

- 1. Program Title:** Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program
- 2. Name of Bar Association:** Nebraska State Bar Association
- 3. Address:** 635 S. 14th Street, Ste 200
- 4. City, State, Zip:** Lincoln, NE 68508
- 5. Phone:** 402-475-7091
- 6. Email:** Lneeley@nebar.com
- 7. Number of Association Members:** 6,444

8. Description of your program to include:

Program objectives

The Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program's main objectives are to encourage corporations and government agencies to:

1. Retain the services of minority-owned law firms.
2. Refer conflict of interest work to minority-owned law firms.
3. Increase the amount of legal services provided by minority lawyers employed in majority-owned law firms.
4. Encourage joint ventures and co-counsel relationships between majority-owned and minority-owned law firms.

The Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program seeks to cultivate these opportunities by hosting 3-4 networking/professional development opportunities per year and by developing referral directories of the employers and attorneys in the program, and the services that they provide.

History of Program: Established in January of 2009.

Number of times presented: To date, 4 networking/professional development events have been held. These events are an opportunity to bring attorneys of color together with firms and corporate counsel. Events have been sponsored by ConAgra Foods, Inc., Legal Aid of Nebraska, Stinson, Morrison and Hecker, LLP, and the Nebraska State Bar Association. A member of the steering committee provides an overview of the goals of the program, then the hosting entity discusses the legal work and relationships that they are looking to explore. Events will feature structured networking exercises or guest speakers, such as Michelle Peak, Senior Attorney for American Airlines and Greg Olaniran, Chairman of Diversity Committee of Stinson, Morrison and Hecker, LLP (see attached materials).

Targeted Audience: Attorneys of color, corporate counsel, government employers, firms, etc.

Number of People Participating: Approximately 150.

Measureable results of efforts to date (include statistics, program evaluation and follow up). Each event has been attended by approximately 60 participants. Their participation has stimulated referral directories. The directories provide a profile of participating attorneys and firms/corporations. The profiles provide contact information, a description of areas of practice, special certifications, and a listing of the co-counsel relationships

that the respective firms/corporations/attorneys are interested in pursuing. Directories are available online on the Nebraska Legal Diversity Website (www.nelegaldiversity.org).

Future program plans: In 2010, Nebraska adopted mandatory continuing legal education. The Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program will be offering diversity CLE opportunities on topics related to diversity and issues of interest to firms and corporations. For example, on May 21, 2010, we are hosting Dr. Arin Reeves of the Athens Group, who will be presenting to an audience of 150 on, “Beyond Diversity into Inclusion: The Legal Community and Leadership in the 21st Century.”

9. Total Program Budget: Sponsoring organizations provide the space, food and beverages for the networking reception.

10 Source of Program Funds: Not applicable

11. Other Resources (e.g., in-kind contributions, materials, etc.): The Nebraska State Bar Association provides the resources to promote the Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program networking events and the dissemination of referral directories. Hosting firms and corporations provide space and food for the networking receptions.

12. Identify other partners who supported your effort (e.g., bar associations, agencies, high schools, colleges/universities, law firms, etc.)

Event Sponsors

Events have been sponsored by ConAgra Foods, Inc., Legal Aid of Nebraska, Stinson, Morrison and Hecker, LLP, and the Nebraska State Bar Association.

Steering Committee

The Nebraska State Bar Association established a diverse steering committee for its Minority Corporate Counsel Program, representing corporations, law firms, and minority bar associations. The Steering Committee provides direction into the priorities of the program.

13. Note any recognition that these efforts have received (e.g., media coverage, awards, etc.).

See attached articles from *The Daily Record* and *The Nebraska Lawyer* magazine.

14. Could another bar association easily replicate this program? Is so, how? Are there materials, checklists, reports that lend themselves to a “how to” guide for other organizations? Please include any pertinent materials with the application form or send separately by email.

The Nebraska State Bar Association has a packet of materials available upon request to assist with replication of this program including:

- A sample invitation letter inviting firms/organizations to participate.
- Copies of the forms to join the referral directories
- Copies of the referral directories for attorneys as well as participating firms, corporation, and organizations.

15. What suggestions or recommendations would you offer to others who might undertake a similar program?

The Nebraska State Bar Association based its program on the ABA Minority Counsel Program. In an effort to build support for the program, the NSBA invited Kay Hodge representing the ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession to Nebraska to present on the benefits of establishing Minority Corporate Counsel Programs.

16. Program contract person, title, phone number:

Elizabeth Neeley
Director, Nebraska Minority Justice Committee
402-475-7091

17. Program contact person's snail mail and email address:

Nebraska State Bar Association
635 S. 14th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
Lneeley@nebar.com

Join the Call to Action

Want to work collectively to promote a diverse legal profession? Join the Call to Action Initiative today! Signatories are listed below:

- *Anderson, Creager, and Wittstruck, PC*
- *Baird Holm LLP*
- *Bartle and Geier Law Firm*
- *Baylor Evnen Curtiss Gruit & Witt LLP*
- *Berens and Tate PC LLO*
- *Blackwell Sanders LLP*
- *Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska*
- *Bradford Coenen and Ashford LLC*
- *Cada, Froscheiser, Cada and Hoffman*
- *Cassem Tierney Adams Gotch and Douglas*
- *City of Lincoln*
- *Cline, Williams, Wright, Johnson and Olfather LLP*
- *ConAgra Foods Inc.*
- *Croker, Huck, Kasher, DeWitt, Anderson and Gonderinger, LLC*
- *DeMars Gordon Olson & Zalewski*
- *Douglas County Attorneys Office*
- *Engles, Ketcham, Olson & Keith PC*
- *Erickson Sederstrom*
- *Federal Public Defender's Office*
- *First Data Corporation*
- *Fraser Stryker PC LLO*
- *Gross and Welch PC LLO*
- *Harding and Shultz PC LLO*
- *Incontro Law*
- *John W. Carlson PC*
- *Kalkwarf and Smith Law Offices*
- *Knapp Fangmeyer Aschwege Besse and Marsh*
- *Knudsen, Berkheimer, Richardson & Endacott, LLP*
- *Koley Jessen*
- *Kutak Rock LLP*
- *Lancaster County Public Defender*
- *Law Office of Joseph Sena*
- *Law Office of Judith Wells*
- *Law Office of Thomas Maul*
- *Legal Aid of Nebraska*
- *Lieben Whitted Houghton Slowiazcek and Cavanagh PC LLO*
- *Lincoln Electric System*
- *McGrath North Mullin and Kratz PC LLO*
- *McHenry Haszard Hansen Roth and Hupp*
- *Midlands Bar Association*
- *Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company*
- *Nebraska Advocacy Services*
- *Nebraska Appleseed*
- *Nebraska Hispanic Bar Association*
- *Nebraska State Bar Association*
- *Pahlke Smith Snyder Petitt & Eubanks*
- *Rembolt Ludtke LLP*
- *Ruth Mueller Robak*
- *Saunders County Public Defender Office*
- *Sennett Duncan Borders and Jenkins PC LLO*
- *Simmons Olson Law Firm PC*
- *Spencer Fane Britt and Browne LLP*
- *Stinson Morrison Hecker LLP*
- *Truell Murray and Maser PC*
- *Union Pacific Corporation*
- *Waite McWha and Harvat*
- *Whitner Law Firm*





Mission

The mission of the Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program is to increase the opportunities for minority lawyers to serve as outside counsel for corporations and government agencies. Specifically, our objectives are to encourage corporations and government agencies to:

- 1.Retain the services of minority-owned law firms;
- 2.Refer conflict of interest work to minority-owned law firms; and
- 3.Increase the amount of legal services provided by minority lawyers employed in majority-owned law firms.

Other objectives are to:

- 4.Encourage majority-owned law firms to hire and promote minority lawyers, to assign significant corporate and government agency projects to their minority lawyers, and to refer conflict of interest work to minority-owned law firms; and
- 5.To encourage joint ventures and co-counsel relationships between majority-owned and minority-owned law firms.



Activities

The Minority Counsel Program will offer several professional development/networking opportunities throughout the year for minority attorneys, corporations, government entities and law firms. The program will also offer directories of attorneys and the services they provide as well as corporations and other entities seeking outside legal services.



Steering Committee

Elizabeth Eynon-Kokrda

Baird Holm LLP

Thomas Jenkins

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska

Shirley A. Mora James

Mora James Law

Carlos Monzon

Monzon Law PC LLO

Jerry Pigsley

Harding and Shultz PC LLO

Shawntal Smith

Incontro Law

Nicole Theophilus

ConAgra Foods, Inc.

Antonio Vandenbosch

Attorney at Law

Sherman Willis

Fraser Stryker PC LLO

Reggie Young

Young and Young

Contact Information

For more on initiatives to promote a diverse profession contact:

Nebraska State Bar Association

Minority Justice Committee

635 S. 14th Street, Ste 200

Lincoln, NE 68508

402-475-7091

Lneeley@nebar.com





New NSBA Committee - Immigration

The Immigration Committee established by the NSBA House of Delegates in January 2009 is to be comprised of lawyers concerned with the practice of all aspects of immigration law. The Committee provides a common forum for exchanging ideas and promoting and providing continuing legal education, social interaction and discussion among the members through scheduled lunches with speakers and other educational meetings. This Committee aims to foster excellence and professionalism in immigration practice. It also assists the House of Delegates, Executive Council and the Legislative Committee in monitoring laws, regulations, practices and proposed legislation relating to immigration law. The 2009 Chair is Dustin J. Kessler, an Omaha attorney who is a member of the Fitzgerald Schorr Barmettler & Brennan law firm.

Civil War Voices



James R. Harris

Civil War Voices, a new musical written by Lincoln attorney **JAMES R. HARRIS** looks at the Civil War through the eyes of five individuals, one of whom was related to the author. But don't expect the program to be a dry history lesson. "Civil War Voices," was performed at the Lied Center in Lincoln on February 13 as part of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial celebration.

The process of writing the musical evolved over a number of years, Harris said. It started when he discovered a diary kept by his great-great uncle, Joseph Henry Harris, who fought for the South during the Civil War. Although he had doubts about the wisdom of secession. "Uncle Joe's" diary reflected this conflict, as dramatized in the play.

Harris began giving talks based on the diary, ending with the final entry that was a prayer for reconciliation and forgiveness. Later he added a mournful rendition of "Dixie" to the final prayer. The addition of this song inspired Harris to look at other songs of the Civil War era and how they could be combined with Uncle Joe's and others' accounts of their experiences.

He discovered accounts of four other people from the era: Elizabeth Keckley, who was born a slave, bought her freedom, and worked first for Jefferson Davis and then as Mary Todd Lincoln's personal dressmaker; Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, a Union soldier and a hero at the Battle of

Gettysburg; and Theo and Harriet Perry, a married couple who wrote love letters to each other while Theo fought for the Confederacy.

Robin McKercher, head of Doane College's theater department, also assisted with producing the play, and composer Mark Hayes of Kansas City arranged the music.

Harris is the founding partner of Harris Law Offices, of Lincoln. His practice includes workers compensation and personal injury matters with an emphasis on truck drivers' injuries.

Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program Holds Inaugural Event

On February 5th, the Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program held its inaugural open house in Omaha. The event was hosted by ConAgra Foods, Inc.



The networking event brings together firms, corporations, non-profits, government entities and minority attorneys from across Nebraska.

The NMCCP

The Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program's main objectives are to encourage corporations and government agencies to:

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Midlands Bar Association President Shawntal Smith and Nebraska Hispanic Bar Association President Shirley Mora James.


The Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program seeks to cultivate these opportunities by hosting 3-4 networking/professional development opportunities per year and by developing referral directories of the employers and attorneys in the program, and the services that they provide.

Many thanks to ConAgra Foods Inc. for sponsoring the inaugural open house. 



Save the Date

The next Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program Event will be by May 5th from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Community Foundation (215 Centennial Mall South), 5th Floor Conference Room. The event will be hosted by Legal Aid of Nebraska. Please RSVP to Liz Neeley at the Nebraska State Bar Association at 402-475-7091 or via email at Lneeley@nebar.com to attend.



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Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program

On May 5th, the Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program held its second networking event in Lincoln, hosted by Legal Aid of Nebraska.

The NMCCP

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The Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program seeks to cultivate these opportunities by hosting 3-4 networking/professional development opportunities per year and by developing referral directories of the employers and attorneys in the program, and the services that they provide. The referral directories of participating attorneys, firms, corporations and entities is available on the Nebraska Legal Diversity website: www.nelegaldiversity.org



Raul Guerra and Jim Cada pose for a picture at the NMCCP networking event.



Legal Aid of Nebraska President, Matt Dunning poses with Anne Hobs, Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission and Yohance Christie, a recent University of Nebraska College of Law graduate.

Save the Date

The next Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program Event will be August 6th in Omaha and will be sponsored by Stinson Morrison Hecker, LLP. Please RSVP to Liz Neeley at the Nebraska State Bar Association at 402-475-7091 or via email at Lneeley@nebar.com to attend.



NMCCP event participants networking on May 5th.

Legal/Bar Report

Gov. Pawlenty Nationally



Gov. Tim Pawlenty

will involve steering assistance to GOP candidates in close races. And he's jumped into the national health care debate, criticizing President Barack Obama's plan in a way also seen as a veiled swipe at potential rival Romney. (He labeled a Massachusetts overhaul enacted under Romney an "experiment" with a swelling price tag.)

Pawlenty also told the AP he's considering forming a political action committee – a staple that gives potential presidential candidates a way to raise money and organize travel to election battlegrounds.

Pawlenty's recent travel has taken him to Washington, Arkansas and Colorado. But he hasn't yet ventured to presidential proving grounds Iowa or New Hampshire and wouldn't say when he would. He visited both while campaigning for 2008 nominee John McCain – who considered him for the running mate slot Palin got – but still has plenty of work to do.

Republican John Finnegan, 50, of Concord, said recently he had heard Pawlenty's name but not much else.

"I don't know anything about
See PAWLENTY, page 5



Michelle Peak and Gregory Olaniran addressed the full house at the Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program's latest networking event.

Diversity Arm of State Bar Is On a Roll

By Lorraine Boyd
The Daily Record

A concerted effort to give minority attorneys more opportunities is a noble goal, but it needs the work and support of many.

Earlier this year, the Nebraska State Bar Association rolled out the Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program with a series of professional development and networking opportunities throughout the year for minority attorneys, corporations, government entities and law firms. The first was held in Omaha in February, the second in Lincoln.

Thursday, Omaha's Stinson Morrison Hecker LLP hosted the third networking event at the

Landmark Building, which was attended by nearly four dozen lawyers, judges and corporate representatives.

Gregory Olaniran, a Stinson Morrison Hecker attorney based in Washington, D.C., is the firm's diversity committee chairman. He was back in Omaha for the second event to show the firm's commitment and support.

In speaking to the audience, Olaniran noted that his law firm has only had its diversity committee for about five years, but strides have been made in that time. He told them he'd learned three things that contribute to its success. First, you need to have the highest level of leadership

on board and communicating that commitment, he said. His firm has made diversity part of its strategic plan and is now in the action plan phase.

Second, he said you must stay true to the policy of inclusion. To do that, not only the minority cultures but also the majority culture must be involved in the process.

And third, he said, "Try to be creative." He noted that last fall during the election season, the Kansas City office took advantage of a play, *Radio Golf*, at the Kansas City Repertory. The play is the last of 10 written by August Wilson about the black experience in the last century, See DIVERSITY, page 5

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ry of African-Americans
Latinos being stopped by
enforcement disproportion-

s reporter, having covered
police in New York City
1958, I can further define
Obama refers to as dispropo-
nate police stops of
s.

May of this year, the New
Civil Liberties Union
CLU) reported, based on
e data, that New York City
e Department officers
ped and interrogated New
ers 171,094 times between
ry and March" – and more
151,000 of those individu-
ere sent on their way with-
charges. Approximately
0 of those stopped were
, 56,000 were Latino, and
0 were white.

anna Lieberman, the head
e NYCLU, added: "These
Yorkers' personal informa-
is now stored in an NYPD
ase."
he NYPD is, in effect,
ing a massive database of
and brown New Yorkers,"
NYCLU Associate Legal
ctor Christopher Dunn.
d on what information on
who are not charged?
r color!

ot incidentally, Barack
na, when he was an Illinois
senator, sponsored legisla-
to track racial breakdown of
ers stopped by the police.
term, "Driving While
k," is familiar to blacks
nd the country protesting
proportionate" police stops
ie road and in their streets.
wsday (July 30) quotes 44-
old Julian Gouborne,

black, an information technolo-
gist for a bank, that "whites
don't understand racial profiling
because white people don't ex-
perience it negatively."

Accordingly, a July 29 *Wall
Street Journal*/NBC poll dis-
closed that 4 percent of blacks
blamed Mr. Gates for the noto-

rious arrest while 30 percent
targeted Crowley. Among white
respondents, 32 percent placed
responsibility for the arrest on
Gates and 7 percent blamed
Crowley.

If this "teachable moment" is
intended to show how far we
still have to go to enter a post-

racial society, it has succeeded.
To be continued.

In another context, Winston
Churchill urged: "Never ever
give up!" Nor should we to en-
sure the Constitution's equal
protection of the laws.

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Diversity

(Continued from page 3)

each one set in succeeding de-
cades. This one is about a young
black politician running for
mayor in Pittsburgh and the
conflicts he encounters as he
 juggles with progress versus his
heritage and tradition. Olaniran
said they created a diversity
event around the play, holding a
panel discussion first, then see-
ing the play. A creative ap-
proach, he noted, to bringing
diversity issues to the table.

The featured speaker was Mi-
chelle Peak, a 1994 Creighton
law school graduate who is now
senior labor attorney with
American Airlines in Dal-
las/Fort Worth, Texas, where
she has worked for nearly 10
years. Prior to joining Ameri-
can, Peak was a manager in
labor relations with Union Pa-
cific Railroad and a deputy
county attorney in Omaha.

Her practice at American in-
cludes all aspects of U.S. labor

relations law, with a particular
focus on labor law matters in
the airline industry arising under
the Railway Labor Act. Mi-
chelle regularly oversees a vari-
ety of litigation matters in state
and federal court, as well as
arbitration matters arising under
the various collective bargaining
agreements on the American
and American Eagle properties.
She also provides counsel and
training to management on all
types of personnel and labor
relations matters. She is a mem-
ber of the Nebraska State Bar
Association.

Peak spoke of the pioneer ef-
forts of American Airlines to
promote diversity, which has
been part of their culture since
1994.

As Olaniran urged, Peak said
the commitment comes from the
top at American. She recounted
the steps that her office takes to
ensure that minority- and
women-owned law firms are
given the opportunity to work
on American's "matters."

The mission of NMCCP is to
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nority lawyers, to assign signifi-
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agency projects to their minority
lawyers, and to refer conflict-of-
interest work to minority-owned
law firms. The organization also
encourages joint ventures and
co-counsel relationships be-
tween majority-owned and mi-
nority-owned law firms.

Peak noted that outside firms
are monitored for their diversity
and inclusion performance and
held to their standards. She said
leadership not only "talks the
talk, but walks the walk ... and
sometimes even runs."

At least 57 Nebraska firms
and organizations have signed
onto the Call to Action Initia-
tive, pledging to work collec-
tively to promote a diverse legal
profession.

Pawlenty

(Continued from page 3)

the guy," he said.

In Iowa, Sioux City busi-
nessman and former state GOP
chairman Ray Hoffman rated

from all 50 states will get their
chance at Pawlenty's speech
Thursday.

Pawlenty tends to stick to a
formula at the podium: He'll
begin with a self-deprecating
joke – usually about a comment

tors" until it finds a better, more
inspiring message.

Whether Pawlenty can break
through to sustain a 2012 cam-
paign is hard to say.

Drake University politics pro-
fessor Dennis Goldford said a

Nebraska Minority Corporate Counsel Program CLE Event

*“Beyond Diversity into Inclusion:
The Legal Community & Leadership
in the 21st Century”*

Dr. Arin Reeves, The Athens Group

Dr. Reeves has worked with diversity and inclusion in organizations for over 15 years. Prior to founding the Athens Group, Dr. Reeves gained valuable experience in the areas of discrimination, conflict resolution, and organizational effectiveness as an attorney in the state of Illinois. Dr. Reeves’ work with The Athens Group focuses primarily on diversity and inclusion issues within the legal profession.



May 21, 2010

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Networking Reception to follow

Kutak Rock, 1650 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68102

Register today on the NSBA website: www.nebar.com

Limited to 150 people