Pennsylvania Bar Association Strategic Plan
May 2021

Vision: To be a vital, independent organization representative of and for Pennsylvania lawyers to enhance the practice of law and ensure access to justice for all persons.

Mission Statement: To advance the science of jurisprudence; to promote the administration of justice; to see that no one, on account of poverty, is denied his or her legal rights; to secure proper legislation; to encourage a thorough legal education; to uphold the honor and dignity of the bar; to promote diversity throughout the profession; to cultivate cordial relations among the lawyers of Pennsylvania; and to perpetuate the history of the profession and the memory of its members. (PBA Articles of Incorporation, July 1895, as amended November 2011)

Introduction: The PBA Planning Committee was tasked with evaluating the existing strategic plan and its relevance to the ever-changing environment. While scenarios continued to emerge, the Committee vowed to remain focused on reviewing the existing strategic initiatives and goals through a series of interactive virtual meetings and discussions. The feedback collected shaped the revision of the existing plan to better align with the current state of the Association and the needs of its stakeholders. The work of the Committee shall also promote continuity of leadership and initiatives of the Association over time. Following a Planning Retreat in September 2014, six strategic areas were identified. Based on feedback from the 2020-2021 planning process, those six strategic areas were expanded to eight; which now include Continuing Legal Education and Advocacy for the Profession. The Planning Committee also revised Diversity & Inclusion to include the word Equity. The strategic areas themselves are interconnected, as are the goals under each area. Further, each strategic area and goal is important to the success of the others. The placement of a goal under one strategic area is not a statement that the goal is not important or relative to one or more other strategic areas.

STRATEGIC AREAS:

I. Member Services and Growth – To remain a vital organization that is most representative of the lawyers in Pennsylvania and to meet its members’ needs, the PBA must continue to retain and recruit new members. Growth in membership, member benefits, and services is fundamental to the association’s future. The PBA will be an advocate for the profession.

II. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – The PBA provides member services to lawyers of all backgrounds and is a catalyst for promoting diversity in its leadership, its committees and sections, other affinity groups, law schools and law firms throughout the Commonwealth, our elected officials, and our judiciary.
III. Continuing Legal Education – A juris doctor degree is not the end of one’s training in the law, it is the beginning. The PBA will continue to be the premier provider of continuing legal education for Pennsylvania lawyers throughout their careers.

IV. Strategic Relationships – The PBA must have strong relationships with the judiciary, county bar associations, law schools, affinity bar associations and other stakeholders to further the PBA’s mission.

V. Legislative Initiatives – As the only broad-based legal association with expertise in a wide variety of subject matter areas, PBA must continue to serve as an important resource to legislators and their staffs. PBA’s communication with the legislature through its lobbying efforts is an important service to the profession as the association works to increase its voice and presence with Pennsylvania’s elected officials.

VI. Advocacy for the Profession – The PBA promotes, protects, and defends the legal profession by effectively communicating with the public, the media, the legislature, the judiciary, and government agencies about the interests of lawyers and improvements to our system of justice.

VII. Service to the Public – Priorities of the association include the promotion and support of the delivery of pro bono services to those in need and education of the public, particularly students, about the judicial system and the role of the legal profession in society.

VIII. Branding/Marketing – In order to sustain its position and image in the legal community, the PBA has to communicate to all attorneys that membership in the PBA is essential to practicing law. The PBA also must continue to promote the good work of the association and its members to the general public.

GOALS:

I. Member Services and Growth

Goal 1 - Develop a project plan and budget to conduct a comprehensive membership-needs survey.

Goal 2 - Identify strategies for the analysis, enhancement, and engagement of the Young Lawyers Division and law students. Develop strategies to aid in increasing the retention of new admittees.
Goal 3 - Assess technology needs and continue to develop a comprehensive plan to both assist members in their practices and review potential non-dues revenue streams for the association.

Goal 4 - Conduct research on voluntary state bar associations’ retention and growth rates to develop realistic goals while studying national trends within those associations.

Goal 5 - Identify strategies for the analysis, enhancement, and engagement of members in committees and sections.

Goal 6 - Create a systematic process for the monitoring and collection of data on target market groups to increase membership and participation in the PBA.

Goal 7 - Create professional networking and business opportunities for members. Research, cultivate and implement strategies that leverage technology to increase communication, connectedness, and better serve the needs of members throughout the state.

Goal 8 - Develop innovative approaches and solutions that can deliver benefits, resources, and guidance to all members who are entering and growing in the legal profession.

Goal 9 - Continue to review and enhance the dues structure to ensure that it maximizes the mission and goals of the PBA, including this Strategic Plan.

II. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Goal 1 - Assure that lawyers from every corner of the commonwealth and every gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and identity, ethnicity, cultural identification, ability, and age are welcome as members and included in leadership positions.

Goal 2 - Provide educational and networking experiences for lawyers and judges about the importance of understanding people of diverse backgrounds, lifestyles, and experiences.

Goal 3 - Promote the efforts of Pennsylvania’s law schools to enroll and educate diverse students.

Goal 4 - Support diverse law students during their education, search for meaningful legal careers, and continuing education and engagement.
Goal 5 - Advocate for the employment and advancement of diverse lawyers in their legal careers.

Goal 6 - Educate county bar associations and the general public in the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

III. Continuing Legal Education

Goal 1 - Encourage PBA committees and sections to produce educational programs on timely topics in the law.

Goal 2 - Market and publicize PBA educational offerings to members and the broader legal community.

Goal 3 - Emphasize PBA educational offerings to promote PBA membership and engagement.

Goal 4 - Engage presenters, planners, and participants from diverse backgrounds.

Goal 5 - Engage presenters, planners, and participants from all geographic sections of the Commonwealth.

Goal 6 - Assure that PBA educational events are accessible to the broadest possible audience by various means including presenting programs assuring remote connectivity.

Goal 7 - Develop PBA educational programs to include audiences beyond the Pennsylvania lawyer.

IV. Strategic Relationships

Goal 1 - Create systematic strategies to enhance relationships with the following groups: the judiciary; law schools; county bar associations; affinity bar associations; the Pennsylvania State Conference of Trial Judges; PABAR-PAC; Pennsylvania Bar Foundation; and other appropriate organizations.

Goal 2 - Develop and strengthen relationships with stakeholders to create a strategic approach to support and improve community awareness and further the mission of the PBA.
V. Legislative Initiatives

Goal 1 - Support the PBA’s committees and sections in reviewing and developing legislative activity in their substantive legal areas.

Goal 2 - Increase member support to the PABAR-PAC to meet the association’s legislative goals.

Goal 3 - Enhance stakeholder participation in the PBA’s legislative efforts.

VI. Advocacy for the Profession

Goal 1 - Educate legislators and government agencies about the practice of law so that new and changing laws and regulations will treat lawyers appropriately and provide efficiencies in the practice of law.

Goal 2 - Interact with the judiciary about proposed procedural rule changes to assure that our system of justice operates with fairness and efficiency for litigants and the legal profession.

Goal 3 - Draft and submit amicus curiae legal briefs for appellate courts on significant legal issues upon which the PBA has a stated policy and/or that will have an effect on the practice of law.

Goal 4 - Teach Pennsylvania citizens about the law and the manner in which our government and judicial system operate.

Goal 5 - Provide information to the public about the availability of legal services and the importance of the profession.

Goal 6 - Promote the appointment of PBA members to boards and committees of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and other legal agencies.

VII. Service to the Public

Goal 1 - Assess the current level of activity and create a strategy to increase participation by attorneys in both pro bono and modest means programs.

Goal 2 - Identify opportunities for enhancement of the PBA’s educational efforts to the public.
Goal 3 - Advocate for the protection of the public’s legal rights.

Goal 4 - Promote increased funding for and access to legal services for the disadvantaged.

Goal 5 - Advocate for, promote, and sponsor civics education programs throughout the Commonwealth.

VIII. Branding/Marketing

Goal 1 - Create a strategic approach to improve members’ and stakeholders’ awareness of the association and its benefits.

Goal 2 - Identify emerging trends and developments and analyze their appropriateness for implementation by the association.

Goal 3 - Create a systematic process for benchmarking programs, benefits and services with other state bar associations, and share information with the PBA Membership Development Committee for regular feedback.

Goal 4 - Evaluate current marketing best practices to help lead to increased member retention, engagement and revenue. Identify leading trend perspectives to assist in growing and delivering personalized targeted campaigns.

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION:

The Planning Committee chairperson and the Executive Director will meet twice per year to review these goals and report to the officers, Board of Governors and Planning Committee on the association’s progress in achieving the stated objectives.