

FBA-SAN DIEGO CHAPTER PLAN FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Introduction

The high-level goals of this Plan are to actively engage groups that have been historically underrepresented in the legal profession (including racial and ethnic minorities, women, LGBTQ individuals, and those with disabilities (collectively referred to herein as “diverse lawyers”)), to communicate a welcoming atmosphere to all members of the legal profession, to mentor and retain diverse lawyers in the FBA-San Diego Chapter’s membership, and to provide clear paths to Chapter leadership for diverse lawyers.

I. MEMBERSHIP

Goal 1: Evaluate Current State of Diversity

The Chapter is committed to demonstrating diversity at both the membership level and the leadership level. To measure the progress of our upcoming diversity efforts, it is necessary to evaluate our starting point. To do so, the Chapter will review its own membership demographics and initiatives, and compare these against external information. Once an analysis has been conducted, the Chapter will identify areas of improvement and create a work plan to achieve short- and long-term diversity goals.

To analyze current Chapter demographics, the Chapter will review its monthly Chapter Membership Reports and other data sources to identify any diversity trends over the past year, and to serve as a baseline for the upcoming year’s diversity initiatives. An initial survey of available data,¹ recommendations on short- and long-term goals to track, and a proposed schedule for assessment will be completed by designated members² of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (“DEI”) Committee by the June Board meeting.

Goal 2: Integrate with Law School Diversity Plans

Designated member(s) of Chapter’s DEI Committee will establish contact with each of the local law schools to develop a means to share DEI programs by the FBA and the school, means of assessing and providing recommendations for improvement of DEI initiatives at the school and the FBA.

Goal 3: Incorporate Diversity into Your Recruitment Plan

¹ The Chapter will consider many sources, including other FBA Chapter Membership Reports; information from the presiding law licensing body; information from local affinity bars; local demographics from census; national benchmarks; surveys to the Chapter; and conversion data of diversity-guided recruitment and retention Chapter efforts.

² A list of such designations will be maintained by the DEI Committee Chair(s).

The Chapter will develop a means to effectively and regularly engage diverse lawyers and Affinity Bars in its activities. As an initial step, designated members of the DEI Committee will reach out to state-wide Affinity Bars and/or local Affinity Bars to determine whether there is a listserv or other means of quickly communicating with Affinity Bars. If not, they will create a listserv of bars in collaboration with the Affinity Bar Liaisons. Once the list of Affinity Bars' contacts is established, the designated Committee members will ensure that invitations and other key communications are distributed to the Affinity Bars' contact list. Alternatively, the Chapter will ask that Affinity Bar Liaisons serve as conduits for sharing Chapter information with the memberships of their respective Affinity Bars.

By the June Chapter Board meeting, following adoption of this DEI Plan, the DEI Committee Chair(s) will cause the Chapter to publish the Chapter's DEI Plan. At the March, June, September, and December Chapter Board meetings, the DEI Committee Chair(s) will provide a written summary of efforts to implement the Chapter's DEI Plan to the Chapter's Board.

Goal 4: Create Diversity Mentorship Program

a. Promote diversity within FBA's existing law student mentorship program

To increase diversity within the FBA's existing law school mentorship program, the Chapter will ensure that law schools in the area have knowledge of the mentorship opportunities, and encourage members of the FBA to commit to serve as mentors.

Beginning in summer of 2022 prior to mentorship application program and continuously thereafter, the DEI Committee Chair(s) and DEI Committee Members will (a) coordinate communication with nearby law schools and promote the FBA's mentorship program to diverse student groups; (b) encourage FBA members to serve as mentors; (c) highlight successful experiences from diverse participants to further promote the FBA mentorship program; and (d) reflect on challenges to better determine how to achieve this goal.

b. Encourage FBA collaboration with diverse organizations' existing mentorship programs for new lawyers

To increase diversity within the FBA, the Chapter will collaborate with diverse groups and cross-promote mentorship opportunities since many diverse groups have existing mentorship programs that may not be known to FBA members.

Beginning in fall of 2022 and continuously thereafter, the DEI Committee Chair(s) and DEI Committee Members will (a) identify diverse organizations; (b) coordinate with diverse organizations to cross-promote mentorship opportunities; and (c) reflect on challenges to better determine how to work together to achieve this goal.

II. LEADERSHIP

Goal 5: Increase Diversity of Chapter Leadership

As greater diversity is fostered in each Chapter's membership, greater diversity in leadership should follow. To ensure that this goal is achieved, the Chapter will: (1) develop a Chapter leadership application and nomination process that is cognizant of diversity; (2) publicize leadership and speaking opportunities to diverse lawyers and Affinity Bars; and (3) investigate and explore alternative avenues to cultivate diversity and inclusion in Chapter leadership.

a. Develop Chapter leadership application and nomination process

By the June 2022 Board meeting, the DEI Committee Chair(s) and DEI Committee Members will propose to the Board an application and nomination form and process for new leaders that is cognizant of the goal of achieving a more diverse and inclusive Chapter leadership. In adopting this application, it is essential that the Board adopt a specific plan for seeking nominations from diverse attorneys in consultation with FBA members and leaders, Affinity Bar Liaisons, the federal bench, and other community leaders.

To implement this sub-goal, the Chapter will establish a leadership nomination subcommittee and assign two Board members as well as the President and President-elect to consider nominations.

b. Publish and publicize leadership opportunities

Once an application and nomination process is developed, the DEI Committee Chair(s) will cause the Chapter to publish information about that process and leadership opportunities on the Chapter website, social media, and Chapter newsletter no later than 14 days before the application deadline. Information about the application and nomination process and leadership opportunities will also be circulated by email to Affinity Bars through their members on the DEI Committee.

The Chapter will also publish on its website any opportunities for involvement in Chapter committees, which will also be circulated by email to Affinity Bars through their members on the DEI Committee.

Affinity Bar Liaisons should be contacted and asked to assist with publicizing opportunities. Chapter committee involvement is an ideal means of broadening diversity within the Chapter ranks and offers a doorway for future leadership opportunities. This is considered a crucial step in ultimately fostering a more diverse Chapter leadership. Ideally, these efforts should be led by the Chapter President and DEI Committee Chair(s) in consultation with the Chapter's executive board leadership.

c. Investigate and explore avenues to cultivate diversity in Chapter leadership

The Board should engage in conversations about means to cultivate a more diverse and inclusive Chapter leadership, including consultation, brainstorming, and collaboration with Affinity Bar Liaisons and their respective organizations, among others.

Chapter leadership will actively seek out programs and conferences designed to foster more thoughtful leadership and increase diversity, such as the American Bar Association’s Collaborative Bar Leadership Program, which is a joint initiative of the American Bar Association’s Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession and the Commission on Disability Rights, the Hispanic National Bar Association, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the National LGBT Bar Association, and the National Native American Bar Association.

Chapter leadership will also engage the federal judiciary locally and the young lawyers or law clerks committees in this endeavor, as they can serve as a conduit between the Chapter and newer diverse attorneys in the community who may wish to get involved in bar activities broadly.

III. INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 6: Identify Diversity Goals in Chapter Programming

Incorporating diversity into Chapter programming will include a focus on both the presenters and the topics presented.

Regarding diversity of presenters, the Legal Education Committee and Special Events Committee will consider the diversity of panelists at every programming event, striving to include at least one diverse panelist for any panel of three or more, and two diverse panelists for panels of five or more. Engaging diverse panelists who have not previously interacted with the FBA is a mutually beneficial opportunity to increase the panelist’s profile and to increase the panelist’s awareness of the FBA.

At least one programming event per year will include a topic related to diversity and inclusion. At the annual Board retreat, the Board will discuss the diverse presentation topic for the year, determine who will spearhead the organization of the programming, and determine the forum for the programming if it will be part of a broader set of programs or the month the programming will occur if it will be a standalone event.

Goal 7: Address Accessibility of Members and Prospective Members

Disabled members and prospective members require the FBA to address issues of accessibility in order to grow and retain members and to ensure that the Chapter and its activities are inclusive and open to all. In this vein, the Chapter will hold events in locations where accessibility of venues is taken into consideration.³ This may mean limiting or avoiding events at older locations built pre-ADA that *may* have lower construction standards on accessibility (subject to expert guidance),

³ The Chapter will identify and authorize funding for as-needed consultation with an ADA coordinator, and will designate its DEI Co-Chairs as responsible for accessibility on an ongoing basis. The Chapter will adopt a requirement that larger conferences or meetings (200+) will include a dedicated resource related to accessibility (e.g., a webpage detailing accessible parking maps, entrances, resources, etc.). The ABA has also created a tool kit addressing accessibility of programming at:

The Chapter will also adopt and publish the following policy⁴ on accessibility:

The FBA-SD will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its programs, services, and activities. The FBA-SD will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities. The FBA-SD will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in the Chapter's programs, services, and activities, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, vision or other impairments. Anyone who makes a reasonable request for an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the FBA-SD, should contact FBA-SD's DEI Committee Chair(s) as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours before the scheduled event. Complaints that a program, service, or activity of the FBA-SD is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to the DEI Committee Chair(s).

IV. OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIP

Goal 8: Use and Build Community Relationships

Developing relationships with local affinity bar associations (“Affinity Bars”) is an essential step in building diversity, equality, and inclusiveness within the Chapter. To that end, the Chapter will identify local affinity bar associations and a Chapter Board Member who will be responsible for developing a relationship with an assigned affinity bar association (“Affinity Bar Liaisons”).

The Chapter’s Affinity Bar Liaisons will build bridges with their respective Affinity Bars by, among other things: (1) listening to members, including leaders, of the Affinity Bars and seeking to understand the perspectives, needs, and resources of the Affinity Bars; (2) where possible, establishing formal relationships with the Affinity Bars, including proposing reciprocal Board positions or facilitating opportunities for Chapter committee and leadership involvement; (3) regularly informing the Chapter’s leaders and other members of the perspectives, priorities, and key events of the Affinity Bars; (4) attending key events of the Affinity Bars; and (5) over time and as appropriate, inviting members of the Affinity Bar, including leaders, to become involved in Chapter events and join the FBA.

The goal of these Affinity Bar Liaisons will be to strengthen the relationship between the Chapter and the Affinity Bars and, ultimately, increase the diversity of membership in the FBA.

V. COMMUNICATION

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/diversity/disabilityrights/resources/access_info/; *see also* <https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap1toolkit.htm>; .

⁴ This policy is modeled after the Oregon State Bar’s policy: <https://www.osbar.org/ada/adanotice.html>.

Goal 9: Incorporate Diversity & Inclusion into Communication Plan

The Chapter will incorporate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (“DEI”) into its Communication Plan and develop a plan to incorporate DEI messaging when communicating with Chapter leaders, members, and prospective members. As a first step, once finalized and approved by the Board, the Chapter President will distribute copies of the Chapter’s DEI Plan to each Chapter leader, including all officers, board members, committee chairs, YLD board members, and law school chapter board members (together, “Chapter Leadership”).

By one month from the adoption of this DEI Plan, the Chapter President will send a letter or email to Chapter Leadership stressing the Chapter’s DEI Mission Statement, their role in the Chapter’s DEI Plan, and the requirement that they implement the Chapter’s D&I Plan.

Annually, by the June Board meeting, the Chapter President will ask Chapter Leadership to provide a written summary of their efforts to implement the Chapter’s DEI Plan.

The Chapter will explore mechanisms for sharing and publicizing DEI information, including community events and initiatives, and the Chapter’s findings and progress concerning DEI demographics and other matters.