

**Minutes of Inclusion, Mentoring and Fellowships Committee at the  
Florida Bar Business Law Section Annual Seminar, on August 31, 2013**

**Attendees:**

Leyza Blanco, **Chair**  
Paul Orshan, **Vice Chair**  
Hon. John Olson, **Judicial Chair**  
Hon. Gil S. Freeman, **Judicial Chair**  
Hon. Cathy McEwen  
Robert Branson  
Carlos Sardi  
Arnell Bryant-Willis  
Marsha Rydberg

Morgan Spector  
James Moon, **Vice Chair**  
Amir Isaiah  
Brian Gart  
Peter Valori  
Mark Nichols  
Harsh Arora  
Sara Paris

**Committees Represented:**

BKC/UCC  
Bankruptcy Judicial Liaison  
IP  
Business Litigation

Antitrust/Franchise  
Computer/Tech  
Corporation/Securities  
Long Range Planning

**Meeting Called to Order at 8:40 a.m.**

The minutes from the June 27, 2013 meeting were approved with two changes: (1) Sections Represented was changed to Committees Represented; and (2) Long Range Planning was added to the Committees Represented.

**Upcoming Events:**

Chair Blanco reported on the status of upcoming events.

9/5/13 - Alan Howard will be making a presentation at the GW Perkins Bar Assn. at Jacksonville Lunch Meeting regarding the benefits of BLS membership. A volunteer from Jacksonville is needed to also attend this lunch meeting.

9/21/13 – FAMU Law School Diversity Mentoring Picnic in Orlando. A sign-up sheet was passed around for BLS members to man a table at the event in one hour shifts from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Chair Blanco will seek additional volunteers at the EC Meeting.

10/17/13 – Joint Program with CABA – Business Court Judicial Roundtable with Judge Bailey and Judge Thornton. It was suggested that this type of program could be repeated around the state and that a link with minority bar associations in each town was needed. Judge McEwen stated that she already had such a relationship in Tampa. Others are needed in different locations. Harsh Arora stated that he was involved with the South Asia Bar Association, which is a statewide group.

10/23 – 10/24/13 – Trial Skills Workshop for Minority Business Lawyers. The BLS is co-sponsoring this event with CABA and the Caribbean Bar Assn. Judge Freeman reported that the workshop will be held at the Lawson E. Thomas Courthouse in downtown Miami. The workshop will be limited to 24 participants with 2 faculty members for each of 3 groups of eight. There will be exercises and demonstrations in the areas of opening and closing arguments, direct and cross examinations and expert testimony. Chair Blanco advised that an email blast would be going out shortly to solicit applications.

Paul Orshan reported that Carlos Sardi's firm, Genovese, Joblove & Battista will be hosting a luncheon on 10/24 for the participants and that a subcommittee is looking for an additional host for a luncheon on 10/23 and for a reception on 10/23. The subcommittee will seek speakers for the two luncheons, and it was suggested that we try to get one of our local bankruptcy judges to speak.

11/9/13 – Kozyak Minority Mentoring Picnic – Chair Blanco reported that the BLS sponsorship for this event was already in the budget. A sign-up sheet was passed for members to volunteer to man a booth for one hour shifts from 11:30 to 4:30 (including set-up and breakdown of the booth).

Brian Gart announced that there are three receptions in advance of the Kozyak Picnic:

9/19/13 – 6:00 p.m. at Kozyak, Tropin in Coral Gables

9/22/13 – 5:00 p.m. at Berger, Singerman in Fort Lauderdale

9/23/13 – 5:30 p.m. at Greenberg, Traurig in Miami

Brian Gart also discussed that this is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mentoring Picnic and that the Kozyak Mentoring Foundation is seeking scholarship funds (4 scholarships of \$5,000 each) to provide internships for 4 mentees with law firms or judges and made a motion for a \$1,000 scholarship contribution from BLS, which was seconded and passed unanimously. Chair Blanco will make that motion at the EC meeting. Judge Olson stated that he would be interested in an intern.

A motion was also made to add the BLS sponsorship for the FAMU picnic, to include the sponsorship, up to a \$300 expense reimbursement and a giveaway, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

Paul Orshan announced that he will be speaking at the annual Florida statewide CLE on LGBT issues entitled "Out of the Closet and Into Your Office" which will be held at the Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville on 10/18 and 10/19/13. Although not a BLS sponsored event, Paul will make an outreach at the event for the BLS.

## **BLS Leadership**

Steph Nagin, Hon. Bill Van Nortwick and Alan Howard addressed the Committee. BLS Chair Nagin stated that he had divided the responsibilities of the Chair's job and that Judge Van Nortwick had the oversight responsibility for this Committee.

Judge Van Nortwick discussed that the BLS wants to define diversity broadly and make the section more diverse through mentoring and fellowships. Diversity is an EC priority and if there are any budgetary or other issues, the Committee should contact him and he will respond quickly. He advised that this Committee plays an important role for the BLS and the Bar.

BLS Chair Nagin wants as much mentoring and inclusion as possible and he believes that starts with the Committee Chairs who should go to the EC for input. He announced that there is a By-Law Revisions Task Force and that an effort is being made to feature our sponsors more as they are vital to the success of the BLS and this annual Meeting and Seminar. Judicial involvement is important to our sponsors and the idea is not to have the sponsors tethered to a booth, but to use, promote and introduce the sponsors at meetings and social events.

### **Fellows Program**

Chair Blanco discussed that the Fellows Program had been moved from the Long Range Planning Committee to this Committee as part of the diversity initiative of the BLS. She reported that 20 applicants had applied for the 2 BLS Fellows. A subcommittee of volunteers agreed to meet over the weekend to narrow the applicants based upon the promotional goals of diversity, geography and practice area.

### **New Business**

There was discussion about a program used by the Reptiles to offer free section membership to lawyers attending CLE programs. There were some questions about issues with the Bar and which CLE programs (in-person, telephone, webinars, etc.) might qualify. Marsha Rydberg agreed to find out how such a program might work and it was tabled to the mid-year meeting in January, 2014.

Chair Blanco initiated some discussion about the exact role of the Committee in the Mentoring area and that she was unsure what the expectations of the BLS were for Mentoring and that the status, mandate and program are somewhat unknown at this time. Peter Valori reported that there is an effort to layer in policies to address diversity issues through mentoring by using selection, matching and the use of liaisons to the Committee. He also announced that the handbook is being reviewed and that Alan Aronson is running the program. It was agreed that the Mentoring issues would be tabled to the mid-year meeting in January, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.