VACANCY ON COUNCIL ON ACCESS & FAIRNESS

The State Bar Council on Access & Fairness is seeking applications for the 2010 Committee year. The Council on Access and Fairness advises the Board of Governors on advancing State Bar diversity strategies and goals. The diversity pipeline includes the early education pipeline K to 12; college, law school and bar exam prep; recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion in the profession; and judicial diversity. The 25-member Council consists of both attorney and public members from diverse constituencies and practice settings. The Council seeks new members who will have experience that represents the full spectrum of the diversity pipeline. New members are expected to have a working knowledge of diversity pipeline issues and experience developing and implementing strategic initiatives to address the issues.

In alignment with the COAF mission, vision statement, strategies, and goals (see below), we are seeking Council members who have fulfilled the following qualities:

- A demonstrated working knowledge of diversity pipeline issues
- A sustained record of leadership and actual performance addressing challenges along the diversity pipeline
- A proven ability to engage in strategic visioning and to work in a “think tank” model towards fulfilling the Council’s vision and mission statement

The applicant also must have the ability to:

- Create, focus on and implement initiatives that have an impact on the full pipeline
- Produce institutional and attitudinal changes to create a culture of inclusion within the legal profession and judiciary that fosters diversity;
- Serve as a catalyst for change by framing and communicating ways to respond to diversity challenges on the part of the legal profession and to inspire and empower potential lawyers from diverse communities;
- Lead, partner, collaborate or coordinate with existing entities and individuals already working toward the goal of diversity within the justice system to achieve that goal; and/or
- Create mechanisms to measure change in the diversity of the legal profession over time.

Areas of Focus: The COAF focuses on initiatives in the four diversity areas along the pipeline including: Early Education Pipeline; College/Law School/Bar Exam; Legal Profession (e.g. recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion); and the Judiciary. The COAF will consider the qualifications of all applicants in light of its current needs for expertise in these specific aspects of its work.

For further information about the Council go to www.calbar.org/AFCouncil
APPLICATION FORM: The WORD version of the application form can be found on the State Bar website at www.calbar.ca.gov (lower left menu “appointments application” – under the OLIO section). Complete and print the form and send to the State Bar (address below).

DEADLINE: Persons interested in being considered now are encouraged to submit their application by MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2010.

FORWARD APPLICATIONS TO:
Karen Hagelund, Appointments Office
The State Bar of California
180 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Patricia Lee, Special Assistant for Diversity and Bar Relations
(415) 538-2240 or patricia.lee@calbar.ca.gov

Brandi Holmes,
Senior Administrative Assistant, Access & Fairness Programs
(415) 538-2587 or brandi.holmes@calbar.ca.gov

For your reference: Council Mission, Vision, Goals and Strategies

Introduction

Equal access to and fairness in the justice system are vital to the effective operation of that system. In recognition of these important goals, three governmental bodies in the State of California are focused on addressing issues related to access and fairness in the judicial system and the legal profession. The work of these groups is summarized below. Their work is interrelated and informs and supports the work of the others. The groups are:

- The Access and Fairness Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council of California, which monitors and examines issues related to access to the judicial system and fairness in the state courts and makes recommendations to the Judicial Council that promote racial, ethnic, gender, disability, and sexual orientation fairness in the judicial branch. In addition, the committee submits proposals to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Education Division/Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) for the education and training of judicial officers and court staff.

- The California Commission on Access to Justice, made up of lawyers and judges, as well as academic, business, labor and community leaders, appointed by the State Bar of California and other statewide entities, which explores ways to improve access to civil justice for Californians living on low and moderate incomes, including the establishment of the Equal Access Fund and other funding sources for civil legal services to the underserved.
• The State Bar of California, Council on Access and Fairness, which advises the State Bar Board of Governors on strategies to enhance diversity opportunities and advancement in the legal profession. “Opportunities” encompass leadership development and appointment to State Bar entities, as well as initiatives to educate students about the law and career opportunities in the law. “Advancement” encompasses recruitment, employment, retention and promotion in the legal profession. The Council is composed of 25 attorney and public members appointed by the Board of Governors. The membership represents a wide range of stakeholders engaged in programs and initiatives focusing on increasing diversity in the legal profession. Consistent with State Bar appointments policies and diversity criteria, Council members are drawn from diverse constituencies, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity and national origin; gender; age; sexual orientation and transgender; disabilities; large, small and solo firms; government and public sector practice; domestic corporate and private firm practice; P-12, college and universities and law schools; and the judiciary. The vision, mission, goals, strategies, objectives and desired outcomes of The State Bar of California Council on Access and Fairness are detailed, below.

### COAF Vision:

The council’s vision is of a culture of inclusion within California legal and judicial communities that accommodates the needs of California’s diverse population and ensures that the justice system delivers procedural fairness and substantive justice to the people of California; of a legal profession comprised of a diverse population of attorneys (including minorities, women, LGBT, seniors, and persons with disabilities); of the elimination of the educational achievement gap between diverse K through 12 students and other student populations; of equal access for diverse students to enhanced educational opportunities and information about the legal profession to cultivate and support their interest and involvement in the judicial system, and of a student population that understand its role and responsibilities as active participants in our democracy.

### COAF Mission:

The mission of the Council on Access and Fairness is to advise the State Bar Board of Governors on appropriate strategies, consistent with State Bar policies and procedures, that enhance opportunities and advancement in the legal profession for diverse populations, particularly those who have been historically underrepresented. “Opportunities” encompasses leadership development and appointments to State Bar entities, as well as initiatives to educate students about the law and career opportunities in the law, referred to as education “pipeline” initiatives. “Advancement” encompasses recruitment, employment, retention and advancement in the legal profession. The Council will also screen candidates for the Annual Diversity Awards.
COAF Long-Range Goals and Strategies:

Long-Range Goals:

GOAL 1. Barriers are eliminated and diversity is encouraged all along the California educational pipeline (from preschool through admission to the legal profession).

GOAL 2. The California legal profession and judiciary will reflect the rich diversity of the California population and respect the cultural values of their constituents.

Strategies:

Strategy 1. Produce Institutional and Attitudinal Changes. Produce institutional and attitudinal changes to create a culture of inclusion within the legal profession and judiciary that fosters diversity.

Strategy 2. Communicate to Inspire and Engage Diversity. Serve as a catalyst for change by framing and communicating ways to respond to diversity challenges to inspire and empower potential lawyers from diverse communities.

Strategy 3. Partner, Collaborate and Coordinate to Achieve Diversity.

Partner, collaborate and coordinate with existing entities and individuals already working toward the goal of diversity within the justice system to achieve that goal.

Strategy 4. Measure Change. Create mechanisms to measure change in the diversity of the legal profession over time.
State Bar Appointments Overview and Tips for Applicants

Benefits of volunteering for a State Bar subentity

- Helps improve the legal profession
- Increases diversity within the State Bar volunteer structure
- Increases visibility for your practice/firm/company/office/organization/local bar association
- Creates networking and professional development opportunities

Variety of sections, committees, and commissions (Appointments 12-page handout summarizes all of the committees)

- 10 standing committees
- 16 section executive committees
- 15 special committees

Application timeline (information also included on front page, right column of Appointments 12-page handout)

- **February 1, 2010** – DEADLINE for applications to Standing, Section Executive and Special Committees as well as ABA House of Delegates and Judicial Council
- **February - April** – Individual subentities review appointment applications and make recommendations to Board Member Involvement Relations and Services (MIRS)
- **May** – MIRS considers appointment recommendations
- **June 1** – DEADLINE for applications to the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (a.k.a. JNE Commission)
- **July** – MIRS considers remaining recommendations; Board of Governors makes appointments
- **July - August** – Official appointment letters and letters to the applicants not selected are mailed
- **August** – MIRS and the Board of Governors consider the appointments to JNE
- **September 23-26, 2010** State Bar Annual Meeting, San Diego; terms for new members and officers for 2009-2010 begin upon close of meeting, September 27, 2010. JNE terms begin February 1, 2011.
Overall practical tips for completing and submitting a “successful” application

- **Read committee descriptions carefully** (expectations, number of meetings, State Bar reimbursement for pre-approved travel, etc) and make sure you can meet the prerequisites and expectations of the committee.

- **Follow the instructions on front page of application;** note “Committee Preferences”—you must submit a separate application for each committee; you can apply for up to 3 but can only be appointed to one; include personal statement, resume/biography and maximum of 3 letters of recommendation for each committee application.

- **Letters of recommendation:** letters are not required but are very helpful and can be persuasive. The letters should address your specific leadership abilities, subject-matter experience, commitment, ability to follow through (generic letters are not as helpful).

- **Be sure to tailor your personal statement** to the charge, objectives and expectations of the committee!! Explain what you can bring to the committee and put your best foot forward. Also attach your resume.

- **Make the application legible**
  Note: the on-line application is in PDF and WORD format. Use the WORD version to complete your application, print, copy and submit (access the application on the State Bar home page [www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov) (left menu under the “olio” section).

- **Respond to “other diversity factors” on Part Two**—this is voluntary information but very useful when committees are reviewing and evaluating applications (see the next section below for the diversity factors included in the State Bar appointments policies).

- **Do NOT submit an application unless you can commit to meeting the expectations.**

- **Don’t be discouraged if you are not appointed -- sometimes the “competition” is stiff; reapply!** -- talk to the Chair, vice chair, staff liaison for feedback.
“Prerequisites” of certain sections, committees, commissions & application review process by committees

- some sections (different than committees) have a prerequisite of serving on a standing committee before being eligible to serve on the executive (governing) committee—check the State Bar Website for Section information
- relevant subject matter, local bar and other volunteer experience are important
- the activities, priorities, membership composition and number of vacancies vary with each subentity (see Appointments Booklet for projected vacancies and other information for each entity)

- all committees look at diversity of membership and applicant pool
  - diverse backgrounds consistent with The State Bar of California’s Board of Governors appointment policies, e.g. geographical location, length of time in practice, practice setting, size of firm, age, gender, race, ethnicity, and other diversity factors including, but not limited to, religious creed, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or medical condition

Where to go for more information and questions

- State Bar homepage: www.calbar.ca.gov ► Attorney Resources ► Committees and Commissions for information about the various State Bar entities
- For general information about the State Bar’s appointments process, contact the Appointments Office at 415-538-2299
- Contact the Council on Access & Fairness: Brandi Holmes at brandi.holmes@calbar.ca.gov or 415-538-2587