

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Jeff Becherer, Board Liaison

**Cc:** Fred Thrasher, Deputy Director; Claire Nash, Member Services Coordinator

**From:** Alex Piller, Chair of the Law Student Professional Development Section

**Date:** February 2, 2023

**Re:** Third Quarter Board Report, NALP Law Student Professional Development Section

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During the third quarter of the 2022 – 2023 NALP business cycle, the Law Student Professional Development (LSPD) Section continued work on its charges within each respective Work Group and conducted its third quarter section meeting hosted via Zoom. This report identifies our leadership team, summarizes the environmental scanning we conducted on our third quarter section meeting, and describes the status of our projects.

## **I. LSPD Leadership Team:**

### **Chair:**

Alex Piller, *Director of Career Planning and Professional Development*, University of Illinois College of Law ([apiller2@illinois.edu](mailto:apiller2@illinois.edu))

### **Vice-Chairs, Annual Education Conference / *Bulletin*+ Article and Webinar Planning / PDI:**

Kristina Bilowus, *Assistant Director of Career Development*, Michigan State University College of Law ([bilowuskristina@law.msu.edu](mailto:bilowuskristina@law.msu.edu))

### **Vice-Chair, Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration:**

Diana Mercer, *Director, Career Development Office*, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law ([dmercerc@loyno.edu](mailto:dmercerc@loyno.edu))

### **Vice-Chair, Member Relations and Membership Development:**

Elizabeth Carr, *Assistant Dean of Career Services*, Mercer University School of Law ([carr\\_e@law.mercer.edu](mailto:carr_e@law.mercer.edu))

**Vice-Chairs, Professional Identity Formation:**

Leanne Fuith, *Associate Professor*, Mitchell Hamline School of Law  
([leanne.fuith@mitchellhamline.edu](mailto:leanne.fuith@mitchellhamline.edu))

Erika Pont, *Associate Professor of Law, Fundamentals of Lawyering*, The George Washington University Law School ([epont@law.gwu.edu](mailto:epont@law.gwu.edu))

**Vice-Chair, Knowledge Management and Resource Implementation:**

Stacy Keehn, *Assistant Dean, Career and Professional Development*, University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law ([skeehn@uottawa.ca](mailto:skeehn@uottawa.ca))

**Vice-Chair, DEI Liaison:**

Carmia Caesar, *Associate Dean for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*, The George Washington University Law School ([ccaesar@law.gwu.edu](mailto:ccaesar@law.gwu.edu))

**Vice-Chair, Well-Being Champion:**

Natasha Patel, *Senior Director, Career Center*, Emory University School of Law  
([natasha.patel@emory.edu](mailto:natasha.patel@emory.edu))

**Vice-Chair, Communications, Social Media & Marketing:**

Oscar Teran, *Associate Dean for Career Services*, Southwestern Law School  
([oteran@swlaw.edu](mailto:oteran@swlaw.edu))

**II. 3rd Quarter Section Meeting (January 19)**

We held our second quarter meeting on January 19 by Zoom. About 15 members attended. We ended the meeting on time, after 60 minutes.

**A. The Reshuffling of the Legal Profession articles discussion**

We discussed the series of articles, “The Reshuffling of the Legal Profession,” by Marcia Pennington Shannon published in the September and October 2022 issues of *NALP Bulletin+* on the large numbers of lawyers making career transitions in 2021 and 2022 and seeking different types of career satisfaction. Leanne Fuith mentioned how some students are further ahead in thinking about these topics than some legal employers, and that there is also a role for law schools to help educate legal employers in what students are seeking from their careers. Erika Pont mentioned that law students are approaching their careers with intentionality and that reshuffling is not necessarily a bad outcome as lawyers continue to think about their long-term plans. Revised ABA Standard 303 on professional identity formation may also have a role. Nikki Harris and Kristina Bilowus mentioned the importance of managing expectations of students. With an increase in first-generation law students, they need additional education on available career paths, and employers may need to offer innovative incentives to meet their hiring goals. Lindsay Slaker mentioned that some employers are creating alternate career tracks

to provide a variety of choices for satisfying their employees' goals. Jeff Becherer shared how pandemic conditions accelerated regular cyclic or generational shifts.

### **B. Professionalism as a Racial Construct article discussion**

We also discussed an article, "Professionalism as Racial Construct," by Leah Goodridge in the UCLA Law Review, Discourse, Law Meets World, published March 29, 2022. Nikki Harris and others discussed the importance of sharing the article and considering who sets the requirements of professionalism and when perceptions or standards of professionalism may be applied in biased or discriminatory ways to harm attorneys of color.

Members have reported continuing to discuss this topic with their colleagues.

### **C. Environmental Scanning**

Members discussed topical observations and concerns, including:

#### **1. Alternative Career Goals**

Sare Mills discussed counseling part-time and some older law students whose career goals may differ from their younger classmates. Sare also mentioned previous NALP Connect conversations about "Work Won't Love You Back". Erika Pont shared a relation to the occurrence of "vocational awe," where some employees are expected to earn less money due to their devotion to work that perceived as privileged. Erika also observed tension between personal identity formation and students who do not feel their life is defined by their work. Leanne Fuith also shared that a percentage of her students are already on their second or later careers and don't expect to work full-time in the law, therefore how do we measure success in career planning and how do we adjust our services to those students.

## **III. Work Group Reports**

### **A. Annual Education Conference / *Bulletin*+ Article and Webinar Planning / PDI (by Kristina Bilowus)**

Kristina Bilowus is continuing the outreach concerning DEI pipelines in our law schools and how schools are implementing same. Additionally, we are exploring how this dovetails into professional identity within our schools. Furthermore, we are actively working on the next cycle of RFPs and how to prepare them. Finally, always seeking article and information about current trends in law school and firms that pertain to professional development. A further call to action will be submitted for the upcoming quarter.

## **B. Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration (by Diana Mercer)**

The Law School Professional Development Section and the Law Firm Professional Development Section have developed a Business Law Curriculum with the goal of providing a guide that both law schools and law firms can use to educate students/new lawyers about the business side of law practice and the effect various compensation structures have on salary considerations, time on partnership track etc. We solicited volunteers from career services professionals to review the curriculum, provide feedback, and to implement it, if helpful. We are reviewing responses before proceeding with the next draft. The hope is that this curriculum will be a resource for law schools and law firms, especially those without centralized training programs, and perhaps also the subject of an article for the NALP newsletter in the future.

## **C. Membership Relations and Membership Development (by Elizabeth Carr)**

Elizabeth Carr plans to connect with those who were new to our last call and ask for feedback on the types of topics they would like to see covered. Specifically, for this upcoming quarter she would like to focus on how members are incorporating the new ABA Professional Identity formation requirement into their traditional Professional Development programming.

## **D. Professional Identity Formation (by Leanne Fuith and Erika Pont)**

The Professional Identity Formation Work Group continues to plan a webinar series for NALP members on the introduction of ABA Standard 303 and how law schools and legal employers can work together on the development of a law student's professional identity (Standard 303(b)) and provide education to law students on bias, cross-cultural competency, and racism (Standard 303(c)). As set forth in the last report, the three-part webinar series will include a session on foundations of professional identity formation, the intersection of professional identity formation and diversity, equity, and inclusion, and law student and lawyer health and wellness as a professional identity formation skill. The co-chairs of the Professional Identity Formation workgroup are collaborating with members of the Lawyer Professional Development section, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion section, and the Well-Being Interest group to plan these sessions.

Since the last report, the Vice Chairs have made progress on identifying speakers for the first webinar, intended to be a primer for those unfamiliar with professional identity formation. After consultation with NALP, they are targeting mid-March for the opening webinar. This webinar is well-timed to provide a foundation for the many professional identity-related topics at the Annual Education Conference: including the Vice-Chairs' presentation on how to build a bridge to practice through professional identity formation in law school education and professional development programming.

### **E. Knowledge Management and Resource Implementation (by Stacy Keehn)**

Stacy Keehn will be stepping down from her role as of February 10, due to a change of employer which will see her move to a firm. Stacy is working in the outstanding assignment from the Knowledge Management and Resource Implementation Advisory Group Vice Chair Kick-Off Meeting.

### **F. Communications, Social Media, & Marketing (by Oscar Teran)**

Oscar Teran, continues to create social media posts for NALP's LinkedIn page. As of February 2023, the Section has created 3 LinkedIn posts, thus satisfying the Section goal of producing 3 LinkedIn posts during the course of the year.

Our posts have highlighted resources and topics central to the work of law student professional development. We have created posts featuring the "Developing the Professional Lawyer" video series, which provide quick tips on common professional development questions; NALP's "Diversity Best Practices Guide," which is a compilation of best diversity and inclusion practices, and the NALP E-Guides on E-Professionalism, which provide practical resources for maintaining a professional presence online. The Section's social media posts have proven popular on NALP's LinkedIn page and have helped increase awareness and participation with the work of the Law Student Professional Development Section.

In addition to creating social media content, the Social Media & Marketing Work Group has also used NALP Connect to highlight the work of Section member Diana Mercer, Career Development Director at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. Diana has partnered with the Law Firm Professional Development Section to develop a "Business of Law" professional development curriculum for students. This exciting curriculum educates students and new lawyers on the business side of law, helping them understand how law firms operate as a business. Using NALP Connect, we were able to help Diana recruit schools that will pilot the curriculum and help the authors further refine the curriculum before a widespread launch.