

Diversity in the Legal Profession Committee  
Minutes  
June 2, 2009

Those attending included: Harisha Bastiampillai, Damian Arguello, Elsa Martinez-Tenreiro, Kathleen Nalty, Cindy Hyman, Cynthia Jones, and Awilda Marquez.

Qwest awards

Cindy noted that nominations for the Qwest Leadership and Trailblazer awards had come in. As a committee, we should make some process decisions. Specifically, Qwest was nominated again for the Leadership award, which they won last year. Also, two Qwest employees were nominated for the Trailblazer award. Since the selection committee includes a Qwest employee, we should discuss how to maintain objectivity and avoid the appearance of impropriety.

With regards to both awards, the committee voted that an individual or company could not win the award in successive years. Therefore, we would not accept the nomination for Qwest this year. Before next year's award, we will discuss whether any additional restrictions should be considered. As for the individuals, the committee voted that the Qwest employee on the selection committee should abstain from voting on the Trailblazer award nominees. Similar restrictions may need to be considered in the future.

Incoming University of Colorado and University of Denver Law School Students

Cindy noted that 17 attorneys volunteered to call incoming diverse students at CU and DU law schools. We heard about this opportunity late in the process, so discussed obtaining the names of admitted students earlier next year, perhaps before the deadline for committing to the schools. It is our hope that by contacting students early, we can help persuade them to come to Colorado to law school.

Bar application language

Kathleen noted that the President of the GLBT bar raised a concern from their members. Several felt the language in the CO bar application was too restrictive. For example, it required applicants to check a box for "male" or "female". For transgender people, this is problematic. It also required them to identify "mother" or "father" instead of parent. Again, this is problematic for those with two mothers or two fathers. Kathleen offered to look into how other states handle this. Qwest offered that one of their summer interns may be able to help.

Colorado bar demographics

The committee discussed again approaching the Supreme Court about asking them to track the demographics of those attorneys registered in CO. This would give us benchmarks to allow us to track progress. Kathleen will look into having her intern or a Qwest intern follow up on how many states already track demographics before presenting this suggestion to the Supreme Court.