

NCWBA 2013 Summit
August 9, 2013
Gender Equity – Moving the Bar Forward
San Francisco, CA

Break Out Groups Assignment: Develop a new innovative program incorporating information from the speakers and the wealth of knowledge from the Summit participants.

Group Number 6 Gender Equity in the Judiciary

Kathleen Rastetter - moderator
Lt. Tashinda Richardson - presenter

While the group discussed issues with the process of appointment or election, including encouraging women to enter the pipeline, and potential association with groups like the National Women’s Political Caucus or Emerge to provide encouragement and training for women to run for office or for positions on the bench, the group decided to focus on the pipeline issue at an earlier stage- law school.

Judicial Pipeline Program

Project: “So you think you want to be a Judge”. Based on the Street Law Diversity Pipeline program, the program is designed to mentor women at younger ages to prepare to become a judge- it is both a pipeline and mentorship program.

The purpose of the project:

- Enable female law students to obtain an early exposure to the process (for career planning purposes)
- To develop an early network for support
- Teach the steps future attorneys can take to position themselves to become a judge

Audience: Law school students.

Major Players: Judges (both male & female); Members of Boards, counsel for governor or other appointment decision-making body. Diversify the panels to show there is no one right way to get to the bench.

How to obtain Buy In: While most judges are very willing to help by appearing at such events, buy in can also be obtained by getting the Chief Judges of the courts involved in the project. Making the business case for female and diverse judges (fairer appearance of bench to litigants and attorneys) should help.

Resources: Partner with other Affinity Bar Associations to present program. Partner with existing female judicial boot camps, etc.

How:

- The project will involve a training series consisting of mentoring, lectures, networking events.
- Internships through the school year
- Provide opportunities for participants to serve as paid law clerks for judges who participate in the program (through fundraising efforts)

Publicize: Publicize the project through websites, social media, through law schools, and bar associations.

Measure of success: Keep statistics on women in program and the number of women appointed or elected to the bench.