

## MEMORANDUM

February 6, 2009

TO: Ritu Bhasin, Board Liaison, Diversity Section

FROM: Dana Morris, Chair Diversity Section

RE: Third Quarter Report

CC: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director

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This report will update the Board on the progress of the Diversity Section since October 2008. The following summarizes our major tasks and work-group activities:

- **NALP Annual Education Conference, Diversity Reception Speaker:** Since the last report to the Board, the Diversity Section pursued the possibility of inviting two speaker candidates, Eric Holder (then partner at Covington & Burling) and John Payton (NAACP-LDEF Counsel). Both were unavailable, so we coordinated with the GLBT Section to compile a new list of candidates, which include Mary Francis Berry, Christina Sarchio, Bryan Stevenson and others. The general consensus arising between the Sections was that Berry, Sarchio, Stevenson were the top choices. I learned this week that Berry is unavailable on April 2 due to a previous speaking engagement. I've contacted the GLBT Section Chair and we will begin pursuing the next possible speaker on the list immediately.
- **NALP Best Practices Guide:** Karen Hester is leading the group of hardy volunteers who are updating the NALP Best Practices Guide. Work is progressing and goal is to finish compiling new information by the end of February, complete final edits by mid-March and submit the final product by the end of March before the NALP education conference in April. Ideally, we hope to make the Guide available by April 5, so that it can be promoted in the May *NALP Bulletin* as space allows.
- **Outreach to ALFDP:** Over the past several weeks I've consulted with Marcy Cox (the Board's liaison to ALFDP) and Section members who are also members of ALFDP about ways to reach out to the organization and help forge a working relationship with NALP. I enlisted member volunteers to speak with the newly elected ALFDP officers about our interest in future collaboration. As a result of the outreach, I had an opportunity to speak with ALFDP members at its annual meeting on November 19 and received a warm reception. Under its new leadership, the group is now eager to work with NALP. Towards that end, and to foster this new relationship, I will be sending a letter on behalf of the Section to ALFDP president Sylvia James to invite members who will be in Washington during the NALP conference to join us at the Diversity Reception.
- **Update on NALP's List of Pipeline Initiatives:** During the Section's last conference call, we discussed the list of pipeline initiatives on the NALP website. The current list features law firm initiatives. Many on the call were curious about law school pipeline initiatives, so I organized a small group of volunteers – Nichole White and Kisha Nuñez – to investigate the information available on law school pipeline initiatives. Thanks to their good work, we now have a listing of law school programs that will be submitted to NALP for review, once it's edited. Our hope is that it will be used to supplement the listing on the NALP website.

- **Communications to NALP Members:** Since the last report, Section volunteers have had two articles published in the NALP Bulletin. Patricia Patrick's and Irene Reed's article, "Improving Diversity at the Partnership Level" appeared in the December edition. My article, "Tapping Women Alumni to Improve Retention, Career Satisfaction in Law Firms" appears in the February edition.
- **Environmental Scanning:** Not surprisingly, the buzz among Section members continues to be concerns about the current economy and how it's impacting their organizations. Those in law firms contend with the prospect of lay-offs and budget reductions while state school members are dealing with budget cut-backs and staff furloughs. Additionally, there is talk that some school and employer members will be sending fewer staff to the NALP conference.

I am planning a group conference call during the week of February 23 to gear up our Section for completing our final projects and solicit volunteers to work the upcoming Diversity reception. I remain available if the Board would like any additional information on the matters covered above. Thank you.