

## **Colorado Bar Association Council on Equity & Inclusive Excellence**

The Colorado Bar Association engaged in a collaborative and inclusive effort to shape the future of our Association through the REFOCUS 20/20 Strategic Plan, which provides a framework for sustainable excellence, defines our shared aspirations, and identifies five strategic goals to meet our mission and vision.

The second strategic goal is:

*Engage under-represented and statewide populations by improving and ensuring their inclusion at all levels of the CBA, by building symbiotic relations with specialty bars, by using technology to better reach members statewide, and by strengthening local bar associations.*

In order to realize this goal, many distinct efforts have taken place primarily through the work of the CBA/DBA Joint Steering Committee and the REDI Committee of the CBA Executive Council. As the work of equity, inclusion, and diversity in the CBA manifests in greater volume and impact, it is imperative that the various component REDI leadership groups collaborate to develop and maintain inclusive excellence within the CBA.

In reimagining the structure and objectives of the CBA/DBA Joint Steering Committee, it is proposed that the CBA create a new organizational body focused on cultivating equity and inclusive excellence for the Colorado Bar Association.

The **Colorado Bar Association Council on Equity & Inclusive Excellence** will:

- Advise CBA leadership on matters of diversity,
- Advocate for policies that foster an inclusive climate,
- Identify current practices that pose barriers to the engagement and success of underrepresented members,
- Increase awareness of inclusive governance best practices, and
- Implement innovations that advance our organizational racial, equity, diversity, and inclusion goals.

Additionally, the council will collaborate with related committees across the organization and the profession (i.e., REDI Committee, Section diversity & inclusion committees, YLD diversity committee, entities identified by the Hub, etc.) to support programming that builds community.

### **Outline of Council Mission, Vision, & Outcomes**

#### **Mission**

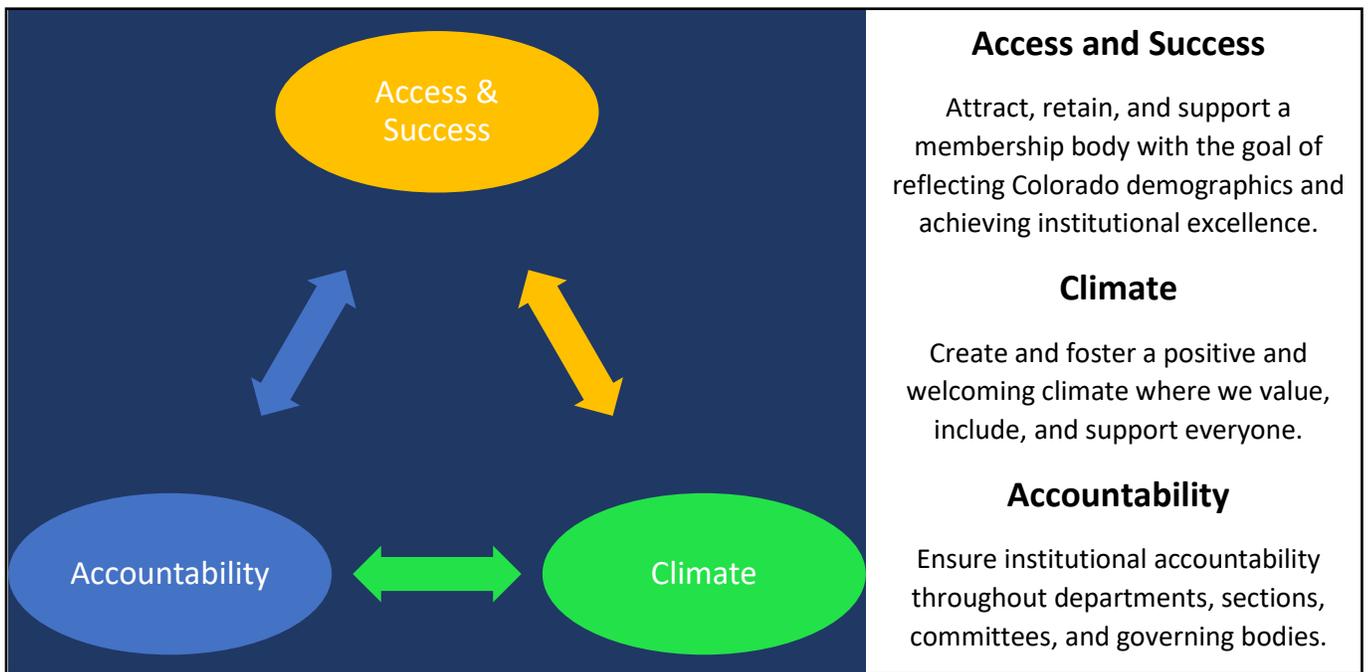
In support of the Colorado Bar Association's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism, the Council on Equity & Inclusive Excellence (CEIE) fosters a bar association community where all individuals feel seen, heard, and valued. The CEIE operates from an intersectional approach to diversity and social justice that encourages meaningful member engagement, professional success, and personal growth.

**Vision**

The Council on Equity & Inclusive Excellence creates space for all members to explore their intersecting identities and critically engage across differences, centering the experiences of groups that have been historically marginalized and underrepresented in the legal profession. The CEIE advises the CBA leadership on matters of diversity, advocates for policies that foster an inclusive climate, identifies current practices that pose barriers to the engagement and success of underrepresented members, increases awareness of inclusive governance best practices, and implements innovations that advance the organization’s racial, equity, diversity, and inclusion goals.

**Core Outcomes**

The work of the Council will be framed around three core outcomes:



Examples of the type of work the Council might undertake in each of these outcome areas include:

Access & Success	Climate	Accountability
Advising CBA leadership, staff and members regarding issues of climate within the CBA	Bringing people together to discuss and connect in community, ensuring programs and services focus on building connections - internal and external	Maintaining and improving upon the work already completed by the CBA/DBA Joint Steering Committee through the 2019 Diversity Action Plan
Advocating on behalf of members for equity and inclusion in leadership selection practices and	Advising on identity-conscious programs and activities that support and strengthen a	Continuously innovating and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives to improve climate and responding to

generating greater transparency regarding leadership opportunities	climate of inclusive excellence within the CBA	concerns by updating organizational diversity plans and strategies
Evaluating and improving efforts surrounding the recruitment and retention of members and leaders from diverse backgrounds	Developing and improving approaches to communicating about inclusion, equity, and anti-racism efforts at the CBA	Monitoring and evaluating the progress of REDI strategic priorities listed in the CBA strategic plan

**Generative Thinking Model**

The Council will achieve its mission, vision, and outcomes by embodying a generative thinking model whereby the Council will be primarily contemplative, future-focused, and engaged in anticipatory work.

While efforts led by the Council will be organized around the 2019 CBA/DBA Joint Steering Committee Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan, this “big picture” generative thinking will accompany (or precede) the strategic modes of thought the CBA has commonly relied on in the past. To that end, the Council will also be responsible for creating, maintaining, and implementing Inclusive Excellence Actions to be developed by the Council in accordance with community feedback received through an annual climate assessment of the organization.

However, the Council will also seek to focus its work beyond the current strategic priorities to include practices such as scenario planning or reviewing insights from stakeholders or thought leaders on emerging REDI issues of importance to the association or profession. In this generative mode, the Council will be asked to be sense makers, probing the CBA’s current REDI reality in anticipation of future challenges facing the organization.

**Leadership & Membership**

The Council members will be strategically representative of constituents across the organization. Composed of leaders, staff, and members, the Council will be “group led” and facilitated by a council manager. Potential members will self-nominate and be selected to the Council through a horizontal leadership methodology.

Horizontal leadership is a way of involving networked teams to ensure the organization's vision is implemented. It develops a horizontal chain of command and delineates well-defined, decision-spaces that clarify when to access the vertical leadership structure of the CBA while also encouraging rapid innovative action when the need or opportunity arises.

The Council will operate through a system of networked, cross-functional teams developed and identified through the creative/problem-solving method of generative thinking. Examples of such teams might include advocacy, communications, accountability, and belonging. These groups of people from different functional areas will work together in process-driven teams to achieve the common outcomes of the Council. The results are scalability, efficiency, greater satisfaction from the work, and continually enhanced skill sets for the organization.