal, which is to interview diverse leaders within the NALP community and diverse attorneys to celebrate their leadership and to later feature their stories, challenges and victories for publication in the *NALP Bulletin* and other media. Calls were held to identify NALP members to be interviewed and also to create a script and a set of interview questions. This task has been completed, so the group is now conducting the interviews. The plan is for those interviews to be completed by the end of November with the profiles to be written and ready for submission by December 21st. Per my correspondence with Janet Smith, it has been agreed that these profiles will be made available in a document to be posted on the NALP website, to be introduced by article either in the *NALP Bulletin* and/or in the NALPNow Newsletter. The other focus for this group is to highlight best retention and inclusion efforts and investigate the creation of an informal NALP affinity group for diverse professionals. Focus on both of those items will occur in January supported by feedback from the interviews that are currently being conducted.

Association of Law Firm Diversity Professionals (ALFDP) Collaboration Work Group

Tasked with maintaining our continued working relationship with ALFDP, Vice-Chair, Maja Hazell and I met to discuss ideas for collaboration. We have come up with three ideas that we believe will enhance the level of understanding for members of both organization. They are:

1. Creation of a best practices booklet on how to best integrate diversity professionals and encourage collaboration across departments.
2. Creation of a joint publication on retaining diverse associates, using NALP attrition data and ALFDP best practices advice on coaching and intervention.
3. Hosting quarterly conference calls facilitated by 2-3 ALFDP and/or NALP members on hot topics.

It is our intention that the best practices booklet will be completed at the end of March 2010. Provided the Board agrees that the joint publication on retention is a good one, since it will

involve a bit more research we think that this could be a long-term project, for which we will provide at least a detailed outline by April 16th. Again if the Board is in agreement, the thought is that two of the quarterly conference calls could take place under the auspices of the workgroup currently in place, with hopes to continue the practice. I am happy to discuss these ideas further and look forward to any suggestions.

Environmental Scanning

Over the last couple of months and during the course of the conference calls held, members of our section have conveyed ideas and expressed concern regarding both the Long Range Strategic Plan and diversity in general. On September 16th, several members of our section joined in on a call hosted by Sonia Menon and Venu Gupta about the Strategic Plan. As I am sure that there will be detailed information provided by the Strategic Planning Committee on this call, I would like to offer up just a few items that came up. There has been a suggestion that going forward NALP should ramp up its efforts with respect to the concept of inclusiveness, including it among its best practices. Specifically using this ideal in the work to eliminating hidden barriers to success for diverse attorneys. Another idea is to take a look at what government employers have done regarding diversity, looking at what might be applicable to the private sector. Another member offer that either a sub-group of the Diversity Section or a new section all together focus its attention on the issue of women in the legal profession, especially women of color. The thought here is that in light of the reports from NALP and Catalyst, there may be things that we can do to contribute to eliminating the shortage of attorneys from this demographic. Although it is already recognized, we will continue to face the challenge of priming the pipeline for diverse students to college and law school. So continued support for pipeline initiatives has been suggested, whether through programs like StreetLaw or grassroots programs on law school campuses. Finally, since many who are responsible for diversity work understand that to accomplish their initiatives its best to work collaboratively with their colleagues, it has been suggested that NALP might consider joint initiatives among the Diversity Section and other sections, like Recruiting and Lawyer Professional Development. Especially with the number of associate deferments, many of which are disproportionately diverse, it might be a helpful endeavor to explore.