

Update from the Board of Governors

December 2020 Meeting Highlights

The CBA Board of Governors (BOG) met virtually on December 11, 2020, closing out a year of many challenges. The meeting highlights below illustrate the progress that CBA sections and groups have made in the face of 2020's adversity.

Welcome

CBA President Jessica Brown opened the meeting, wishing everyone well during these difficult times. Jessica thanked the legal community and CBA staff for the ceaseless work of strengthening our legal community. She also encouraged members to step forward as leaders in the legal and greater community. Jessica recognized Immediate Past President Kathleen Hearn Croshal for her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kathleen thanked staff and members and shared some of the positives of her year, including the opportunity to make new contacts and friends.

Greater Colorado Task Force

Greater Colorado Task Force (GCTF) Chair Ian McCargar summarized the group's accomplishments over the past year and outlined what's ahead for the coming year. The GCTF was formed in late 2019 to focus on the "E" goal of the CBA's REFOCUS strategic plan. Eight task force members from around the state were appointed to carry out the following initiatives:

- engage under-represented and statewide populations by improving and ensuring their inclusion at all levels of the CBA;
- build symbiotic relations with specialty bars;

- use technology to better reach members statewide; and
- strengthen local bar associations.

The GCTF identified CBA programs and CBA's benefits structure as key areas through which to maximize the use of technology and impact local bar resources. A report on this plan is being prepared now for presentation to the CBA Executive Council (EC) in the spring and the BOG in June 2021. Questions on the GCTF should be directed to Ian McCargar at imccargar@windvorgov.com.

Young Lawyers Division

CBA YLD Chair Spencer Rubin provided a rundown of the YLD's recent activities:

- The BOG increased the CBA YLD's board size from 16 to 22 members to enhance the YLD's ability to carry out its programs.
- In response to the pandemic, the YLD has expanded its free online offerings to members. Programs have largely centered on current events and challenges, wellness issues, election laws, and EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusivity) initiatives.
- More than 30 section liaisons attended a successful YLD Section Liaison Summit and Orientation. Liaisons from each section are now active with the YLD and are attending the monthly meetings.
- The work of the Federal Legal Appearance Program (FLAP) is proceeding slowly right now due to COVID restrictions on court appearances, but volunteer trainings and orientations are still being held so young lawyers can hit the ground

running when the restrictions are lifted. FLAP, a collaboration between YLD and the federal court, was created during Immediate Past Chair Danaé Woody's term to enable young lawyers to assist pro se litigants while gaining valuable experience in federal court.

- Colorado Diverse Attorney Community Circle (CODACC), a community networking space for diverse attorneys around the state, will take off in 2022 when in-person restrictions are expected to be lifted. CODACC is being designed as a year-long program to help diverse members feel more connected and will include activities such as retreats, leadership speakers, CLEs, and networking events.
- The YLD will expand its communications platforms in 2021 by providing LinkedIn content for CBA's account to promote young lawyers.

Please reach out to Spencer Rubin at spencermrubin@gmail.com or Chair-elect Mallory Hasbrook at malloryhasbrook@gmail.com with questions about any YLD programs.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity

The CBA has several initiatives aimed at accomplishing EDI in all facets of the legal community.

Diversity on the Bench Coalition

Judge Gary Jackson, co-chair of the Diversity on the Bench Coalition, provided a snapshot of the Coalition's recent progress in appointments to the bench. In 2018 Judge Bill Robins announced his retirement. At that time, he was the single Black judge out of 181 district court judges in the state. Also in 2018, Judge Karen Ashby announced her retirement, at which time she was the only Black judge out of 29 appellate court judges in the state. In 2019 there were a total of eight Black judges out of 356 judicial officers in the state. In 2020, Governor Polis appointed six Black and five Latino judges.

Coalition Co-chair Patricia Jarzowski noted that 19 Coordinating Council members have been meeting for the past year to design an Action Plan. The Plan addresses five primary areas in judicial appointments:

1. candidates,
2. judicial nominating commissions,
3. deciding officials,
4. accountability and tracking, and
5. messaging and promoting.

During the next six months the team will begin implementing the first round of action steps.

Joint Steering Committee

Patricia Jarzowski, chair of the CBA/DBA EDI Joint Steering Committee (JSC), opened discussion on the JSC's "pillars to success." Pillar one leader Ryann Peyton talked about the diversity pipeline, which has three main objectives: to create a standard and inclusive leadership selection process; to standardize the application and interview process, creating a consistent and inclusive process; and to create a list of members who noted interest.

Courtney Holm spoke on pillar two, whose focus is messaging. The team is preparing to launch a weekly podcast series in January and is currently looking into video opportunities. The team has published several articles in *Colorado Lawyer* and *The Loop*.

Melissa Schwartz reported on pillar three, the implementation committee, whose main goal was to create a section leadership toolkit. The toolkit is now fully up and running! Visit <https://www.cobar.org/For-Members/Committees/Section-Diversity-Inclusivity-Toolkit>.

Judge Mariana Vielma spoke for the fourth pillar: accountability. All leaders will complete individual actions plans. Accountability will focus on identifying diversity, auditing the committee to find gaps, identifying people who are interested in leadership, and having members identify one to three EDI activities they plan to complete during their term. The accountability plan includes a recent leadership survey sent to collect accurate data that can be used to measure progress and create a more equitable and diverse leadership.

Racial Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusivity (REDI) Committee

CBA EC member Jon Olafson reported on the REDI Committee, whose initial goals were to revise the mission and vision statements,

which was accomplished and approved by the EC. The EC also approved a statement on solidarity in late summer. To make sure that the REDI Committee continues long into the future, the EC passed a policy making the REDI Committee a standing committee of the EC and a permanent agenda item on all EC meetings.

In the last few months the Committee also set ambassadorial tasks designed for the EC to lead by example and boost the leadership pipeline, and it created a REDI Blueprint, a guidebook for ensuring the EC meets its REDI-related goals. Finally, the Committee is setting up a CBA Community page to support those who want to undertake the ABA's 21 Day Racial Equality Habit-Building Challenge.

EDICLE

Kevin McReynolds reported on the joint efforts of the CBA, DBA, and Presidents' Diversity Council with the Colorado Supreme Court's Continuing Legal and Judicial Education Committee (CLJE) to create a new CLE requirement. Similar rules have been adopted in 10 other states so far. The proposed rule would add EDI CLEs as a separate two-hour requirement starting in 2023. The CLJE is setting a meeting to review and potentially approve the proposal, which would then follow the path for Supreme Court approval.

Bylaws Committee Update

Judson Hite is chair of the Bylaws Committee, which was formed under Kathleen Hearn Croshal's presidency to take a fresh look at the bylaws and align them with the REFOCUS 20/20 Strategic Plan to remove barriers for diversity and inclusivity initiatives. The Bylaws Committee also reviewed Bar operations under COVID pandemic conditions and operational changes brought about by the CBA-CLE governance interface.

The Committee worked on adopting a CBA mission, vision and values, and non-discrimination policy. Currently it's working on streamlining meeting notices, attendance requirements, voting, and electoral procedures for the BOG and EC, and creating preformation procedures for new sections. The Committee is also exploring new concepts with the GCTF

to alternate the rotation of CBA presidents to offer greater opportunity for candidates outside of region one who now have to wait 12 years to serve. The plan is to present the proposed changes/additions to the bylaws to the EC in early 2021 and to the BOG in June.

Disaster Legal Services

Kathleen Schoen, CBA access to justice and local bar relations director, shared the widespread impact of disaster legal services. The CBA is supporting its own programs and outside collaborative programs to assist volunteers in helping those in need. To this end, CBA launched the "Its Our Turn" pro bono recruitment campaign, working with Succession to Service and local pro bono programs throughout the state.

The Legislative Front

Andrew White, CBA's legislative relations director, summarized the recent accomplishments of the CBA Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). Over the past year, the LPC worked on 27 legislative measures involving a wide range of matters, including corporate, employment, real estate, elder law, and civil rights. Notably, the LPC worked with the courts on COVID-19 issues and creating new remote witnessing rules.

Leading with Empathy

A meeting high point was Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser's presentation on leading with empathy. A transcript of his speech appears in this month's President's Message.

Colorado Bar Foundation

Colorado Bar Foundation Chair Loren Brown updated the BOG on the CBA's charitable giving arm. This year the Foundation awarded 32 separate grants totaling \$128,000 to promote access to justice-related programs, enhance law-related education, and improve the administration of justice.

Looking Forward

As the CBA marches into 2021 with the pandemic still looming, there is no doubt that its challenges will continue. But the Bar remains true to its mission and will forge ahead to meet the needs of its member and the legal community at large. 