

## Diversity on the Bench

### *Meeting Minutes*

**Meeting Date:** February 13, 2024

**Meeting Time:** 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

**Attendees:** Meghan Bush, Charles Robertson, Judge Cynthia Mares, John Rodman, Judge Maritza Braswell, Machia Mullens, Nicole Soto Quintero, Sumi Lee, Dr. Fernando Guzman, Judge Gary Jackson, Catherine Chan.

#### **Minutes:**

- **Minutes for the December 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting have been approved.**
- **New Focus Area Document:**
  - o Focus areas have been tweaked a little.
  - o This document will be published if no edits need to be made.
- **Civil Lawyer Outreach**
  - o The civil rights attorney reached out and was upset that the coalition existed and thought it was against the law.
  - o We can't ignore the fact that the supreme court decision has brought up a lot of different opinions in the public.
  - o The coalition is doing great work and there is no need to be worried about these opinions.
  - o No one is being excluded but we are focused.
  - o Judge Mares will be doing a CLE in Seattle for the National Hispanic Bar Association to discuss these issues. If you would like more information contact Judge Mares.
- **Focus Area Updates:**
  - o Focus Group 1: Encourage Diverse Lawyers to Apply for Judicial Vacancies and Help Prepare Interested Applicants
    - Membership Programs.
    - The Dream Team Program was a CLI program that helped coach diverse candidates. There was a one-hour video for judges to train the difference of mentoring vs coaching.
    - An email will go out for all the sitting judges to ask for volunteers to mentor/coach.
      - Waiting for Justice Marquize's approval.
    - A letter will be sent out to give people in the community an update about the coalition.
  - o Focus Group 2: Support the Retention of Diverse Judicial Officers
    - Been reaching out to diverse judges around the state to find unique issues that diverse judicial officers face and what the coalition can do to assist them.
    - Spoke to Justice Marquez and Kent Wagner about this.

- Everyone was interested in having focus groups from judicial officers to understand what needed work.
  - Focus groups will be conducted. An email will be sent out to explain the focus group. The focus group will be completely confidential.
  - Develop a list of volunteers to send the email out to.
  - The app is called Meatometer. It allows a host to ask questions and receive responses that every participant will see but it will not be connected to a particular participant.
  - Working on spotlighting Diverse Judicial Officers. If you have any thoughts reach out to the Co-chairs.
    - Colorado Lawyer
    - Thrive
  - Courageous conversations came up with the judges and might be a good way to tie it in to this group.
- Focus Group 3: Be a Resource for Key Decision-Makers
  - They had two focus groups, and the turnout was great.
  - Two pages of questions.
  - The highlight of the focus groups is that they needed more education and resources, especially for the non-lawyers.
  - No uniformity on unsolicited information.
  - Sometimes a great candidate will be selected and sent to the governor, but the governor does not select them. The commissioners would like more information on why.
  - The commissioners felt like there were no issues with lack of representation.
  - A report will be put together and brought back to the commission.
  - It might be useful to share with other Commissioners to allow them to add things.
  - Commissioners are willing to be part of a buddy system to discuss things.
- Focus Group 4: Be Visible
  - Judge Mares and Judge Braswell have been continually active in the community and have been invited to CU Bolder to talk about the coalition.
  - Judge Mares is also sitting on a panel.
  - Everyone should be sharing the coalitions work in the community. We need more people power.
  - If you have anyone that would be a good fit for the collation, please invite them and have them either email [diversity@cobar.org](mailto:diversity@cobar.org) or Judge Braswell or Judge Mares to join.
- **Every Focus group should have one meeting between now and the next Coalition meeting.**
- **Budget:**
  - Is there anything that the Collation will need a budget for?
  - A reception would be a great idea at some point for the Dream Team 2.0. Mentoring program
  - Money will be needed for the mentimeter app.
  - CBA and CLI have hosted a CLE for Pathway to the Bench.