

NALP LAWYER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SECTION

Quarterly Report to the Board of Directors
July 1, 2010
Gillian Murray, Bryan Cave LLP, Section Chair

SUMMARY

The first quarter of the 2010-2011 NALP year was dedicated to establishing volunteers in key positions; determining the scope and focus of work groups and potential projects; and the solicitation, review, and selection of proposals for the Professional Development Institute and NALP's 2011 Annual Conference.

KEY ROLES

Section Executive Committee: Gillian Murray, Michele Bendekovic (Steptoe & Johnson) and Emily Leeson (Alston & Bird)

Liaison to Diversity Section: Alexandra Mai (Vinson & Elkins)

A member of both sections, Alexandra serves as our single point of contact on common issues, particularly the retention of women of color.

Liaison to Technology & Research Advisory Group: Kay Nash (Wiley Rein)

Kay will ensure that NALP's 2010-11 surveys (whether snapshot or comprehensive) include professional development issues.

WORK GROUPS

Lawyer Professional Development Best Practices: Liz Tingey, Vice Chair (Andrews Kurth)

Liz will ensure that key information (best practices, hot topics) from the sessions at NALP's annual Professional Development Institute is shared with the membership at large. She serves as the Section's liaison to the conference planning team, and will collaborate with the work group's volunteers to determine how to best disseminate information following the 2010 Professional Development Institute.

Lawyer/Law Student Professional Development Collaboration: Kris Butler, Section Vice Chair (Holland & Knight)

Kris services as our section's vice chair for this work group; Meg Reuter (New York Law School) is the other vice-chair. Their focus for the 2010-11 year will be on one item from the NALP Strategic Plan: "Conduct research on lawyer PD issues from recruitment through retirement."

While it is generally acknowledged that there is a gap between what law students learn in school and what skills they need to practice law, more research needs to be done. The work group plans a conduct a survey that will ask newer associates what skills and experiences they received as students are serving them well, which ones less so, and what is missing in their backgrounds or

law school education that they wish they had. They will also survey employers on which skills and experiences make newer associates most effective, from their point of view. The work group envisions the survey will be conducted during the second half of 2010, with the final report going to NALP in early 2011.

REQUEST FOR CONFERENCE PROPOSALS

The solicitation, review, and selection of proposals for the Professional Development Institute and NALP's 2011 Annual Conference was undertaken by the Executive Committee members and Liz Tingey, the section's liaison to the PDI conference planning team. At the conclusion of the process, a total of 12 proposals were submitted on our section's behalf (six for each conference). Three of the annual conference proposals were co-sponsored with other NALP sections.

Professional Development Institute:

- Turning Partners into Powerful Presenters (Marsha Redmon)
- Making Lemonade: Getting Best Results from Videoconference Training and Other Distance Methods (Marsha Redmon)
- Connecting the Strategic Goals of Your Law Firm and Its Clients to Your Professional Development Program (Tammy Patterson, NALP Foundation; Caren Stacy, Lawyer Development Strategies)
- All Roads Lead to Rome: Effective Strategies for Integrating & Building PD Programming Regardless of Where You Start or What You Have (Jeanne Picht, Stites & Harbison)
- Budgeting & Financial Savvy for the PD Professional (Kay Nash, Wiley Rein; J.D. Neary, McGuireWoods; Colleen O'Hara, Arent Fox)
- Strengths-Based Talent Development: Practical & Effective Approaches for Law Firms (Cindy Pladziewicz, Thompson and Knight; Steve Records, Gallup)

NALP Annual Education Conference 2011:

- Who Moved My Career? Coaching and Counseling During a Legal Upheaval (Sang Lee, SJL Attorney Search; Jim Lovelace, Pillsbury Winthrop; Dana Morris, University of Maryland School of Law [Panel] and Gillian Murray, Bryan Cave [Moderator]) *Co-Sponsor: Diversity Section*
- Bridging the Gap: Cross-Departmental Collaboration for Successful Hiring and Retention (Erin Springer, Alston & Bird; Amy Hancock, Andrews Kurth; Dyana Barninger, Cadwalader) *Co-Sponsor: Recruiting Section*
- Interpreting the Law School Transcript: The Insiders' Guide to Law School Curriculum (Meg Reuter, New York Law School; Bill Henderson, Indiana University Maurer School of Law; Sue Schechter, UC-Berkeley) *Co-Sponsor: Law Student PD Section*
- New Models of Leadership for a Changing Profession (Ida Abbott, Abbott Consulting; Terri Mottershead, DLA Piper)
- Building Bench Strength: Succession Planning Strategies (Sue Manch, Shannon & Manch; Gillian Murray, Bryan Cave)

- Practical and Innovative Assignment Systems: How to Make Your Staffing Function a Critical Professional Development Tool (Dyana Barninger and Doug Ebeling, Cadwalader; Milana Hogan, Sullivan & Cromwell)

BULLETIN ARTICLES & WEBINARS

Articles — As of this report, the section is planning two articles: one related to topics presented at the annual Professional Development Institute (highlights and/or best practices), and another related to the research survey that the Lawyer/Law Student Professional Development Work Group is planning to conduct (see above). In addition, we plan to follow up with the contacts of any declined PDI or annual conference proposals after the notification date of July 21 to see if they would be interested in writing an article instead.

Webinar — As of this report, the section is planning to develop a webinar on "how to stress training & developing associates in an environment of increased scrutiny and demand for efficiency" (per the NALP Long Range Strategic Plan). Taught by Marian Lee of Brownstein Hyatt, the program would focus on the importance of effective risk management to firms and clients, and how to use its connection to associate professional development to gain buy-in for the latter.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

Budget Issues:

While the funds for conference attendance are still not forthcoming, attendees on the quarterly call reported a loosening of constraints on office-to-office travel as well as slightly increased budgets over FY 2009 (although everyone agreed they'd probably never go back to pre-downturn levels). Several participants also noted that they were being "more circumspect" about the budget process, i.e. they're not aware that something is an absolute 'no' but they are very aware of ensuring the best use of resources.

Training/PD Issues:

Attendance at programs is down; some section members asked their vendors if they had seen the same thing with other clients – the vendors concurred. This lack of attendance seems counter-intuitive considering the increase in attorney downtime. The consensus was that associates are so concerned about missing a potential assignment (and therefore additional billable hours) when partners "walk the halls" that they are afraid to leave their desk for any length of time. Several participants said that they have encouraged associates to take advantage of just-in-time learning through their firm's online CLE contracts to mitigate this concern.

Participants on the quarterly call also noted that their firms are holding more CLE sessions for clients, and that such training seemed to be increasingly on partners' radar screens. Section members are using this upswing in engagement to remind partners of other resources that professional development can provide.

In addition, it was noted that the topic of law firm economics is becoming a standard part of their curriculums. Section members weren't sure whether this focus arose from internal pressure (the firm's need for attorneys to understand their industry) or external (the client's demand that attorneys add value by having a baseline of business knowledge). However, all agreed that law firm economics is now following the same path in attorney professional development as marketing/business development did previously –first, as a topic taught solely to partners; then to senior associates; then as a key, core competency taught to all attorneys with a different emphasis at each level.

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In conclusion, the Lawyer Professional Development Section thanks NALP for its ongoing support and expertise, and welcomes any feedback from the Board of Directors.