

## **American Bar Association 2008 Partnership Awards Program Application**

The ABA Partnership Awards Program salutes outstanding bar association projects that seek to increase the participation and advancement of lawyers of color in the organized bar and to attract students of color to the legal profession. Award-winning programs will be featured at the joint annual meeting of the National Conference of Bar Presidents, the National Association of Bar Executives and the National Conference of Bar Foundations, to be held in New York, August 8, 2008.

### **NOMINEE INFORMATION:**

Program Title: Summer Clerkship Program

Name of Bar Association: The Allegheny County Bar Association

Address: 400 Koppers Building  
436 Seventh Avenue  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

City/State/Zip Code:

Phone #: 412-402-6600

Email address: dblaner@acba.org

Number of Association Members: 6,500

Program contact person, title, phone #, mail and email address:

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The Allegheny County Bar Association  
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### **PROGRAM INFORMATION:**

In the narrative portion of your application, you will be required to answer the following questions about the program submission.

#### **1. Program Title**

Summer Clerkship Program – (See attachment)

#### **2. Description**

- Describe the program and indicate the aspect of diversity it was designed to address.
- Explain the program's history, its target audience and number of participants.

After 30 legal organizations agreed to and signed the Statement of Purpose, Principles and Objectives (See attachment) on diversity in 2004, specific strategic steps were unfolded. In the subsequent years, the Allegheny County Bar Association organized four task forces that would address diversity issues. Over forty attorneys volunteered to participate on task forces and to provide suggestions, comments and guidelines while serving on either the Law Firm/Corporate

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Law Department, law School, Community Outreach or Courts and Government Agency task force.

In the first full year of work under the Diversity Initiative, the task force members agreed that the highest priority should be to improve upon the recruitment and retention of minorities in Pittsburgh legal organizations. The Summer Clerkship Program was adopted in 2005 as a mechanism for improving upon the process for the identification and recruiting of minority attorneys. Identification of first-year minority law students became the focus of the Law Firm/Corporate Law department task force.

Subsequently, the Allegheny County Bar Association would offer summer clerkship opportunities to first-year minority law students attending the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Duquesne University School of Law and the West Virginia University College of Law. Sixteen law firms, corporations and government agencies agreed to participate in the program by hiring or by providing financial support for the program.

### 3. Goals and Objectives

- Describe the goals and objectives of the program.
- Explain why you decided on this course of action and what effect on diversity in the profession your program would have.

The purpose of the Summer Clerkship Program is to provide summer work experience as a way to attract and to identify high potential first-year minority law students who may become candidates for future employment in Pittsburgh. The Allegheny County Bar Association sponsors the program as one of its key strategies for achieving diversity in the Pittsburgh legal profession.

### 4. New or Existing Initiative

Please indicate if this is a new or an ongoing program.

- If new, describe the issues that prompted the need for this project and indicate whether the goals you wished to accomplish were met and whether the program will continue.

The goals of the program are being met as the program evolves into its fourth year. It has achieved full acceptance by the sixteen participating legal organizations. The ACBA, legal organizations, law schools and task forces will convene in 2008 to consider improvements or enhancements for the 2009 program.

- If an ongoing program, indicate its inception and goals. Also describe whether and how it differed from previous years and what, if any, new ideas were implemented this year.

After a positive experience with the program in 2005, several law firms offered summer work to second-year minority law students. In 2007, the ACBA encouraged more focus on retention of minority attorneys who were hired in Pittsburgh by becoming a sponsor of the new Diversity Symposium held in August 2007. In addition, the ACBA offered a helping hand to the Homer S. Brown Law Association, the Hispanic Bar Committee and the Asian Bar Committee by providing administrative support and regular meeting space that bolstered their effectiveness and service to their members.

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### 5. Budget

Provide information about the total expenses and revenues for this effort.

Approximately twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per year covers the expense of the program.

- Explain the source of program funds and other resources (e.g. in-kind contributions, materials, etc.)

The ACBA provides ninety five percent of the program expense. Other financial support is contributed by law firms.

### 6. Implementation and Execution

- Identify other “partners” who supported your effort (e.g. bar associations, agencies, high schools/colleges/universities/law schools, law firms, etc.).
- Explain how another bar association could replicate this program.
- What suggestions or recommendations would you offer to others who might do so?
- Are there materials, checklists, reports that lend themselves to a “how to” guide for other organizations?

Major partners are the legal organizations and local schools of law. Encouragement and support are also received from the minority bar associations in Pittsburgh.

A bar association can replicate this program by becoming familiar with the strategic blueprint and administrative details. Program materials are available which can be considered as a “how to” guide for interested parties.

### 7. Promotion

- Identify any recognition this program has received, e.g. media coverage, awards, etc.
- If this program has also been submitted for another ABA-related award, including NABE, NCBP or NCBF, please identify.

The ACBA has not applied for recognition with other organizations.

### 8. Results and Evaluation

- How many people participated in the program?
- Describe the short- or long-term benefits that this program provided.
- Did the program meet or exceed its goals/objectives? Explain why or why not.
- Explain any program follow-up efforts (e.g. a report on the number of participants who eventually attend law school).
- Use statistics, registration/attendance numbers or other form of documentation to support your statement.

Forty two first-year minority law students have completed the program to date (2005 -2007). From the 2005 class, forty six percent of the graduating law students received associate or clerkship positions in Pittsburgh. This achievement is well beyond our expectations.

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After completing the clerkship program, participating students reported that they find Pittsburgh as an attractive employment destination that is competitive with many other possible locations for beginning their law practice.

As part of the retention strategy, the Diversity Coordinator follows up with associates on a regular basis. Personal and positive contact occurs from time to time with minority associates for coaching purposes.

To date one hundred and twenty first-year law students have been identified, screened and interviewed as part of the Summer Clerkship Program processes. A resume book complete with the student's resume, a legal writing sample and transcript, if available, becomes part of our tracking information and database for future reference. A copy of the resume book is sent to each of our participating legal organizations for reference.

Return by **March 28, 2008** with supporting documentation to:

Kimberly Vann  
ABA Partnership Awards Program  
ABA Division for Bar Services  
321 North Clark Street, Fl. 20  
Chicago, IL 60610-4714

Or email to: [vannk2@staff.abanet.org](mailto:vannk2@staff.abanet.org)

For further information, contact Kimberly Vann, ABA Division for Bar Services, at 312/988-5364. Thank you for your interest.