

# Diversity Committee Update

By Vincent D. Howard, Diversity Committee Co-Chair



The Diversity Committee has been very busy and off to a great start for its 2012 inaugural year. Building on our committee's diversity strategy and stated goals, our committee has been working on the following:

## Increasing Our Own Diversity by Reaching Out to Diverse Bar Organizations

One of our goals discussed in previous issues was to increase communication between CAOC and other minority bar associations. CAOC has made progress in this area by becoming members of the Minority Bar Coalition (MBC). The MBC is a specialty bar group comprised of the presidents of various minority bar organizations in the San Francisco-Bay Area and the State Bar Special Assistant for Diversity & Bar Relations. The MBC meets periodically to discuss best practices, issues that affect minorities, and ways to increase diversity and awareness. The intent is for the various presidents to take what is discussed at the MBC meetings back to their organizations for further discussion and action. CAOC now has a "spot at the table" as Micha Liberty and I have been attending meetings and have started a dialog with various leaders in the MBC organization. Three major issues discussed were court funding, judicial appointments, and new board of trustees.

With regard to court funding, Micha and I shared with MBC members CAOC's Justice Day event, where part of our focus was court funding. We also discussed judicial appointments. Since the beginning of his term, Governor Brown has been very clear that he is interested in appointing a diverse group of judges. The various groups were encouraged to support and nominate judges from diverse backgrounds to apply. Finally, the various MBC members were also encouraged to nominate and support

people from diverse backgrounds to apply to the State Bar Board of Trustees, which is the State Bar's governing board, formerly known as the Board of Governors.

## Increase Member Participation in CAOC

Another stated goal of the DC is to increase the participation of our diverse membership in all CAOC activities, including our educational programs. Members of the DC have been hard at work ensuring that CAOC has a diverse panel of outstanding speakers at our annual convention in November. A special thanks goes out to Ronnie Whitehead (CAOC DC Member LA) and Chumahan Bowen (CAOC DC Member LA) for their help in making this happen.

## Networking

Finally, we are working with specialty bar groups in San Francisco and Los Angeles to host networking receptions. The first DC mixer is September 27th in San Francisco! We are proud to host this networking event that brings all our members together. Come meet attorney members and political leaders in this eclectic, informal setting – get some mentoring and do some networking. Drinks and appetizers will be served.

Micha and I are really excited about what this committee has accomplished thus far and we are excited about what is on the horizon. We thank you all for your continued support and we continue to look forward to working with all interested members in achieving our diversity goals. ■

## Diversity Mixer

hosted by

### Consumer Attorneys of California Diversity Committee Co-Chairs of the Minority Bar Coalition

Asian American Bar Association • Asian American Prosecutor's Association • The Bar Association of San Francisco • Bay Area Black Prosecutors Association • Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom • Black Women Lawyers of Northern California • Charles Houston Bar Association • Diversity Section of the Marin County Bar Association • East Bay La Raza Lawyers Association • Filipino Bar Association • Iranian American Bar Association • Korean American Bar Association of Northern California • National Native American Bar Association • Queen's Bench • San Francisco La Raza Lawyer's Association • South Asian Bar Association of Northern California • Vietnamese American Bar Association of Northern California

**Thursday, September 27, 2012**

5:30 – 7:30pm

Otis Lounge

25 Maiden Lane, San Francisco, CA 94108

**Space is limited – RSVP required**

to Valerie Shope at [valerie@caoc.org](mailto:valerie@caoc.org) or (916) 442-6902 ext. 115

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