

The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers

Board of Governors Strategic Plan

(Revised January 2018, approved at February 2018 Board of Governors' meeting)

This Strategic Plan is intended to be a work in progress, subject to revision from time to time as deemed appropriate by the College Board of Governors to meet the needs of its membership. It does not contain a list of imperatives, but strategic objectives and aspirational goals designed to further achieve the College's mission.

Mission Statement

The College of Labor and Employment Lawyers is a fellowship of the most accomplished members of the labor and employment law community. Its mission is:

- To promote achievement, advancement, and excellence in the practice of labor and employment law;
- To establish, by example, high standards of professionalism and civility for the practice of labor and employment law;
- To share our experience and knowledge to improve existing systems of dispute resolution and conflict management and to develop new ones;
- To recognize and honor distinguished members of the labor and employment law community;
- To convene meetings and sponsor programs to pursue our mission, induct new members, and celebrate our fellowship; and
- To act as a resource of labor and employment law knowledge, skills, experience, and history for the bar, academia, government, the judiciary, and the community at large.

A. PROMOTION

Task: Increase Fellow Involvement in Regional Activities

Purpose: Increased regional activity provides individual Fellows with a greater opportunity to: 1) be of service to their community and the Bar; 2) work collaboratively with other Fellows; 3) enhance the value of their membership; 4) encourage leadership within the College; 5) provide meaningful opportunities for networking; 6) increase the visibility of the College; 7) allow for messaging of core tenets – civility and leadership; and 8) provide outreach to young lawyers and law students to familiarize them with the practice of labor and employment law. Note: This is closely tied to one of the Tasks for the Education subcommittee.

Strategy: A Board Regional Activity Committee (“BRAC”) would determine appropriate regional boundaries (federal circuits or geographical boundaries). Once the regional boundaries are determined, BRAC would create a survey to be distributed to all Fellows to assess the level of interest and type of professional and/or social activities which would be of interest. BRAC would analyze the results to prioritize which activities would yield the most involvement, and which regions/circuits would be interested in taking a leadership role in sponsoring such activities. Activities that involve Fellows from more than one region/circuit should be considered. Currently active Fellows should be solicited to motivate their colleagues.

Responsibility: BRAC should be created to oversee the fulfillment of the responsibilities, including organizing regional leadership. Board members should be involved in the initial organization of their respective regions/circuits. If there is a region or circuit that is unrepresented, it should be covered by a Board member from a nearby region/circuit to the extent feasible.

Time Frame: Steps: 1. Assign BRAC to determine the initial structure of regions within one month after acceptance of the Strategic Plan. 2. Identify Fellows to serve on regional/local committees within the next three months and send template ideas of activities and the Fellows’ survey to committees. 3. Ask that each committee organize and host one regional event within six months once committee assignments are finalized. 4. Regional Committees to submit reports on activity and response of Fellows to BRAC within one year.

Dissemination: The information should be shared first with the Strategic Planning Committee, which will in turn present it to the Board to determine how best to disseminate the results to Fellows.

Task: Diversity/Balance

Purpose: To address issues of diversity, especially with respect to practice area. There is an increasing imbalance in College Membership with many more members representing management. Demographic diversity with respect to gender, ethnicity, and sexual preference, among other characteristics, also continues to be a concern. The goal is to achieve and maintain relative balance among the practice areas and increase demographic diversity.

Strategy: The College should explore the establishment of a goal for management lawyers to be balanced with the other constituencies: unions, plaintiffs, and neutrals. Every Fellow who represents unions, employees, as well as neutrals, should offer to nominate qualified colleagues, and actively encourage them to apply. The College should engage in more active promotion by contacting other labor law groups that have strong union representation including the ABA LEL and AFL-CIO LCC, as well as plaintiff-oriented associations such as NELA. Current Fellows who represent management should be encouraged to nominate qualified union and employee adversaries and neutrals. With respect to demographic diversity, the College should continue to encourage the nomination of qualified people of color, females, LGBTQ individuals, and other underrepresented groups, and contact organizations such as the National Bar Association, the Hispanic Bar Association, the Lambda Legal Association, the LEL Section and others that provide support to qualified attorneys of color, females) and LGBTQ attorneys.

It is also important to study the possible root causes of and any disparity within the College and to take steps to address such causes.

Demographic diversity should be established as a core principal. The College should periodically remind Fellows of the importance of demographic diversity and balance across practice areas, especially at the time when nominations are made.

Responsibility: The Board, through the Board Credentials Committee, should conduct an annual assessment of the diversity of each class selected citing improvements or areas where more work is needed to achieve the College's diversity goals. The Board Credentials Committee should conduct the initial review, and present its findings to the Board. The Board should actively emphasize balance and diversity, making adjustments and formulating strategies from year to year.

Time Frame: The Board should do an annual assessment of the diversity of each class as soon as is practicable after each class of Inductees is announced beginning with the first class of inductees after approval of the Strategic Plan.

Dissemination: The Board may consider whether it wishes to publish an annual report on the status of diversity in the newsletter.

Task: CLEL Membership Value

Purpose: To promote the value proposition for membership by motivating current Fellows to take more responsibility for creating opportunities for networking and educational programming at an advanced level, sharing best practices, and modeling professional standards for others.

Strategy: The College would stress the value of internal referral systems and value to clients. The College should obtain significant input from regions to discern successes and failures through activities. Possibly form a “task force” containing experienced organizers to share best practices and then share them with the College via newsletter. The College should encourage Fellows to nominate other individuals who could be interested in coordinating internal activities. This should include firms willing and able to host activities. Organizers should be regularly recognized.

The College could convene an advisory group of Fellows who have successfully coordinated regional activities to assist with disseminating these practices to inactive regions.

Responsibility: Create a task force on how to evaluate regional activity, and how to assess and enhance membership.

Time Frame: Task force to be created within three months.

Dissemination: The results of successful internal promotions should be shared with the College as a whole.

B. CIVILITY

Task: Mentoring and Promotion of Collaboration Among Constituencies: Law School Employment or Labor Law Class Program on Ethical Practices in Labor and Employment Law.

Purpose: Law students have little exposure to the real world of labor and employment law practice. This proposed program presents an opportunity to expose law students to the ethical challenges they will encounter, the ethical principles to which they must adhere, and to the leaders of the specialty who are paragons of ethical and civil practice.

Strategy: Develop a 50-minute program to be rolled out to law schools.

Responsibility: Create a committee chaired by a Board member and staffed by academic Fellows and Fellows from other constituencies to assess and determine the feasibility of creating and installing a pilot program for three law schools.

Time Frame: Create a model program within six months after approval of the Strategic Plan. Establish one program within a year. Use the model program in three law schools within a year thereafter.

Dissemination: All academic Fellows should be informed by letter from a respected colleague asking whether they have an interest in participating. During the first Board meeting after the letters have gone out and responses have been tabulated, create a committee if the response is positive.

Task: Ethics – Government Employees

Purpose: To ensure that government employees in labor and employment agencies obtain ethics and civility training consistent with College principles. Advertise the College to government employees so that fellowship becomes an aspirational goal.

Strategy: Review Adele Rapport’s training to determine if updates are needed.

Responsibility: Create a subcommittee of the BRAC which should include members of BRAC and government Fellows.

Time Frame: Once Adele Rapport has reviewed and made any updates necessary to the existing program, the subcommittee of BRAC will identify the first three regions, and organizers in those regions, to present the program. The identification of regions and organizers should be done within six months after approval of the Strategic Plan. The first three programs should be conducted within one year. The remaining regions should conduct the program within two years.

Dissemination: Chair of the subcommittee of BRAC should provide regular status reports to the Board.

C. EDUCATION

Task: Increased Regional Activity

Purpose: Through increased regional activity, the College will highlight the importance of its mission, provide educational programs, and strengthen its relevance throughout the country.

Strategy: Create regional boards of at least three to six members, where none now exist, and conduct at least one event per region per year. Each region should

have a Regional Chair position. Events may include: substantive programming, including civility training; collegial gatherings and networking (dinners, luncheons, receptions, guest speakers); outreach to law students (e.g., on civility and the benefits of practicing labor and employment law), outreach to law clerks (e.g., on civility issues, liaisons, training), outreach to newer lawyers (e.g., on professionalism and civility); and training for agencies (help newer employees understand the mission and basic law). This may include partnering with other entities (e.g., a state bar association or governmental body/agency) to host an event and obtaining sponsorships. Successful programming can be shared across regions.

Responsibility: BRAC will identify regional leadership and obtain commitments from the regional leaders.

Time Frame: BRAC should identify and secure commitments from regional leaders to serve within six months after approval of the Strategic Plan. Regional leaders should identify and secure commitments from Fellows willing to serve on regional committees to organize the events within three months thereafter. The regional committees should begin their meetings within three months of creation of the regional committees, and the committees should submit semi-annual reports identifying efforts, events, progress, and annual plans. BRAC should have a quarterly conference call to review regional efforts and identify how to assist any struggling region.

Dissemination: All College members should be informed and their participation and input solicited within four weeks after approval of the Strategic Plan.

Task: Education/Publications

Purpose: To continue to advance the College’s mission through education in the form of CLE and Publications.

Strategy: To continue the College’s newsletter and CLE program in connection with the ABA Section of Labor and Employment Law’s Annual CLE Conference in November. To explore additional activities in the form of webinars and podcasts.

Responsibility: If the Board determines that webinars and podcasts should be explored, the Board should identify Fellows who will serve on a subcommittee created for this purpose.

Time Frame: The subcommittee should prepare a plan for Board approval within two months after the subcommittee is appointed and convened, which should take place within two months after approval of the Strategic Plan. The subcommittee should be responsible for the quarterly or semi-annual production of webinars and at least two podcasts a year.

Dissemination: All College members should be informed and their participation and input solicited. If podcasts and webinars are to be available to more than College Fellows, the subcommittee should be responsible for disseminating the information to others.

Task: Law School Writing Competition

Purpose: The Law School Writing Competition serves the purpose of: a) introducing law students to the College and the practice of labor and employment law; and b) educating readers of the ABA Journal of Labor and Employment Law on the topic covered by the competition winner.

Strategy: No changes are needed to the current program. The College should ensure a succession for judges, and solicit feedback from judges to improve the consistent quality of the competition. There should be continuous review of the awards provided to competition winners.

Responsibility: The College Board is responsible for oversight.

Time Frame: N/A

Dissemination: The competition is already well advertised on the College's website and to various law schools. A journal should be secured to ensure ongoing publication.

Task: Video History Project

Purpose: The purpose of the video project is to develop a video library to preserve the history of labor and employment law, making it readily accessible to Fellows and the public.

Strategy: The Board should spend substantial time reviewing the project taking into consideration: (a) its purpose; (b) a reduction in expenses through possible elimination of a professional videographer (CLEL purchase cameras); (c) options for editing existing video to shorten the viewing time and ensuring videos are edited and indexed; (d) use of Fellows, film schools, college students to conduct edits; (e) where videos should be stored (Cornell and/or elsewhere, including on the College website); (f) the targeted audience; (g) investing in documentarians/academics rather than CLEL creating the videos; and (h) use of grants/sponsors to fund and produce the videos.

Responsibility: The College Board should be responsible for deciding what videos should be made to preserve important labor and employment history and ensuring that videos are completed.

Time Frame: Every two years, the College Board should devote time at a Board meeting to review the progress of the video project and determine what, if any, changes would be appropriate and/or advisable.

Dissemination: Once the Board determines how it wishes to proceed, the College membership should be timely informed.

D. NEW DIRECTIONS

Task: Technological Advancement and Trends in the Practice of L&E Law

Purpose: To monitor and analyze the changing “business of law” to meet the evolving needs of Fellows in their practice of labor and employment law through technological and other advancements.

Strategy: (1) Conduct a thorough study of current and on-the-horizon technological developments and trends in the practice of labor and employment law. Work with the ABA Technology Group, other similar organizations, and possibly vendors to present symposia on trends and advancements to inform Fellows of the development of the practice. Partner with law schools to identify and research trends in the development of the practice. This could be a topic for future podcasts or other educational platforms.

(2) Undertake a review of how law departments and firms currently operate and alternative fee arrangements used, and make appropriate recommendations for improvements in best practices

Responsibility: Two task forces should be created to undertake these reviews consisting of Board members, the Strategic Planning Committee, and Fellows who express an interest in serving or who have expertise in this area. This presents another opportunity to engage Fellows not previously involved.

Time Frame: The task forces should be established within two months of approval of the Strategic Plan. Their findings should be completed by the Annual Meeting in 2018.

Dissemination: All College Fellows should be informed of this initiative, and their participation and input solicited. The results should be distributed to all Fellows.

Task: Partnering Organizations

Purpose: Join with other Colleges and similar organizations, within the U.S. and overseas, to expand the reputation of the College as an esteemed organization well recognized for serving labor and employment lawyers throughout North America and other continents.

Strategy: Set time table for presenting a substantive CLE type program, and invite another College or similar organization to join with us for this program; and encourage all College Fellows to participate. This program would be in addition to the regional CLE programs discussed above.

Responsibility: The Board should appoint a task force to undertake this endeavor, which would include members of the Board, the Strategic Planning Committee and interested Fellows.

Time Frame: The program should be presented by the Annual Meeting in 2018.

Dissemination: All College Fellows should be informed of this initiative, and the results should be distributed to all Fellows.