Leadership in Advocacy

Katherine Culliton-González
THE LEADERSHIP ISSUE
Elia Diaz-Yaeger is a Shareholder in the law firm of Lugenbuhl, Wheaton, Peck, Rankin and Hubbard. Her primary areas of practice are industrial employment/long-latency lung disease litigation, insurance defense and coverage, environmental law, commercial litigation, and Board Governance/Cybersecurity. In the last twenty years, Ms. Diaz-Yaeger has successfully defended thousands of occupational exposure claims, including exposure to asbestos and silica-containing products. Mrs. Diaz-Yaeger’s extensive litigation experience enables her to provide clients with an early strategic plan, vigorous defense, and efficient litigation.

As an AV-rated attorney, Mrs. Diaz-Yaeger was selected for the inaugural edition of the Martindale-Hubbell® Bar Register of Preeminent Women Lawyers™. Her recent professional credentials include the 2014-2015 Recipient of the Louisiana State Bar Association Human Rights Award. She is also a 2015 CityBusiness “Women of the Year” recipient and honoree. Mrs. Diaz-Yaeger actively promotes diversity and inclusion of women and Hispanics in the legal professions through various professional organizations. She is a long standing member of the Hispanic National Bar Association, where she currently serves as the National Secretary. Mrs. Diaz-Yaeger is also a member of International Association of Defense Counsel, Defense Research Institute, American Bar Association, and Louisiana State Bar Association. She is a frequent speaker and CLE presenter. Her recent professional engagements include: presenting at the 2015 DRI Asbestos Medicine Seminar; 2015 Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) diversity training seminar; 2015 LSBA presenter on professionalism; speaker at the 2012 American Bar Association mid-year meeting and 2011 HNBA National Corporate Conference; leading round-table discussions at several in-house corporate meetings; serving as a diversity facilitator for the LSBA; participating in the LSBA’s diversity and inclusion video.

In addition to her professional pursuits, Mrs. Diaz-Yaeger also serves on the Board of Directors of ASI Federal Credit Union, a Community Development Financial Institution, whose mission is to strengthen the financial health of underserved communities through financial service and education. Mrs. Diaz-Yaeger also volunteers and participates in a number of social and community programs including, Taking Steps for Crohn’s and Colitis, New Orleans Ballet, Kingsley House “friendraising,” and New Orleans Opera Association. Additionally, she is a founding member of Candy Girls/Life Savers of New Orleans, a non-profit group that supports and provides services to families in need.

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Throughout history, much has been written about what it means to be a leader. The English philosopher Herbert Spencer argued that leaders were the result of the society in which they lived. Nineteenth-century historian Thomas Carlyle believed leaders were born and not made. Over the past decades there have been countless studies and research reports, all which detail a wide variety of leadership skills, styles, and characteristics. Yet even today, it remains clear that there is no single definition of leadership. A leader is far more than a label—leadership is about taking actions to create sustained, positive transformations within an organization. Great leaders have a good attitude, are in touch with their community and organizations, seek different perspectives, are effective problem solvers, operate with a strong results orientation, and support each other. Great leaders align their own values and vision with those of their business and help operationalize them for the future.
Leadership Requires More Than “Ganas”

In 1985, a young Columbia University graduate by the name of Barack Obama arrived in Chicago, ready to begin what would become a three-year stint as a community organizer in the South Side’s poor neighborhoods, perhaps one of the more influential episodes of his life. Early on in the job, his boss gave him his first big assignment and some advice on how to organize people for collective action:

Find out their self-interest, he said. That’s why people become involved in organizing—because they think they’ll get something out of it. Once I found an issue enough people cared about, I could take them into action. With enough actions, I could start to build power.

More than thirty years later, and on the cusp of this community organizer’s historic two-term presidency, the demographics of America, and its leadership, look much different. In 1985, Latinos were only 7% of the U.S. population. Today, we’re more than 17%. In 1985, there were 14 Hispanic Members of Congress and zero Cabinet members of Latino descent. Today, we number 37 in the U.S. Congress and three in the President’s Cabinet.

It’s very symbolic and appropriate that we, the HNBA, convene this year in the city of our 44th President’s organizing days. These have been exciting and, without doubt, interesting times. With the change of administration following this year’s Presidential election, many new opportunities and challenges will present themselves. Latinos are poised to assume strong leadership positions, not only in government, but also in the vibrant tech sector and other legal and business sectors.

But to be effective leaders, caring about our community and wanting to make a difference simply isn’t enough. Edward James Olmos, as celebrated teacher Jaime Escalante, famously said, “Ganas, that’s all we need is ganas,” in the 1988 film Stand and Deliver. While I don’t disagree, I think we also need to be smart. We also need to be prepared. Luckily there’s another Spanish word that captures both those qualities. Listos. Tenemos que ser listos. Tenemos que estar listos.

We need to have the tools, skills and resources to empower our Latino/a leaders of today and tomorrow. We need to be able to inspire and motivate others to take action, build relationships to leverage power, and be honest about when we are succeeding (and when we’re not). We need to work to improve Latino representation on corporate boards, combat implicit bias in the workplace, and lift up those who’ve delivered for our community.

The HNBA model for leadership is one that not only builds on the strength of it members, but also depends on it. The National Officers, Regional Presidents, Affiliate Representatives—these are all people who have benefited from the advice and networks of their predecessors, and who will pass that along to their successors. Because a new National President is sworn in every year, this sharing of knowledge and ideas is critical to maintaining a seamless transition every time the HNBA presidential gavel is handed off to the next person. Behind that one leader are a Board of Governors, national staff, local affiliates, and past presidents helping the current one implement his or her vision of the organization for the year.

This year, as National President, I focused on expanding our reach and making sure the voices of our community were heard loud and clear. We have had resounding success. Our voice has been louder than ever before. We spoke out against vicious attacks on Mexican immigrants and diverse federal judges. We spoke out about important cases involving affirmative action, voting rights and criminal justice reform, and filed amicus briefs. We urged Congress and the President to pass critically important debt restructuring legislation for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. We sounded the alarm on the underrepresentation of Latinos in STEM education and in the tech industry. And we continue to put pressure on the Senate to hold confirmation hearings for the President’s nominee for the United States Supreme Court, so that we have a full Court to make decisions for the American people. The HNBA has strongly led in all of these areas.

At the end of this year’s convention, in the “Windy City” of Chicago, where many important leaders have emerged, I will pass the gavel onto your President-Elect and my good friend, Pedro Torres-Díaz. I’ve have worked with him closely this year, and there is no doubt that Pedro esta listo! I’m excited to see what new ideas and energy he will bring to the HNBA, but more importantly, I look forward to seeing him continue the HNBA legacy of empowering the next generation of leaders in the legal profession.

Robert T. Maldonado
HNBA National President
Colegas,

¡Bienvenidos a Chicago, La Ciudad de los Vientos! As I was sworn in last year in Boston, this convention in Chicago seemed distant and far away…and yet, here we are!

This has been an incredible and enlightening year, full of twists and wonderful moments that have energized me to follow in the steps of President Maldonado, whose leadership and vision have been quite in tune with his theme for this year, “Surging to New Heights, Expanding our Reach.” I am eternally grateful to Robert for his friendship, counsel, leadership, and strength. And of course, we could not have achieved this level of success without the support of our Board of Governors, our sponsors and strategic partners; and our National Office. To you all, I say: Mil Gracias. This year was the best example of what we can accomplish together.

Speaking of accomplishments, this Annual Convention in the City in the Garden is already a success. We have already exceeded our financial goals for the event, and thanks to the tireless efforts of the National Conference Leadership Team and many others on the ground, the event promises to be as informative and powerful as ever. In such an important election year, that could determine the future of our country for generations to come, one of our plenary sessions will discuss the role of the media in the national debate. We will also sponsor a voter registration drive, the first of many to take place throughout the nation in the coming months. And in keeping with this year’s theme, “Empowering Leaders,” another of our plenary sessions will discuss the executive appointment process and how to best position yourself for a position in government. Our programming would not be complete if we did not discuss the (still disappointing) state of Hispanics in the legal profession and how bias still keeps Hispanics at a disadvantage; two of our plenaries will discuss the continued struggle of Latinas in the legal profession, and how implicit bias affects decision making. In addition, four different tracks of Continued Legal Education will surely provide you with great insights in cutting-edge legal issues to empower you to achieve greater success in your career. And with several receptions and social events throughout the week, this convention promises to be both educational AND fun!

I urge you to take advantage of everything this convention and this wonderful city has to offer. And I urge you to roll up your sleeves and get even more involved with the HNBA. We have accomplished quite a bit, but as you know, there is still a long road ahead of us. As I take the gavel from Robert on September 9, I trust that you will join me in this arduous but exciting journey. Gracias por tu apoyo…

Pa’lante siempre…

Fuerte abrazo,

Pedro J. Torres-Díaz
HNBA National President-Elect
HNBA’s 7th Annual Corporate Counsel Conference (CCC) and 21st Annual Uvaldo Herrera Moot Court Competition took place from March 16–19, 2016 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The event was a tremendous success. Thanks to the support of our sponsors, participants, and volunteers, the HNBA held one of the best Corporate Counsel Conferences in our history.

The three-day event took place at the world-famous Caesar’s Palace. The theme for our conference, “Embracing Technology,” reflected the impact of technology in the field of law, as well as the need to understand and incorporate technology into our practices. On that note, the deployment of the mobile HNBA Event App was a great success in allowing users to monitor all activities surrounding the conference, as well as to receive updates on changes as the conference progressed.

The HNBA welcomed participants from across the country all the while providing wonderful programming for our members. The plenary sessions and continuing legal education (CLE) tracks included: public policy and government; intellectual property and litigation; in-house counsel/corporate; and, business development institute and law practice management. The CLE panels were presented by world class leaders and speakers bringing a wealth of experience and insight to our members.

The CCC also included other wonderful events that drew tremendous interest. The Minority Corporate Counsel Association provided the MCCA Blueprint Program for outside and in-house-counsel. The HNBA LGBT Division held a tremendously successful first-ever HNBA LGBT Summit featuring a roundtable panel of national LGBT and Latino leaders on the current state of affairs of Latino/a LGBT rights.

On March 17th, the HNBA Top Lawyers under 40 Awards reception was held at the Omnia Nightclub at Caesar’s Palace where we heard inspiring remarks from former Nevada State Assembly Member Lucy Flores, and we recognized the achievements of our awardees. On March 18th, we held a historic first Plenary Session of Latino/a Secretaries of State and were joined by: California Secretary of State Alex Padilla; Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea; and, Pennsylvania Secretary of State Pedro Cortés.

A special thank you to all who joined us during the HNBA’s 7th Annual Corporate Counsel Conference and 21st Annual Uvaldo Herrera Moot Court Competition in Las Vegas. You made the conference a huge success! We look forward to seeing many of you at the next CCC to be held in Miami in 2017.
The event was a tremendous success. Thanks to the support of our sponsors, participants, and volunteers, the HNBA held one of the best Corporate Counsel Conferences in our history.
The Gavel Gap:

State Courts Do Not Reflect the Communities They Serve

By Caroline Fredrickson

The majority of state court systems are failing at adequately reflecting the diversity of the populations they serve, according to a report authored by law professors Tracey E. George and Albert H. Yoon and released this year by the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy (ACS). The report, titled The Gavel Gap: Who Sits in Judgement at State Courts?, presents original research that demonstrates the woeful lack of minority and female representation among state judges. The data set, collected for the first time in a comprehensive and systematic manner, compiles the race, ethnicity, and gender of 10,000 sitting judges on state courts of general jurisdiction, ranging from trial courts to state supreme courts.

Professors George and Yoon examined the biographical information of judges in 51 jurisdictions across the country, and compared the percentage of women and minorities on each state judicial bench to that of the state’s general population. The states were then graded based on how closely their benches reflected their populations, with states close to or at parity receiving an A, and states with a representation gap of 40% or more given an F. Among the findings, the study concluded:

• Forty-one (41) out of the 51 state judiciaries studied received either a D or F grade;
• White men are twice as represented on state judiciaries (approximately 58%) as in the general population (30%);
• Women are only 30% of state judges, yet they are 51% of the general population; and
• People of color make up just 20% of state judges, although they are 38% of the general population.
Latinos: Nearly One Fifth of the Population, But Only One Twentieth of Judges

The findings are appalling, given that the vast majority of Americans’ interactions with the judicial system, ranging from traffic violations to criminal proceedings, happen in state courts. Latinos make up 18 percent of the U.S. population, but only five percent of state court judges. This tremendous lack of inclusion is remarkably consistent at all levels of the justice system, as Latinos make up only fractionally more of the trial court bench (5.5 percent) than they do of the appellate bench (5.2 percent).

And the shortfall is greatest of all for Latinas and other women of color. Women of color make up 19 percent of the population but only eight percent of state court judges. The courts of the states with the largest Latino populations do not reflect the diversity of those states’ populations.

Only in New Mexico and Florida is the percentage of Latinos on the state bench more than half of their percentage of the general population. Those two states get passing (though hardly outstanding) grades while all eight of the others fail under the Gavel Gap grading system.

State courts should have a major role in bringing justice and peace to our neighborhoods, but until we eliminate the Gavel Gap they will struggle to do so. Judicial diversity sends a signal to defendants coming before the courts that their communities are not excluded from leadership in the criminal justice system, and could go far toward reducing the level of distrust for that system.

In addition, Increased diversity among state court judges would expand the different personal and professional experiences of the judiciary. State trial judges and appellate court judges talk, interact, and often consult with their fellow judges, and share important information that ultimately influence their decisions in the courtroom. Achieving a more diverse judiciary would ensure that any one judge’s experiences would not be dispositive; if each human comes to the bench with a blind spot shaped by his/her experiences, then judicial diversity lessens the chances that any one blind spot will harm the fairness and impartiality of the bench’s decisions.

Solutions for closing the Gavel Gap

The Gavel Gap is not a natural phenomenon. It is a purely human creation, an artifact of choices made and opportunities missed. Three conceptually simple (but, one must admit, politically challenging) fixes to the judicial system would go far toward closing the Gavel Gap.

First, states must begin collecting and making available data on who their judges are and relevant information regarding their backgrounds, including race and gender. It is a truism of management and government that one measures what one values, because only through measurement do we gain the power to differentiate between success and failure. Too many states have set themselves up to fail in achieving judicial diversity because they do not measure their performance. Even in the relatively rare cases this sort of data is collected, it is usually not made available so that the public can hold those in power accountable for their actions.

The American Constitution Society is proud to have supported the work needed to collect the data that is the basis for The Gavel Gap, but that makes it no less a scandal that we had to.

Second, Latinos and other communities of color should share data about how poorly they are being represented on their courts and demand change. Third, we need reforms to systems by which judges are selected and retained. The Gavel Gap shows that no system has consistently succeeded in producing courts that truly include the talents of all. Even in states where Latinos have enjoyed some, often localized, success in winning elections, the overall results remain poor. Elections can give, but they also take away as increasingly high fundraising bars deter qualified candidates from even attempting to become judges. Selection methods that include nomination by a commission offer some promise if they are reformed to be truly inclusive, transparent and accountable.

Diverse courts are fair courts. They are the courts Latinos, and all our people, deserve. Visit www.gavelgap.org and share the results for your state with colleagues, friends and family members. We must make this issue one that those in power can no longer afford to ignore.

Caroline Fredrickson is the president of the American Constitution Society in Washington, D.C.
Region Leadership—Fundraising Strategies

By Maria C. Dantes Sanchez, HNBA Region VIII President

All Regional Presidents and Deputy Regional Presidents have a fiduciary obligation to the HNBA to fundraise. Thus, developing strong and financially secure regions must be a top priority for all regional leaders. Fundraising is necessary to hold events, develop programs, increase membership engagement, and ultimately help promote the mission of the HNBA. Fundraising is also crucial because the stronger and more financially secure our regions are, the stronger our organization is as a whole.

To help each region with programs and events, the HNBA allots monies for each of the nineteen region every year. The funds must be used during the current year or they are forfeited. Unfortunately, some regions do not utilize all of the allocated funds. Other regions are extremely active and well exceed the allotment. Those regions are able to hold events and programs that exceed the allocated funds by engaging in additional fundraising and sponsorship efforts. As one can correctly assume, there is a direct correlation between the success of a region and its fundraising achievements. Thus, knowing how to effectively fundraise is very important for regional leaders because it is the key to the success of the region. The purpose of this article is to share with regional leaders strategies on how to effectively fundraise to ensure that their region is strong and successful.

Regional leaders must set forth a strategic plan designed to not only effectively use all funds allotted to the region, but also raise additional funds. Fundraising can sometimes be seen as intimidating and difficult for some, but it doesn’t have to be. There are many individuals, businesses, and organizations that value the mission of the HNBA, and find many benefits in partnering with, and supporting our organization. Some sponsors will step up without being asked. However, sometimes it does require regional leaders to approach friends, colleagues, clients, and others to request sponsorship and provide information on the benefits of their support. When a sponsor is approached by someone they know, respect and trust, the response is generally very positive. Thus, it is important for the regional leadership to strategize on the most effective delegation of responsibilities amongst the team when approaching potential sponsors. If the fundraising approach is well thought out and planned, it is much more effective, and easier than one may think.

To properly strategize, Regional Presidents need to start by engaging a team of Deputy Regional Presidents and preparing an effective strategic plan which must include fundraising goals. Regional Presidents should appoint Deputy Regional Presidents and each should be responsible to identify potential sponsors and participate in fundraising efforts. Regional Presidents should also hold regular regional meetings to discuss events and programs, sponsorship activities, and ensure that the regional leadership team is staying on course with its strategic plan. All meetings should be guided by an agenda designed to address the strategic plan. When planning events, the regional leadership should focus on events that will be of interest to the region and bring value to the members. This will make it easier to draw the interest of potential sponsors. As the leadership team launches its fundraising efforts these are suggested strategies:

• Use up your entire Regional budget every year on regional events.
• Work on securing in-kind donations for food and beverage and venue space.
• Work on securing in-kind donations for other services such as photography, printing, signage, marketing, transportation, etc.
• Establish and build relationships with local law schools and request that they support the Region financially through monetary or in-kind donations, hosting events at the law school, etc.
• Request sponsorship in small increments if you have a significant amount of small, medium-sized firms in your Region that would not be in a position to make larger donations.
• Organize events that pay for themselves in that each of the attendees pay their own way. For example, monthly luncheons with guest speakers; CLE with registration fee to cover cost of event, etc.
• Offer sponsors benefits as part of their sponsorship (recognition on event announcements, invitation, at the event; free registration; speaking opportunity, etc.)
• Secure local sponsors for the HNBA national conferences since regional leaders have a fiduciary responsibility to engage in both regional and national fundraising, which includes setting sponsor meetings between the National Leadership Team and local sponsors.
• Identify and work on possible strategic partnership arrangements that are regional and/or national in scope. For example, if there are many businesses that would like to partner with the HNBA to further the goals of the respective organizations.

These suggested strategies are not exhaustive, and regional leaders are encouraged to find additional methods of fundraising. If the region fundraising results in a surplus, the funds can be carried over to the following year (with the exception of the national allocated funds which do expire if not used). Having a balance to carry over to the next year puts the region in an excellent financial posture. A robust regional budget will lead to more events and programs, and enhance the benefits we provide to our membership. Although the process of fundraising can be time consuming and challenging, the end result can be very rewarding.

Maria Dantes Sanchez is the Regional General Attorney at Liberty Mutual Group, where she oversees the Field Legal Operation of the Southern Midwest Region that consists of 25 legal offices in 15 states. She has extensive experience involving insurance defense litigation and law office operations. Maria also served as the HNBA Region VIII President for 2016-17, and is the incoming HNBA Vice President of Regions and Affiliates for 2016-17.

“Every time you have to speak, you are auditioning for leadership.”—JAMES HUMES
Community Leadership

By Freddy Saavedra, Region XIV President

Given the HNBA mission of enriching and diversifying the legal professions, we as members should ensure that we develop our leadership skills toward advancing this goal. Leadership has many facets, but a primary component is continuing to develop oneself to better lead within our community.

I first learned about leadership in the United States Army. I saw firsthand the sacrifices, selflessness, and dedication of many non-commissioned and commissioned officers in Germany and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Army’s Primary Leadership Development School at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, instilled in me the strong sense of responsibility that comes with being a leader. As a Staff Sergeant, leading a team throughout Iraq and Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, I was able to emulate the incredible leaders I had served under as a soldier.

Leadership is also important in the civilian world, especially for us as attorneys and HNBA members. Our community members look to us to lead and inform them of the myriad of issues affecting us. In fact, leadership in our communities may be even more challenging in that while soldiers are required to obey orders under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, this requirement does not exist for HNBA volunteers. While leadership training is a cornerstone of the military, many opportunities exist for attorneys to develop their leadership skills in the civilian world.

Among many leadership training programs in which I have been fortunate to participate, one of the most applicable and beneficial courses to our positions as attorneys and community leaders is the Collaborative Bar Leadership Academy (CBLA). The CBLA is a joint initiative of the American Bar Association, Hispanic National Bar Association, National Asian American Bar Association, National LGBT Bar Association, and National Native American Bar Association.

The CBLA provides a unique opportunity to network with leaders of the multiple National Bar Associations, develop leadership skills, receive training and advice from National Bar Leaders, and develop skills to organize, operate, and lead within our own organization and communities.

I attended the 2015 class in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and was gratified to receive training and advice from the many Presidents and President-Elects of the bar associations participating in this training. I am particularly grateful for the opportunity that CBLA provides for close-knit discussions with these incredible leaders. One of the highlights was a small dinner with classmates and ABA President Paulette Brown. Ms. Brown was very generous with her time and advice. The experiences she shared and the advice she offered has been of immeasurable benefit to me as an attorney and as a leader. As a whole, the knowledge and wisdom offered by so many respected community leaders has also helped me to adopt practices and procedures critical to succeeding and leading within our community.

While the 2016 CBLA has already taken place in Seattle, I strongly urge our members to make every effort to participate in next year’s CBLA. As we move forward serving our communities, we must continue to hone our leadership skills and the CBLA offers an excellent opportunity to do just that.

Freddy Saavedra is the current HNBA Region XIV President. He is a shareholder at the personal injury litigation firm of Alex & Saavedra, P.C., in Phoenix, Arizona.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

-MARGARET MEAD
ON LEADERSHIP IN Advocacy

By Katherine Culliton-González, Chair, HNBA Voting Rights Committee

I was asked to write about leadership in advocacy, and although it’s something I’ve been working on for years, it’s a challenge to define. Since I’m writing for a sophisticated audience of lawyers, I’ll use some legal terms that will help get right to the point of what I hope to pass along.

Anyone who has litigated knows that the forum has clear rules, timing, and procedures. Advocacy is much broader and can include working in the spheres of legislation, policy, community organizing, and strategic communications. In my opinion, advocacy also encompasses impact litigation. For example, in the HNBA Voting Rights Committee, we not only participate in amicus briefs in key voting rights cases, we select those cases precisely because we want to make an impact in protecting Latino voting rights. We look to the mission with every action, and make sure our actions further the mission. This begs the question, what is the mission? If you don’t know then you cannot be an advocate. Instead, you will only be a lawyer trying to win one case.

Leadership in advocacy is always oriented towards change, and requires a theory of change. This is not something taught in law school, and it is best learned through listening to community leaders, watching experienced advocates, and jumping in and getting some experience yourself. I have been very blessed to learn from the best, including Joaquin Avila, who founded the HNBA Voting Rights Committee. After some experience, you will understand theory of change. It means knowing: (1) what influence is needed, (2) by whom, and (3) to convince those in power (the decision-makers) to change.

Theory of change analysis is simple, but it is easy to veer from it. We all want to “make a difference.” Strong leadership in advocacy means always questioning yourself to ensure that your activities actually do make a difference. Having a theory of change for your overall mission and for each major activity will ensure you are not preaching to the choir, becoming distracted by well-funded opposition, forgetting the mission, or simply acting on your own behalf. In fact, theory of change is all about increasing the power and influence of the community and not any one individual.

Let’s break it down with examples. At HNBA, we want to not only fight discrimination in voting, but also increase Latino participation, which is currently lower than any other group. In 2016, over 27.3 million Latinos represent 12–13% of the eligible voters, but in recent years, less than half of all eligible Latinos have voted. We want that to change, so that policy-makers are more accountable to the Latino community. We also want that to change because HNBA stands for equal opportunity and democracy. This theory of change is bigger than defending against discrimination in voting or protecting Latino voting rights.

In order to “make a difference,” we have to know what is holding back Latino voters, because the voters themselves are the change agent. Their influence is needed to change the power structure and ensure that the needs of the Latino community are taken into account. Our leadership is needed as HNBA lawyers who are privileged to have the education and ability to lift up the voices of the community. We must be flexible and accountable enough to contribute more than just our mastery of the law, and instead begin to understand the structural change that is needed for equal access to the ballot and a true democracy.

Last year, HNBA worked toward making a difference by inviting Latino/a Secretaries of State to the first plenary forum to talk about their work at last year’s Corporate Counsel conference in Las Vegas. Thanks to the leadership of past-President Robert Maldonado, an opportunity to step forward in leadership was possible, and we helped to show why Latino/a lawyers should consider running for elections, rather than just litigating against flaws in the system that hold Latino citizens back. This was complemented by HNBA hosting experts and community leaders in a special session on naturalization, after which HNBA lawyers could go back to their own communities and assist legal permanent residents to become citizens in time to vote for the November 2016 election.

At our Annual Conference in Chicago this year, in addition to a cutting-edge CLE panel on voting rights, HNBA lawyers will support a voter registration drive in the local Latino community, and learn how to help community groups ensure that voters are properly registered and able to vote. As nonpartisan community leaders, of course we don’t tell people who to vote for, but we can ensure that Latino citizens have equal opportunity to participate in and be part of American democracy.

Everyone at this conference can be a leader in advocacy. Your participation in the voter registration drive can help uplift a strong theory of change designed to enable increasing Latino voter participation, in order to change the power structure such that elected officials are responsive to the needs of the community. All this is only a complement to what you can do in your own community. With your participation, HNBA can become a more vibrant, community-based organization with leadership in advocacy across the country, which is sure to help make our nation a more just and inclusive democracy.
Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company’s (MassMutual) history of corporate responsibility can be traced all the way back to the company’s infancy, and the products and services we offer have been instrumental in helping people through some really tough times.

People can borrow against the cash value in their permanent life insurance policies. That was pretty important during times when banks were going on “holidays” and not letting people have access to their accounts. It was particularly acute in the Detroit area, where the state had specific fiscal problems with declines in the auto and mining industries.

So MassMutual sent $300,000 in cash to its agency in Detroit (along with deputizing agents as deputy sheriffs so they could carry guns and provide security). It also arranged for another $100,000 cash payment to a coal dealer, who was also a policyowner, so he could get supplies to freezing customers.1

These are just two examples of how MassMutual’s commitment to the communities in which we live and work have been woven into the fabric of its history. From Executive leadership down through every employee, volunteerism is encouraged and supported. Employees are empowered to select causes and grantees, donate funds and amplify change through volunteerism. For example, in 2015, 25 employees grew 2,100lbs of produce on the MassMutual campus and donated it to local food pantries. And in 2016, we are proud to distribute $1.4 million to employee-selected grantees in our communities.

This volunteering spirit has led MassMutual leadership and its employees to create Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) dedicated to the concerns and important issues our employees face at work and in their extended communities. In 2015, our Latino employee resource group (ALMMA) was recognized as one of the Top 25 U.S. ERGs and Diversity Councils by the Association of ERGs & Councils.

When it comes to supporting the next generation of leaders, we focus on what we know best—financial education. We believe it’s never too early, or too late, for people to benefit from learning the value of education, the power of saving, and ultimately the rewards of a financially secure life. We do this through strategic partnerships that allow us to enhance a participating school’s curriculum to include financial education as part of its extension of the classroom.

In addition, our unique LifeBridgeSM program helps young people fulfill their learning potential through the value of our core product—life insurance. This national initiative helps fund a child’s education by issuing $50,000 term life insurance policies to benefit the children of eligible working families at no cost to the parents. MassMutual pays the premiums. To date, MassMutual has issued over 13,700 policies, equaling more than $685 million in coverage.

With corporate citizenship as a core value, the MassMutual Foundation aligns our charitable investments with our communities’ needs in an effort to have a greater impact on relevant issues facing society. Our approach reflects our desire to improve our communities, whether through volunteerism, education, advocacy, sustainability, or economic development. We believe that success as a company cannot be achieved without every employee playing a key role in helping to create vibrant and engaged local communities across the country.

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1 Access to cash values through borrowing or partial surrenders will reduce the policy’s cash value and death benefit, increase the chance the policy will lapse, and may result in a tax liability if the policy terminates before the death of the insured.


“The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.”

—RONALD REAGAN
In February 2016, I had the opportunity to see Israel in an unparalleled way. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee’s (“AIPAC”) American Israel Education Foundation invited me on a trip with individuals who are leaders in their respective career fields and communities to learn more about Israel first-hand. As President of The Dominican Bar Association (“The DBA”), I jumped at the opportunity to visit Israel and then return to New York and The DBA to implement the lessons I had learned.

How was Israel? That was the simple and seemingly innocuous question that everyone asked upon my return. For the first few days I just replied “amazing” because I was still digesting it all but I also knew that those who asked didn’t have the hours I’d need to tell them about my experience. Israel was beautiful, illuminating, and inspiring, but it was also emotional and at times heartbreaking. I’m infinitely grateful for this opportunity because without visiting Israel, I would have never been able to appreciate the cultural, religious, political, geographical, and geopolitical nuances that exist. My trip also highlighted that leaders can thrive and be empowered in almost any circumstance.

For example, we visited a kibbutz a stone’s throw away from Gaza, and the resident we spoke with admitted that she and her teenage son and their neighbors live with varying degrees of traumatic stress disorder because missiles often land near their homes. As most in our group held back tears, this resident also showed us the markings where, during hostile times, shrapnel had hit the community day cares’ walls. And yet, she insisted on teaching her son and neighbors to have compassion for those who lived where those missiles came from.

Our group also visited one of only a few schools in Israel where Arab and Jewish students were bridging the gap by learning together and about each other. Years earlier, the first school had been founded by a group of Arab and Israeli parents who saw the benefits of exposing their children to “the other side.” What had begun as an earnest experiment, was now a model for other schools and had even earned some of the students and teachers a visit with President Obama at the White House!

I could go on for hours about the individuals and organizations we encountered who were leading by example in order to effect change. There was the Israeli start-up that prioritized diversity and consciously hired Arabs. Or the hospital that was treating Syrian refugees at no cost. Or the Knesset member who, like the Arab-Israeli school advocated for greater integration.

My trip to Israel was emotional, but it was also a shining example of leadership and human resilience. In the midst of this ongoing conflict it was inspiring to hear from individuals who were steadfast in their commitment to peace and their compassion for Jews and non-Jews alike. In their own way these individuals and organizations were unwilling to allow their often volatile circumstances to define the way in which they viewed the world. Instead, they were committed to injecting positivity into those circumstances, no matter the setbacks because, as leaders, that’s what they were called to do.

Queenie Paniagua is President of The Dominican Bar Association and an Assistant District Attorney with the Kings County District Attorney’s Office in Brooklyn, New York. Ms. Paniagua obtained her Juris Doctor from St. John's University School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts in Politics from Fairfield University (Fairfield, CT).

“To add value to others, one must first value others.” —JOHN MAXWELL
LEADERSHIP
a Personal Perspective

By Nathalie Lamberto Konigsberg

On February 21, 2016, Nathalie joined labor leaders, LGBTQ activists, city and state government officials, and prominent members of the nonprofit community on a trip to Israel with the American Israel Education Fund.

Tikkun Olam is a powerful concept in Judaism that is about taking leadership in the betterment of the world; in fact, it directly translates to “repairing of the world.” It is the belief that humanity is charged with taking action in bettering our earthly surroundings, in addition to redressing societal inequities in our communities. Tikkun Olam empowers us to be leaders in healing an imperfect world, for the benefit of ourselves and future generations. As the Jewish state, caring for the land and our environment is at the heart of the State of Israel’s values and central to Tikkun Olam.

Since its inception in 1948, Israel has been a world leader in harvesting renewable sources of energy. By the early 1950s, Israel would be catapulted to the forefront of solar technology by the tenacity of Israeli physicist Levi Yissar, who developed and commercialized solar water heating systems for home use. Today, 90% of residential homes in Israel rely on solar installations for hot water. Israel’s laws have also taken the progressive route of requiring that new residential construction utilize solar technology to decrease the country’s dependence on foreign crude oil—as there are no natural oil reserves in the land.

Israel’s arid soil has presented additional environmental challenges that have had to be overcome by innovative solutions. In 1964, members of Kibbutz Hatzerim developed modern drip irrigation, a technique that minimizes the amount of water and fertilizer needed to achieve high crop yields for farmers. The drip irrigation technique regularly exceeds 90 percent water efficiency and represents a 30 percent to 50 percent savings on the quantity of water used for irrigation. Drip irrigation has also been applied by Israel to plant trees, changing Israel’s landscape to make it the “desert that blooms.” Israel’s leadership in repairing the environment goes beyond water conservation to water creation—taking the salt out of seawater has helped Israel move from the constant threat of drought to a plentiful supply of water. Israel is currently sharing drip irrigation and water desalination technology throughout the world, and most recently to assist in droughts in California and Puerto Rico.

I witnessed the perfect marriage of Tikkun Olam and Israeli technology in Innovation Africa, a female-owned NGO with its roots in Israel. Starting out as a vision for a better world, founder and CEO Sivan Borowitch-Ya’ari proudly shared that today Innovation Africa has reached nearly 1 million people by bringing electricity, light, and clean water to 108 remote villages in Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Ethiopia, and South Africa. Solar-powered electricity, brought for the first time to many medical clinics, has elevated the level of care to include life-saving vaccinations requiring refrigeration. Newly installed solar light technologies at schools have permitted more learning and enrichment opportunities for children—investing in tomorrow’s leaders. Installations of local water sources in villages have empowered matriarchs who once walked miles to find water to bring back to their families. Lastly, the introduction of drip irrigation has encouraged African farmers whose crop yields have prospered.

Innovation Africa embodies female entrepreneurship and leadership in sharing Israeli-developed technology for societal change. Winner of the United Nations’ 2013 Innovation Award, Innovation Africa has made inroads in some of the most poverty-stricken parts of the world, doing its part to repair the lives and environment of global citizens. We should all look to Israel and Innovation Africa as fine role models of leadership towards bettering the lives of the world’s citizenry, without borders.

Nathalie Lamberto Konigsberg, Esq. is a Claims Specialist for Management Liability and Specialty Claims at Nationwide Insurance Company, and a leadership member of Nationwide’s Claims Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

“Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence.”

—SHERYL SANDBERG, COO OF FACEBOOK
By Juan M. Sempertegui

Diversity and inclusion discussions have traditionally focused on creating equal opportunities for everyone, especially those in the minority based on gender, race, sexual orientation, and/or disability. In recent years, it has become quite clear that diversity also matters in business. The historic changing demographics of the United States should be forcing corporations and their law firms to consider diversity and inclusion of individuals from different backgrounds as imperative to growth and relevance.

During the American Bar Association, Business Law Section’s 2016 Spring Meeting in Montreal, Canada, the Diversity & Inclusion Committee presented a Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program titled: Diversity & Inclusion: Your Clients Care And This Is Why You Should Too! 1 The panel, moderated by Anne Gwal from Pepco Holdings, Inc., included: Joan Durocher from the National Council on Disability; Kenneth Fredeen from Deloitte LLP (Canada), Business Law Section Advisor Michele Coleman Mayes from the New York Public Library; Samuel M. Reeves from Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; and Joseph “Joe” K. West from Duane Morris LLP.

The program materials for the CLE included written responses to diversity-related inquiries from more than 15 general counsel and legal officers at some of the largest companies in the world. The panelists, and those legal officers that provided written responses, discussed extensively the business value of diversity and its impact on the legal marketplace.

This article incorporates some of the CLE information presented during the Spring Meeting and provides additional support that diversity and inclusion have become business imperatives for corporations and law firms. First, we analyze the changing demographics, and then we consider the tangible benefits that arise from a diverse workforce.

Diverse Consumer

As of July 1, 2014, the U.S. Census determined that the U.S. population is comprised of 13.2% African-Americans, 5.4% Asians, 17.4% Latinos, and 62.1% Whites, not including Latinos. 3 As a result, more than 35% of the population is considered multicultural, and it is projected to substantially increase in the coming years. Specifically, by around 2020, “more than half of the nation’s children are expected to be part of a minority race or ethnic group” … [and] by 2044, the Census Bureau predicts no one racial or ethnic group will dominate the U.S. in terms of size.” 4 So why do these numbers matter for law firms and in-house counsel? The answer is quite simple—buying power.

From 2000 to 2013, the buying power for African-American households increased by 78%, for Asian American households it increased by 160%, and for Latino households the increase was 142%. 5 Of note, Asian households, which have a higher median household income, spent 21% more than the average U.S. household. 6

1 Juan M. Sempertegui works for a state financial regulatory agency and serves as the Vice-Chair for the Lawyers of Color Subcommittee in the American Bar Association, Business Law Section’s (ABA-BLS) Diversity & Inclusion Committee. He is the Immediate Past President of the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia. Juan would like to thank Kenneth Fredeen, Jason Goitia, Michelle Mayes, Dalila Sempertegui and Chris Young for their assistance with the article.

2 ABA-BLS Diversity & Inclusion Committee is led by Chair by Sylvia Chin from White & Case LLP and Vice-Chair Chris Young from Young Law Firm, PLLC. The CLE Program Chairs were Juan Sempertegui and Wilson Chu from McDermott Will & Emery LLP and the Program Materials Coordinator was Grace E. Robson from Markowitz, Ringel, Trusty & Hartog, P.A.


6 Id.
Companies such as BB&T Bank have recognized these demographic changes and acted by creating a multicultural markets division. The bank recognized that the “major source of population growth is now represented by persons of African, Asian and Latino heritage” and focused on hiring “native-speaking associates to address communication and cultural differences” to serve them better. The company’s efforts resulted in increasing BB&T’s “multicultural financial centers by 35%, to 350.”

In terms of individuals with disabilities, the American Community Survey estimates that the “overall rate of disability in the U.S. population in 2014 was 12.6%.” But this underestimates the size of the market. In the 2016 Annual Report: The Global Economics of Disability, it is noted that the estimated population of 1.3 billion people with disabilities are an emerging market the size of China, and when you add family and friends, the number of potential customers grows by another 2.4 billion. This could represent 53% of the consumer market, and that number will grow as boomers, with their significant spending power, age. In terms of attorney employment, a 2012 study from the Washington State Bar Association found that 21% of its members have a disability, but yet employers nationwide frequently report less than 1% of their employees as having a disability. It is also worth noting that people with disabilities are represented in all other diverse groups.

“Efforts to quantify the LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] population, both by the government and outside polling sources, are relatively new, with much still unknown about this subsection of America.” As a result, it is currently difficult to provide reasonable US estimates of the LGBT makeup in the population. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that the LGBT population is a prevalent part of the U.S. population and the marketplace.

It is undisputed that the substantial demographic change to a more diverse consumer base will impact the approaches that corporations take to market their products and services. To effectively serve their clients, law firms must be sensitive to these approaches and the changing marketplace. As noted below, many legal officers are mindful of these shifts and are already acting accordingly.

We live our values every day and everywhere, collaborating for the benefit of our customers, investors, employees, communities and partners. As the demographics of each of these key stakeholder groups grow more diverse, as the world in which we live and operate becomes increasingly global, and as the competition for customers and top talent becomes increasingly fierce, Alcoa will continue to succeed only if we foster an environment where people can bring unparalleled creativity, energy and new ways of thinking to the table.

—Audrey Strauss, Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer, Alcoa Inc.

Collaborating with a diverse group of coworkers, who reflect the customers and communities we serve, has led to better problem solving, thereby positively impacting our customer satisfaction ratings and service reliability efforts.

—Kevin Fitzgerald, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Pepco Holdings, Inc.

Hundreds of millions of diverse customers and members shop in our stores and clubs each week. The more we reflect our customers and their perspectives, the better positioned we will be to meet their needs.

—Samuel M. Reeves, Senior Vice President, General Counsel, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Diversity strengthens our culture and increases our agility and ability to compete in a complex, fast-paced, global environment, enables us to deepen our understanding of customers in each of our markets and businesses, unleashes creativity, innovation and business value by welcoming different perspectives, experiences and beliefs, reduces and eliminates barriers to full participation in the workplace to help all employees reach their greatest potential.

—Melissa Kennedy, Executive Vice-President and Chief Legal Officer, Sun Life Financial

We believe that an inclusive and diverse workforce, where we learn from our differences, leads to higher employee engagement, which is integral to creating great customer experiences and enhanced loyalty.

—Bindu Cudjoe, Deputy General Counsel & Chief Administrative Officer, Bank of Montreal

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8 Id.
**Tangible Benefits**

The value of diversity extends beyond appealing to consumers. Employees from diverse backgrounds also provide tangible benefits to corporations and law firms in many distinct ways.

Acritas Research Ltd. published a Diversity Report on May 12, 2016, addressing the impact of a diverse legal team. The report is based on 1,771 interviews with senior in-house counsel around the world, with respondents defining diversity primarily in terms of gender, but also according to race and ethnicity, nationality, LGBT identification, age and years of experience. The survey determined that “compared to ‘not at all diverse’ external legal support teams, ‘very diverse’ teams provide a superior performance to their clients across all key performance areas.”

The evidence gathered in the study established that diverse teams deliver enhanced performance across various attributes “including responsiveness, business understanding, client focus, commerciality and efficiency.” Specifically, law firms were “more than one and a half times as likely to achieve a perfect ten performance score from their clients when the team was considered diverse.”

In addition, law firms with diverse teams received over 3 times higher Net Promoter Score. As a result, the clients were much “more likely to promote the law firm they are working with to others,” the “ultimate signal of a strong client relationship.” The proof manifests itself in share of wallet, with very diverse teams earning 25% more in revenue than not at all diverse teams. The study found similar substantial benefits to in-house teams. Legal departments with diverse teams were found to have improved overall performance, better value, better relationships, and improved efficiency compared to non-diverse teams.

The survey results clearly establish that a diverse team has a positive impact on both sides of the legal relationship. As stated below, in-house counsel from various corporations also recognize the value of diversity:

> At 3M, we view diversity as the appreciation of differences, and we use inclusion of those differences as a competitive advantage to power our curiosity and creativity. By enabling broader perspectives, insights, and ideas, diversity and inclusion give us a greater edge in all we do. And diversity and inclusion allows everyone in the workplace to bring his or her “full self” to work and be respected and valued.
> —Ivan Fong, SVP, Legal Affairs & General Counsel, 3M Company

We believe diverse teams create greater innovation with different approaches, questions and ideas.

> Horacio Gutierrez, General Counsel and VP of Legal Affairs, Microsoft Corporation

The differing perspectives brought to the workplace by employees who reflect the culture in which we operate helps ensure that the organization’s products and services meet the needs of the different communities in our society, and helps ensure that our organization stays away from “groupthink” and other cultural biases.

> John Mountain, SVP, Legal, CCO & Corporate Secretary, NEI Investments

We may believe that we are considering all aspects of an issue, but if everyone involved in the debate approaches the issue from the same perspective, we run the risk of thinking we have considered all options when in reality we are just operating in an echo chamber. It therefore is vital that our legal department, and our outside counsel, include individuals with diverse backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives. Without that diversity, we can’t produce the best and most complete legal guidance to our clients.

> Craig Silliman, Executive VP—Public Policy and General Counsel, Verizon Communications.

**Conclusion**

Inclusion of diverse lawyers will play a major role in helping law firms and corporations deal with the demographic shifts that are taking place. The changes are real, and they are having a substantial impact on the marketing of products and services. The associated challenges will require addressing many issues with new approaches. Hence, as Business Law Section Advisor Michelle Mayes stated in Montreal, quoting Carla Harris, a Managing Director at Morgan Stanley:

> “To have the innovation everyone seeks, you need new ideas; To generate new ideas, you need different perspectives; To have different perspectives, you need different experiences, And to achieve this, you need diversity.”

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15 Id.
16 Id.
18 Id.
19 “Share of wallet” is a marketing term referring to the amount of the customer’s total spending that a business captures in the products and services that it offers. Increasing the share of a customer’s wallet that a company receives is often a cheaper way of boosting revenue than increasing market share.
20 Acritas Sharper Insight, supra n.14.

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“You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” —ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
The Benefits of Leadership Training

By Carrie Ricci

Who can benefit from leadership training? Everyone! I retired from the Army in 2010, just shy of 22 years of service. From my first duty assignment to my last, leadership training was ever present as a part of my professional development. What I didn’t realize then is how much I have benefited from honing my leadership as a regular requirement of my employment. Within two years of retiring from military service, I was selected for appointment to the Senior Executive Service, an accomplishment that I attribute largely to the leadership skills I gained in the military.

Leadership training can benefit anyone, whether a military officer or a factory worker. Sound leadership skills make a difference both on and off the job. No matter your position or station in life, being able to draw on solid leadership skills will bring out the best in you, and will grant you the ability to bring out the best in others. A recent survey of prominent female leaders around the world found one very common factor that each pointed to in recounting their early leadership training—a parental figure who modeled strong leadership, even if only within their family structure. Leadership training teaches critical life skills such as discipline, organization, integrity, and perhaps most critically, the importance of valuing others. You can’t go wrong when you learn and practice these important life skills. Exhibiting strong leadership will cause you to stand out among your peers and demonstrate that you bring value to your employer that goes beyond mere technical skills.

Since its inception, the Latina Commission has sponsored an annual Latina Leadership Academy in conjunction with the HNBA Annual Convention. Opening the door to greater opportunities cannot be accomplished without individual preparation. The Latina Commission seeks to enhance the leadership skills of Latina lawyers so that when opportunity knocks, the Latina lawyer is well prepared to answer.

—WOODROW WILSON

"You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand."

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Who do you want to be judged by? Maybe someone who looks and sounds like you? Perhaps you have what it takes to be a fair and impartial judge.

The development of judicial leadership is critical to the health and growth of our legal landscape, and diversifying that leadership is of special importance to the Latino community we serve. Judicial leadership must be groomed from within our ranks and then nurtured and strengthened once they are on the bench.

Usually when we think about leadership in the legal field, we think about leadership within the respective bar associations. However, leadership is so much more than that. Lending your experience and knowledge to younger attorneys through mentorship is discussed often, but the same focus is needed within the judiciary.

Long-serving, seasoned, experienced judges have a duty to help train and develop new judges. Individual styles and approaches to judicial analysis and temperament should vary depending on the types of cases that are being heard. Family law and juvenile cases require a very different approach than other areas of law such as intellectual property, bankruptcy, or corporate civil disputes.

The context of the litigation can give rise to the need for extraordinary judicial leadership. Groundbreaking cases of first impression afford even the most experienced jurist an opportunity to make a lasting mark on laws that can change the course of history. The 1954 decision in Brown v. Board of Education is a prime example. Current cases in immigration law, healthcare, and voting rights are more current examples of where strong judicial leadership can result in seminal, life-changing decisions that affect every person in the United States, especially minority populations like the Hispanic community.

But who are these judges? There are simply not enough Hispanic or female judges on the bench. Whose fault is that? It’s time that more of us step up to the plate.

Many young Hispanic attorneys feel that they don’t have the credentials or experience to seek a judicial position, and they are short-changing themselves. The evolution and change many seek in the judicial system can only be accomplished when individual members, judges, and court officials become aware of the need for change and take that first, necessary step towards making change. A more diverse judiciary is critical to preserve and uphold the highest ideals of justice if we are to adequately serve the widely diverse population in these United States.

Were it not for the encouragement of senior judges and elected officials, I would never have become a judge. Others saw potential in me, and I was strong enough to listen to them and act upon their recommendations and suggestions. You must do the same! Talk to the judges you appear before in court, and ask how they reached their position. Explore your possibilities.

As a young, four-year attorney working as General Counsel at the Texas Senate, I was approached by a municipal judge who was serving as a resource for one of the court reform bills we were working on to get enacted. He suggested that I would make a good judge myself and encouraged me to throw my hat into the ring during the upcoming appointment process. I thought he was crazy! How could a four-year attorney possibly be ready for such a position? But the idea had been planted in my mind. I reached out to the judge I had clerked for while in law school, my hometown senator, friends who had served in the judiciary in the Rio Grande Valley, and acquaintances in local, city government to find out more. I was not-so-gently informed that I was more than ready to advance my career in this direction.

My many years serving the community on non-profit boards combined with my comprehensive business and managerial background, fair and calm demeanor, and dedication to the rule of law as a trial attorney and legislative aide proved to be a strong combination uniquely qualifying me to become a judge. I took the plunge, jumped into the deep end, and never looked back. Now, after almost seven years on the bench, I am grateful for my position and thankful that I am able to apply the law I love so much in a neutral, fair, impartial manner as intended by the people who created them. I am proud to serve my community and ensure that true justice is rendered, especially to previously underserved communities.

Our society’s institutions can either grow and adapt with the times or become stagnant and irrelevant. We all have a duty to ensure that the judicial system continues to mirror our community and is open and receptive to all manners of salient argument.

Sea usted el juez. You be the judge.
Non-profit LEADERSHIP

By William Alvarado Rivera

When I joined AARP Foundation last December, I received some pithy advice: “We’re not-for-profit, but we’re not for loss, either.” It was a reminder of my responsibility to exhibit financial integrity, not just as an AARP leader, but also as a steward of the public’s trust in our organization and our brand. This advice echoes my own experience with the Hispanic Bar Association of DC and other organizations—leading a non-profit is not only an amazing opportunity to serve others, it’s also serious business.

The Vision Thing

In an increasingly global and rapidly changing economy, non-profits compete not only for resources, but also for attention—for the power to make a difference. There is no shortage of need in the world. Why support us, with your time as a volunteer, your charitable contribution, or your labor, rather than direct your resources toward a host of other worthy causes? As non-profit leaders, we at AARP Foundation ask ourselves these questions regularly and challenge ourselves to make the case for our cause.

The Value of Volunteer Non-Profit Leadership

Given the dynamic nature of the industry, non-profit leaders have to stay ahead of the curve, just like for-profit leaders do. We are responsible for not only our individual lines of business (in my case, impact litigation in service of people 50 and older), but also other aspects of the business of the non-profit that affect its stability and growth. These include, among other things, strategic planning and monitoring, financial and management, program evaluation, and governance. Successful non-profit leaders need a comprehensive set of financial, operational, and executive skills that combine the best qualities of a senior government or corporate C-suite executive.

My experience as a volunteer leader in numerous non-profit boards, including the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (HBA-DC), provided invaluable training for my current role with AARP Foundation. As an HBA-DC board member and, later, HBA-DC President, I learned from talented leaders and colleagues and developed leadership competencies that are valued in executives across the public and private sector, such as leading strategically, navigating change, driving results, leading teams, and managing resources, among others.

I encourage you to get involved in the HNBA, its affiliates, or other non-profit organizations to give back to the profession and the community, as well as to develop your leadership skills. Find something that moves you, inspires you, or brings you joy. In addition to the HBA-DC, I have served on the boards of several non-profits, including my local Little League, an international educational and cultural exchange organization, and a county and school board-appointed community engagement association. Each provided a personally fulfilling and rewarding experience, as well as opportunities for professional development and growth.

AARP Founder Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus gave the organization its motto: “to serve, not to be served.” Non-profit leadership is an amazing opportunity to serve others and positively affect their lives. In short, it’s a wonderful way to try to make the world a better place and have a good time doing it.

William Alvarado Rivera is Senior Vice President for Litigation at AARP Foundation, www.aarpfoundation.org. AARP’s charitable affiliate, which serves vulnerable people 50+ by creating and advancing effective solutions that help them secure the essentials. In 2010, he served as president of the HBA-DC, which recognized his term with the HNBA Affiliate of the Year Award.
The 4th annual HNBA/Microsoft Intellectual Property Law Institute (IPLI) was held in Washington, DC, June 5–10, 2016. The IPLI was developed to introduce Hispanic law students to the practice of IP law. This year’s program was led by Mick Konowal (Region XVI President), Catherine Romero (Region XVI Deputy), Kate Drakos, Dave Green and Jacqueline Morales, all of Microsoft, and HNBA National President Robert Maldonado, President-elect Pedro Torres-Díaz, and the HNBA National Office team.

Students selected to participate in the IPLI demonstrate a high level of perseverance and the ability to succeed despite odds against them. To increase diversity in the legal field, and in IP law specifically, these are the students the IPLI supports. Approximately half of the IPLI class have technical undergraduate degrees. A recurring theme is that many of their families urge them to practice in a field that is considered as “giving back to their community,” such as immigration or family law. The IPLI exposes students to possibilities in the IP field, and shows them how a career in IP is also giving back to their communities. Today, 85% of alums who have graduated from law school are practicing in IP law.

During the 2016 IPLI the students received substantive instruction, hands-on practical experience, writing workshops, and other valuable programming from some of the nation’s top IP practitioners, including: returning Professor, Jorge Contreras from the University of Utah Law School. Government agencies involved in the creation and practice of IP law offered informational panels, including: the Federal Trade Commission, the US Copyright Office, the White House, the US Patent and Trademark Office, lawyers for both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees, and the International Trade Commission. This year’s IPLI was also again supported by the IPLI Fellowship Program. Seven of the most prestigious firms in the country provided additional funding and actively participated in the program. The Law Firm Fellow lawyers will act as mentors to the students for the remainder of the students’ law school careers.

The 2016 IPLI was anchored by a day at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (CAFC). The Honorable Jimmie V. Reyna from the CAFC presided over the panel and then hosted the group at the historic Tayloe House. The day ended with a reception given by Judge Reyna and Chief Judge Sharon Prost at the Dolley Madison House, where Mick Konowal presented Judge Reyna with a historic letter related to the court as a gift for his ongoing contributions to the IPLI.

Throughout the week, the students heard career stories from patent heavyweights Don Dunner and Bob Stoll, dove into the specialized areas of pharmaceutical IP with Bryan Zielinski from Pfizer and entertainment law with Ian Fried from the Digital Media Entertainment law firm in Los Angeles and Troy Dow from Disney, and discussed ITC practice with MOFO partner Hector Gallegos. Other highlights of the week included former Cargill Chief IP counsel Harry Gwinnell and Judge Peter Reyes’ fireside chat, “Perspectives of an IP Attorney,” and spending time at the White House with Daniel Marti, the Chief IP Enforcement Officer for the Obama Administration. The IPLI concluded with a graduation ceremony and reception at the Microsoft office in Washington, DC.

The IPLI has had a lasting impact on the lives of the students involved. This year’s event left a deep impression on the students who participated, some of whom had this to say:

I can’t emphasize how encouraging and inspirational the experience was… More programs like IPLI need to exist… As a former teacher, I can attest that making students believe in themselves is not an easy task. Making adults believe in themselves is infinitely more challenging. You two incredibly managed to accomplish this feat with so many of us in just one week. I honestly believe the confidence you instilled in the group is going to change lives… I’m completely awestruck by the profound effect it had on many of the scholars, including myself.

—Kimberly Pflug

Thank you to all those involved with the 2016 IPLI for their commitment to this great program’s success!

Mick Konowal is a Senior Attorney at Microsoft currently practicing in the areas of business development and digital entertainment. He has been with Microsoft since 2001.
Every year, MassMutual is proud to support communities across the country – and the extraordinary people who work so hard to improve our lives through education, community vitality and so much more.

MassMutual is a proud sponsor of the Hispanic National Bar Association.
HBA-DC
HBA-DC Holds Successful Career Fair
On April 7, 2016, HBA-DC held its second annual Career Fair during the 19th Annual Hispanic Law Conference at American University Washington College of Law. With the participation of 35 employers and a combined attendance of over 100 participants in a two-hour period, the event was very successful. Candidates had the opportunity to submit their resumes for inclusion in a Resume Book that was provided to employers. Special thanks to all the employers, Board member Carlos A. Gutierrez, and Professional Development Committee Co-Chair Wanda Fernandez for their leadership in planning the Career Fair.

HBA-DC Holds Successful Summer Law Students’ Reception and Resume Workshop
On June 23, 2016, HBA-DC held its Summer Law Students’ Reception and Resume Workshop to introduce summer associates, law clerks, and legal interns in the Washington, D.C. area to HBA-DC. The keynote speaker was the Honorable Ignacia S. Moreno, CEO & Principal of The Moreno Group, PLC, and former Assistant Attorney General at the United States Department of Justice. Prior to the reception, the event included a Resume Workshop, which included the participation of 22 law students and 10 experienced HBA-DC resume reviewers. HBA-DC is grateful to Ignacia Moreno for providing keynote remarks and Covington & Burling LLP for hosting the event.

How to Become a Judge Advocate in the Armed Services
On June 16, 2016, HBA-DC held a panel on How to Become a Judge Advocate in the U.S. Armed Services. The panelists were HBA-DC members who are judge advocates in the active duty and reserve components. The panel was moderated by HBA-DC President-Elect (Maj.) Ben Hernandez-Stern (U.S. Air Force Reserve) and included: (COL) Jaime Areizaga-Soto (Army National Guard), (LT) Lorena M. Marez (U.S. Army Reserve), (LTC) Charles Lozano (U.S. Army), (LT) Daniel Manguel (U.S. Navy) and (Capt.) Patricia Encarnacion Miranda (U.S. Air Force). Following the panel, there were informal breakout sessions where the various military services had an opportunity to talk about their specific programs. The event was co-sponsored by WBA-DC, APABA-DC, and the GW Latino Law Students Association.

Upcoming Events
Thursday, October 20, 2016—Becoming a Judge on DC Superior Court and DC Court of Appeals, Beveridge & Diamond, 1350 I Street, NW
Friday, November 4, 2016—Equal Justice Awards Reception, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 1330 Maryland Avenue, SW
WITH A DIVERSE WORKFORCE, WE’RE REALLY GOING PLACES.

The MetLife Legal Affairs Diversity Committee works to attract employees, vendors, and outside counsel that bring fresh ideas, new perspectives, and well-rounded experience. It’s a complex marketplace, and MetLife recognizes the value of diverse and unique perspectives in touching the lives of our customers, shareholders and business partners.

MetLife and MetLife Legal Affairs are proud to have received the following awards:

- Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s Corporate Equality Index “Best Places to Work”
- Diversity MBA “Top 50 Companies for Diverse Managers”
- National Association for Female Executives (NAFE) “Top Companies for Executive Women”
- Employer of Choice for the Northeast Region by Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA)
- National Association of Women Lawyer’s President’s Award in recognition of initiatives to advance women and minority attorneys both in-house and in outside law firms
- Working Mother Magazine’s “100 Best Companies”
- DiversityInc “Top 50 Companies for Diversity”
- Hispanic Business Magazine’s “Diversity Elite”
- MetLife has received a series of awards throughout their partnership with INROADS, including “Sponsor of the Year” award for consistently demonstrating support of INROADS’ mission around enrollment, and providing development opportunities for interns
- LATINA Style Magazine’s “50 Best Companies for Latinas”
- DiversityBusiness.com’s “ America’s Top 50 Organizations for Multicultural Business Opportunities”
- The 2014 Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR) Corporate inclusion Index

For more information visit metlife.com.
BERNALILLO COUNTY, NEW MEXICO SECOND IN COUNTRY TO ESTABLISH ANIMAL WELFARE COURT FOR THE BENEFIT OF WHOLE COMMUNITY

Due to the sustained efforts of two New Mexico lawyers and a task force of dedicated community members, PAW (Pre-Adjudication Animal Welfare Court) opened on May 1, 2016, in Albuquerque, New Mexico with the Honorable Rosemary Cosgrove-Aguilar presiding. The two lawyers, Amber Macias-Mayo (current HNBA Region XV Deputy President and Young Lawyers Division Representative) and Laura Castille, learned of the now-established link between animal abuse and domestic violence/child abuse while they were students at the University of New Mexico School of Law. Both domestic violence and child abuse are serious problems in New Mexico; the state has ranked in the top ten in the nation for incidents of domestic violence and child abuse deaths for years.

Over time, the animal welfare court will have a ripple effect on other specialty courts dealing with domestic violence. All PAW workers (including the judge, staff, defense attorneys, counseling agency and probation officer) are knowledgeable in animal abuse offenses, defenses to accusations of animal abuse, and warning signs that animal abuse is part of a pattern of abuse against humans. Counseling and treatment can prevent more abuse being perpetrated against animals and humans living in the perpetrators household. The goal of PAW has always been to get perpetrators of animal abuse into counseling and return them to the community as safer individuals for everyone in their lives. The skill and dedication of PAW personnel enable animal welfare officers and prosecutors to pursue more cases; thus, more offenders will enter the system earlier, with more potential for successful treatment. When abuse is taken more seriously by the courts, it is taken more seriously by the community. PAW is a win-win for all living creatures concerned.

THE HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF GREAT KANSAS CITY

HBAGKC is excited to be one year away from hosting the HNBA Annual Convention in Kansas City on September 6–9, 2017 during our 25th anniversary year. The HBAGKC Board has been hard at work collaborating with HNBA leadership with visits to Kansas City in preparation for the annual convention.

On July 25, 2016, National Finance Director, Irene Oria, visited Kansas City for meetings with area firms and businesses, and while she was here she was treated to some KC hospitality and barbeque! Later this year, on October 06, 2016, HNBA President-Elect, Pedro Jose Diaz-Torres, will be our keynote speaker at our annual scholarship reception. Six scholarship recipients will be recognized who are receiving matching scholarships from area law schools. We look forward to welcoming everyone to the heart of the Midwest and know that you will find a warm and welcoming legal and business community. Los esperamos en Kansas City!

Janell N. Avila, HNBA Board Representative/HBAGKC President 2017

LEAP

The Legal Education Action Program (LEAP) is one of the stars of the Hispanic National Bar Association and its charitable arm, the Fund, as it provides high school students from across the country each summer an opportunity to learn about the law and conclude the week’s activities with a mock trial competition. This year’s LEAP law camp took place in Miami, Florida and was a resounding success. Many congratulations and thanks to all the students, the sponsors, the HNBA and LEF Boards, and to the camp executive director, Cynthia Carraasco. You inspire us all!

Benny Agosto, Jr.
REGION I

Region I affiliates have been busy! In June 2016, Region I, MAHA, and the Massachusetts Bar Association, hosted two deans from the University Of Havana School Of Law. The occasion was an intimate meeting of approximately 40 attorneys, law professors, law students, and judges. Participants engaged in a lively exchange about the prevalent legal issues Cuba is currently facing and how we may collaborate moving forward as colleagues, given the current and prospective future political climate. Region I is supporting ongoing efforts with MAHA and other bar organizations in Massachusetts to work with the Governor’s office to diversify all levels of the state judiciary, and MAHA continues to offer application review and mock interviews for interested candidates. MAHA plans to host its Annual Awards event on October 13th in Boston during Hispanic Heritage Month.

Region I affiliate CHBA recently installed its new leadership and held its annual Summer Social event on July 16th. CHBA is working with Quinnipiac Law School to teach law students how to prepare applications for pardons, and is working with the Governor’s office and Judicial Selection Commission to support CHBA members for judicial appointments. CHBA is also working with affinity and state bar leadership to develop a program pursuant to the recently enacted state law providing for “civil Gideon” rights. The CHBA annual gala will take place in November.

Newest Region I affiliate RIHBA held their first CLE panel this spring. RIHBA teamed up with the RI Women’s Bar Association to present a panel on U-Visas to the standing room only crowd of attorney, law enforcement, and community members. Also this spring, approximately 30 RIHBA and Thurgood Marshall Law Society members gathered to discuss ways to focus on diversifying the bar and the judiciary in Rhode Island. RIHBA recently installed its new leadership, and plans to hold its annual networking event and membership drive in October.

Region I and affiliate leadership are in the planning stages to host a Region I networking event this fall. It will be centrally located so that affiliate members from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut may attend.

REGION IV

HNBA Region IV partnered with the HNBA Latina Commission to host a Latina Roundtable on Leadership and Career Success in the Region which was moderated by Jacqueline Romero. The featured speakers included Isla Long, Esquire, Partner at Pepper Hamilton, LLP; Judge M. Teresa Sarmina, Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas; Ramona Romero, Esquire, General Counsel at Princeton University; and Anita Santos-Singh, Esquire, Executive Director at Philadelphia Legal Assistance. HNBA Region IV affiliate HBAPA partnered with the Federal Bar Association to present Supervision To Aid Reentry (STAR) Program—A federal program designed to reduce recidivism and violent crime.

REGION V

In May 2016, HNBA Region V Deputy President, Samir Aguirre, participated in a mock trial program hosted by the HNBA Latina Commission’s Youth Group Program. Presented in the Federal Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the mock trial case “made it” all the way to Court of Appeals Judge Jimmy Reyna, who gave the student’s a heartfelt presentation prior to the trial encouraging them to learn about the justice system and pursue careers in the law.

HNBA Region V is proud to announce that several of its members have launched, “Cafecito DC,” a network to develop and connect Latina lawyers in the Washington D.C. area. Cafecito DC, which is modeled after a similar effort in New York City, has met twice in the last few months, with initial meetings focused on developing mentorship relationships and identifying topics of interest for professional and client development. If you are interested in joining, please contact either Clara Jimenez at Clara.Jimenez@finnegan.com or Lillian Forero at lillian.forero@nortonrosefulbright.com.

“You take people as far as they will go, not as far as you would like them to go.”—JEANETTE RANKIN
REGION IX

Over the last few months, the Region IX leadership team has continued to conduct due diligence interviews and determinations regarding several judicial candidates in Minnesota. We have also reached out to HNBA affiliates in St. Louis and Kansas City to offer support and resources. We have also had a number of discussions with students at the University of Iowa Law School as to how to organize Latina and Latino law students in a way that provides more fulfilling and sustainable engagement with the HNBA.

We have been spending some time understanding a new and exciting program for Latina/o youth in Minnesota. The Latino Lawyer Camp is an intensive, week-long summer camp experience to introduce Latino 8th graders to the legal profession. As best as the organizers can tell, there is no program like this anywhere. Finally, our affiliate, Minnesota Hispanic Bar Association, continues to work with other local organizations to plan for Associate Justice Sotomayor’s visit to Minnesota in October.

REGION IX PUERTO RICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

The PRBA formed in 1994 to address many unique issues affecting the Puerto Rican community in Chicago. On August 06, 2016, the PRBA will assist in The Juvenile Expungement Summit offering free legal assistance to adult & juvenile offenders. The Expungement Summit will also involve job training and job placement.

Previously, On July 17, 2016 the PRBA participated in a workshop on the proposed constitutional assembly on the status of Puerto Rico.

The PRBA is also active in food drives, pro bono legal work, and raising scholarship money for latino law students.

REGION VI

NORTH CAROLINA & SOUTH CAROLINA

In April, the HNBA hosted a luncheon event with members of the Charlotte Hispanic Community at K&L Gates’ downtown offices. HNBA National President Robert Maldonado talked about the HNBA and also shared sobering statistics with the group about Hispanics in the legal profession. Several members of Charlotte’s Hispanic business community present at the event were delighted to get to know the HNBA for the first time. “The legal community is so intertwined with business and other community groups that it is critical we reach out beyond just lawyers’ bars,” stated Region VI President Gonzalo Frias.
Supporting diversity in the legal profession.

Microsoft is proud to join the HNBA in its mission to enrich and diversify the legal profession and create opportunities for Hispanic communities. To learn more about Microsoft’s Corporate, External, & Legal Affairs Team visit careers.microsoft.com.
**REGION XVII**

On July 28, 2016, the Latina Commission held a networking mixer for Region XVIII members, attorneys and students. The primary purpose of the event was to introduce the HNBA and the Latina Commission to law students, recent law school graduates, and non-HNBA members. Yesenia Gallegos, HNBA Latina Commissioner, hosted the event at Fox Rothschild, LLP, with the assistance of Lindsay Holloman (associate at Sheppard Mullin) and Andrea Brizuela (attorney at NBC Universal). Yesenia spoke to the approximately 30 guests about the various initiatives and programs offered by the HNBA and the Latina Commission that help enhance the career trajectory for attorneys, and Lindsay and Andrea shared their personal paths towards their current legal careers and how the HNBA has served as an instrumental resource.

**REGION XIX**

We have continued our efforts to increase the membership in Puerto Rico. We are focusing on activities at the three law schools: Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, and the University of Puerto Rico. We are providing conferences at schools in such topics as: “What is the HNBA?”, “El Derecho más Allá de los Tribunales,” “Jóvenes Abogados y la Práctica del Derecho,” among others. We are also working on the implementation of the Program Law School Sí Se Puede! The efforts made have been very productive, and I’m confident that we will strengthen the HNBA in PR. Together we will make a difference in the community and in the local legal profession.

**REGION XV HOSTS PRESIDENT ROBERT MALDONADO**

Region XV President, Michelle Hernandez, along with Deputy Presidents DeAnza Valencia Sapien and Amber R. Macias-Mayo, are excited to announce plans to host a Presidential Reception in honor of HNBA President Robert Maldonado on August 26, 2016. The reception will take place in Albuquerque, New Mexico at an extraordinary outdoor venue under the grand New Mexico sky. Local firms and affiliate organization New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association will cohost the event, and all are invited to attend this special event.

**REGION XVIII**

On July 28, 2016, the Latina Commission held a networking mixer for Region XVIII members, attorneys and students. The primary purpose of the event was to introduce the HNBA and the Latina Commission to law students, recent law school graduates, and non-HNBA members. Yesenia Gallegos, HNBA Latina Commissioner, hosted the event at Fox Rothschild, LLP, with the assistance of Lindsay Holloman (associate at Sheppard Mullin) and Andrea Brizuela (attorney at NBC Universal), and Yesenia Gallegos (Partner at Fox Rothschild).

*Namal Tartula (Associate at Sheppard Mullin), Lindsay Holloman (Associate at Sheppard Mullin), Andrea Brizuela (attorney at NBC Universal), and Yesenia Gallegos (Partner at Fox Rothschild).*

"You get in life what you have the courage to ask for." —NANCY D. SOLOMON
We are a proud sponsor of the Hispanic National Bar Association.
Elia Diaz-Yaeger, New Orleans, LA
Doreen Fogg, New Orleans, LA
Alba Cruz-Hacker, Washington, DC
Darcy Tharp, Washington, DC

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Noticias