

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fred Thrasher, NALP Deputy Director
Traci Mundy Jenkins, NALP Board Liaison
NALP Board of Directors

FROM: Demetria Johnson, Chair, Diversity Section

DATE: June, 28, 2011

SUBJECT: NALP Diversity Section – First Status Report

This report summarizes the various activities that the NALP Diversity Section has been engaged in since our first meeting at the 2011 NALP Annual Education Conference in Palm Springs, California. Our first section meeting had an overwhelming and enthusiastic turnout for an early morning meeting (8 a.m.). There were approximately 28 participants in attendance. After a brief introduction, we broke into small groups to discuss and brainstorm the charges for the 2011-2012 season. Our main objective at this meeting was to brainstorm on proposal topics for the 2012 Annual Education Conference.

2012 NALP Annual Education Conference Work Group

Our first meeting took place on-site in Palm Springs at the 2011 Annual Education Conference on April 28th. The section members in attendance divided themselves into five (5) groups to discuss topics and ideas for RFP's, Bulletin Articles, Pipeline Resources, Diversity Leadership, etc. Many different ideas were generated and discussed as topics for conference proposals and articles. Our section's first conference call was held on Thursday, May 5, 2011. The call was facilitated by myself and the three Vice Chairs of the RFP work group (Carlos Davila-Caballero, Eliza Musallam & Sherry-Ann Smith). Thanks to the great ideas that transpired at the on-site meeting in Palm Springs and with a few subsequent work group calls and e-mails, I am very pleased to report that our section produced 10 conference proposals, including two collaborations with the LGBT section. The following proposals were submitted on behalf of the Diversity Section to the Conference Planning Committee for the 2012 Annual Education Conference:

1. What Lurks Beneath the Surface: Identifying, Acknowledging and Combating Implicit Bias
2. Does Everyone Really Make the Team? – Strategies for Dealing with Diverse Millennials
3. Navigating Choppy Waters: Diversity Programs and Employment Law Issues
4. Watch your @\$% Mouth! RACE, LGBT, and Other Four Letter Words and the Difficult Conversations Around Them
5. Diverse Women: Success Strategies from Law School to Law Practice
6. White Men CAN Jump!

7. You Want to Go Where? Diverse Students in Not So Diverse Locations
8. Back to the Future: Making the Case for Diversity in the New Normal
9. Positive Partnering: Strengthening Diversity Ties Between Law Schools and Law Firms
10. Moving Beyond the Mainstream: A Closer Look at Three Unique Law Student Diversity Initiatives

Our section members also assisted with conference proposals submitted on behalf of the Experienced Professionals, Recruiting Section and LGBT Section. Our Vice Chairs, Carlos, Eliza and Sherry-Ann did a tremendous job overseeing and coordinating the proposal process and submitting the information to the Conference Planning Committee in a timely manner. I could not have done this without their support. Kudos to all!

2011-2012 NALP Bulletin Article Work Group

During our initial on-site meeting at the NALP Annual Education Conference, section members brainstormed on several topics for the Bulletin. A follow-up call was setup with the entire section to solicit additional ideas on June 6th and was led by Vice Chair, Chia Kang. This call was quite successful and several additional article suggestions were presented and incorporated into our proposed list. We held one final call on June 22nd prior to the June 24th submission deadline:

1. Topic: Stephen Young's MicroInequities workshop at the 2011 Diversity Summit

Description: An interview with Stephen Young or impressions of workshop attendees.

Article length: 1 page or feature article

Author: Paula Edgar, Sherry-Ann Smith and Sheri Zachary

Deadline: August 5 for September 2011 Issue

2. Topic: 2011 Vault/MCCA Law Firm Diversity Database

Description: Discuss findings from the Spring 2011 Vault/MCCA survey.

Article length: 3 column article

Authors: Chia Kang and Alexandra Mai

Deadline: September 5 for October 2011 Issue

3. Topic: Update on the work of the LCLD's Pipeline Committee

Description: A conversation with Brad Smith, GC at Microsoft and co-chair of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's Pipeline Committee, on the progress of the pipeline committee (following the LCLD's second annual meeting in September 2011).

Article length: 3 or 4 column article

Author: Demetria Johnson, Michelle Mason and Susan Piotrowski

Deadline: October 5 for November 2011 Issue or November 5 for December 2011 Issue

4. Topic: Diversity clerkship and fellowship opportunities

Description: Discuss where to find information on clerkship and fellowship opportunities for diverse law students and provide suggestions on communicating this information to students.

Article length: 2 or 3 column article

Authors: Beverly Bracken and Sherry-Ann Smith

Deadline: December 5 for January 2012 Issue

Comment: We could also present this article as a blog post with links to some of these opportunities, or create a directory of opportunities on the NALP website.

5. Topic: Asian Pacific American lawyers' experiences in law firms

Description: Discuss experiences specific to APA lawyers in law firms (large, mid, small size?) based on data collected from the recent past (2 or 4 years?) and anecdotes.

Article length: 1 page or feature article

Authors: Juliette Clark, Alexandra Mai and Eliza Musallam

Deadline: March 5 for April 2012 Issue

6. Topic: Review of diversity training and management books

Description: Compile and review books in general stream that have diversity message.

Article length: 1 page article

Author: Carlos Davila-Caballero

Deadline: Flexible

Comment: We could also present the book reviews as monthly blogs. Also, Verna Meyers' new book will be out in July so a possible publication date could be September 2011.

7. Topic: Diversity professionals in career services offices

Description: Discuss the benefits of employing a diversity professional and the role(s) the professional would play within the CSO (and perhaps the law school?), and provide suggestions for advocating for the hire of a diversity professional.

Article length: 1 page or feature article

Authors: Paula Edgar, Sherry-Ann Smith and Sarra Ziari

Deadline: Flexible

8. Topic: Decline in the number of diverse attorneys.

Description: Discuss decline in the number of diverse attorneys in the private sector in the "new normal" and suggest steps for recovery.

Article length: 1 page article

Author: Donna Davis

Deadline: Flexible

Comment: Is there any way for us to find out where these diverse attorneys have gone?

9. Topic: Mentors and sponsors

Description: Discuss the different roles mentors and sponsors play in one's career strategy and suggest ways to develop and maintain relationships.

Article length: 2 or 3 column article

Authors: Teresa Clarke and Sheri Zachary

Deadline: Flexible

10. Topic: Review of select diversity pipeline programs

Description: Spotlight select diversity pipeline programs listed on the ABA/LSAC Pipeline Diversity Directory

Article length: 2 column or 1 page

Authors: Paula Edgar (on PALS), Chia Kang (on Legal Outreach), and Cybele Smith (on Moritz College of Law program)

Deadline: Flexible

Comment: We could also present the spotlight as blog posts. Millie suggested a Pipeline Week on the Diversity Dish where one program is featured each day.

11. Topic: Improving diversity in federal clerkships

Description: Suggestions on how to improve diversity in federal clerkships. The article is already being co-sponsored by the Newer Professionals and Clerkship sections.

Author: Hanna Stotland

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

As recommended by the Board, and continuing in the tradition set forth over the past few years, the NALP Diversity Section would like to continue in its collaboration with ALFDP. Over the next couple of weeks I will be coordinating with Vice Chair, Tamara Toussaint to setup a call with interested section members.

Diversity Summit Planning Work Group (2012)

A small work group of three NALP members will serve on the Diversity Summit Planning team. Work group members: Melique Jones, Nicole White and Aymara Zielina are working with members of ALFDP to coordinate and facilitate the programming for the 2012 NALP Diversity Summit.

Diversity Leadership: The Retention/Inclusion Imperative Work Group Update

This group seeks to continue to promote and celebrate diverse leadership within our industry. As a follow-up to the “Diversity Champions Guide”, this group would like to collaborate with the Social Media section on transferring some of those profiled into sound bites on the NALP website. We’ve also had discussions on the best way to update the “Best Practices Guide”. Suggestions thus far: a) turn it into a tri-fold brochure referencing key information and links to expert resources (ABA, MCCA, NALP, LCLD); b) consider coordination with Millie and the “diversity dish” blog to profile diversity leaders. Vice Chairs, Markeisha Miner and Rachel Simmonds-Watson will be coordinating with members to work on these initiatives over the course of the year.

Pipeline Initiative Resource Work Group

Continuing the work from the 2010-2011 Work Group, to identify, update, consolidate partnerships and opportunities for law schools and legal employers to impact the pipeline of diverse law students. The section has discussed the following ideas: a) proposed bulletin article on “*review of diversity pipelines*”; b) spotlight blog post of diversity pipelines; c) dedicate a week in the “diversity dish” to pipeline initiatives. A work group conference call will be scheduled in July to discuss the next steps. This work group also suggests collaborating with the Social Media section to promote the pipeline initiatives. Vice Chair, Debbi Milwood-Rowe will be reaching out to the membership over the next few weeks to setup a call.

Track Programming

This new work group was conceived by the incoming NALP President, Marcy Cox. This work group will collaborate with the Members Services Advisory Group to identify and compile resources that are designed to help members new to the profession. Resources will include but not limited to “best of” sessions from NALP educational programming events (Annual Education Conference, Diversity Summit, Lawyer Professional Development Program, Newer Professional Forum, Professional Development Institute, PSLawNet Mini Conference) and NALP and NALP Foundation Webinars. Vice Chair, Jessica Maroney will be facilitating these initiatives with Chair Demetria Johnson.

Environmental Scanning

During our last call the overall consensus from the group is that it has been a busy few months. For the firm members, summer programs are in full swing.

We discussed the upcoming condensed fall recruiting season and how members thought that would or would not impact the 2012 hiring season. Many on both the law firm and law school side felt that it would be a challenging season. This year many law firm members believe that the size of the summer programs will not increase and the “ROI” (return on investment) will play a part in decision making.

There was also lengthy discussion about diversity job fairs and the timing of these diversity-related fairs. Many wondered whether the timing played a role in the attendance of firms at these fairs or is the concern that there are too many and that it is hard for firms to participate in all of them. Feedback was largely given from those in the D.C. and New York markets. Timing seemed to be the big concern with both law firm and law school side-section members. One suggestion that was discussed among the group, was to take a snapshot survey of the membership to see what their thoughts on the timing and overall concept of diversity job fairs. Section members Nikki White and Dana Morris have volunteered to contact NALP and get this process underway.

Below please find a list of articles/ topics of interest shared with the Diversity Section Discussion Group (“listserv”):

- May 23, 2011
Follow-up survey to a presentation conducted at the 2011 NALP Annual Education Conference
Maja Hazell, Donna Harris and Jacqueline Cranford-Wilson
"Diversity Committees That Work: Creation, Utilization, and Reformation"
<http://www.nalp.org/uploads/DiversitySectionSurveySummary2011.PDF>
- June 6, 2011
AMLAW Daily
Steven Harper
"Family Friendly?" Yale Law Women's – Top Ten Family Friendly Law Firms
<http://amlawdaily.typepad.com/amlawdaily/2011/06/harper06052011.html>
- June 20, 2011
U.S. Department of Education
Press Release
NALP Diversity Section Member Tamara Toussaint, appointed to the Commission on Presidential Scholars
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/psp/commission.html>

Many thanks to the Board for your support and attention to our Diversity section's efforts, goals and progress over the last quarter. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.