

MEMORANDUM

TO: Courtney Carter, NALP Vice-President for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

FROM: Aisha Joseph
Jennifer Gibert Mencarini
NALP 2023-24 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Section Co-Chair

DATE: June 28, 2023

RE: DEI Section Quarterly Board Report #1

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Section had an active first quarter following the Annual Education Conference (AEC) in late April.

The Section's inaugural meeting of the NALP year, on June 8, 2023, was well-attended. The discussion focused on:

- The upcoming RFP deadline for NALP Bulletin articles
- Introduction of Section Vice-Chairs and request for work group volunteers
- Discussion of several hot topics led by **Jennifer Gibert Mencarini**:
 - Celebrations of Juneteenth
 - What's everyone doing?
 - Anti-transgender and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation and other actions
 - How are your lawyers and students holding up?
 - Political bias affiliation

The Section currently has 668 members, 19 more than at the time of the last Board report. Our next quarterly meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2023.

WORK GROUP UPDATES:

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

Vice Chairs: **Bijal Shah**, Senior Manager of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Skadden Arps; **Amber Crosby**, Senior Level Manager, Inclusion, Equity & Diversity, Littler

We had a robust RFP submission process, with 41 AEC DEI RFPs submitted to NALP for consideration. We met with the Vice-Chairs and Courtney Carter to review and rank the RFPs that would be most appropriate for the 2024 AEC.

There were fewer submissions for Bulletin articles (we have two confirmed RFPs and one pending RFP), but we hope that some of the AEC RFPs that are not selected for presentation may be converted into Bulletin articles or webinars. Aisha has already reached out to Cindy Stephens, the new EIC of the *Bulletin*, to share that request. Article RFPs are as follows:

1) Lana Manganiello- October 2023 Bulletin—750 words max

"Shaping the Future of Law: The Crucial Intersection of Business Development and DEI" examines how fostering business development skills among diverse attorneys can revolutionize diversity, equity, and inclusion within law firms. By showcasing real-world success stories and outlining the benefits of this investment, the article presents a compelling case for how empowering diverse attorneys with business development skills can create a more equitable legal profession, transform firm culture, and drive meaningful change from within.

2) Michael Nguyen and Andrea Yang for January 2024 Bulletin- 750 words max

Title TBD: Article focused on our own professional development (as legal career professionals), covering topics like internal measures of growth, including cultivating our good qualities that are unshakable by the external circumstances, self-confidence, and authenticity, what it means to be fully you wherever you are and how you show up for yourself and others, etc. We'd like to do this at year end or beginning of 2024, as context for "preparing for 2024."

LGBTQ+

Vice Chairs: **LaNitra S. Webb**, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Lead, Kecker, Van Nest & Peters LLP; **Sarah N. LaFleur**, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Specialist, Venable

The Vice-Chairs have reached out to us about updating the LGBTQ+ resources on the NALP website. We anticipate they will spend the summer reviewing what is currently in place and collaborating with work group members to update them as appropriate.

In addition, they are keeping their eyes out for potential LGBTQ+ *Bulletin* article topics or webinar material.

Legislative Monitoring

Vice Chair: **Luke Lemmeier**, Legal Recruiting Coordinator, Jones Day

Luke has already created a fantastic online [resource](#) to help track DEI-related legislation on both the state and federal levels.

Disability Inclusion

Vice Chairs: **Robin Thorner**, Assistant Dean, Office of Career Strategy, St. Mary's University School of Law; **Tobias Rodriguez**, Associate Director, Career Services Office, Chicago-Kent College of Law

The Disability Workgroup has begun to identify online resources members can utilize to increase inclusion in the legal profession. The workgroup is also focused on coordinating efforts with the Neurodiversity in the Legal Profession Task Force, which is expanding its scope in the coming year to provide more print resources to NALP members on disability generally. The Task Force plans to host a webinar on disability-based employment discrimination so that employer members and school members are aware of an employer's legal obligations under federal law; this would not only ensure more recruiters understand the process, but also that CSO staff can advise students

better when they are potentially being discriminated against in the application and hiring process. The workgroup hopes to co-sponsor this webinar.

Gender Non-Binary Inclusion

Vice Chairs: **Nicole Netkin-Collins**, Assistant Dean for Career Strategy & Advancement, Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law, **Christopher Neal**, Director of Career Services, Temple University Beasley School of Law

The Gender Non-Binary Inclusion Workgroup Vice Chairs held a meeting on June 15th for anyone interested in volunteering with the Workgroup. Eight (8) people joined the call, and the group began brainstorming ways to implement the Workgroup's charges. The Vice Chairs plan to hold a standing monthly check-in meeting to continue brainstorming and to move our projects forward.

Well-Being Champion

Champion: **Julie Anna Alvarez Rivera**, Senior Career Development Manager, Paul Weiss

No updates for this report.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES:

- Chris Neal, Vice-Chair of the Gender Non-Binary Inclusion work group, reached out to us and NALP staff members about creating a “tips” list for AEC presenters focused on important considerations to deliver a culturally sensitive and responsive presentations. Mary Beal agreed this could be a helpful resource, and the Co-Chairs have met with Chris and offered their assistance with its development.
- Sheryl Roberts, Smith Anderson, has proposed a brief survey of NALP members focused on Juneteenth celebrations as they relate to the depth and breadth of law firms and law schools' overall DEI strategy. The information obtained could be used to offer resources to others about ideas for Juneteenth commemorations, and data to offer leadership/management to keep DEI moving forward in a proactive and meaningful way, particularly considering the downturn in DEI activity since the summer of 2020.