Bar Leaders that Act, Do Make a Difference
Actions every bar leader can take to make the legal profession more inclusive, safe and equitable for our racially and ethnically diverse members

• After participating in this program, we hope you will commit to recruiting at least one minority attorney to serve as a peer volunteer for LCL and plan at least one new program that approaches attorney wellness from a different perspective.
• We all have a circle of influence where we can do something that makes a difference. Use your influence to create a more civil, inclusive and supportive professional work environment in Pennsylvania.

Originally presented virtually on August 26, 2021 and available on-demand

Program Thought Leaders for today's program
• Laurie Besden, Executive Director of Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL)
• Hon. Ann Butchart, Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas, Member of LCL's Diversity Committee, LCL Board Member
• C. Reginald Johnson, Chair of LCL's Diversity Committee, LCL Board Member
• Ned Spells, President, Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL), Chief Law Clerk for Superior Court Judge Olson, Member of LCL's Diversity Committee
• Kathleen Wilkinson, President, Pennsylvania Bar Association
• Philip Yoon, Chair, PBA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team

Contact Information
• If you are interested in learning more about serving as an LCL peer volunteer, please contact Jennifer Poinsett, LCL Resource Coordinator.
• If you would like to learn more about the PBA’s diversity, equity and inclusion strategies, please contact Trent Hargrove, PBA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer.
• For questions or more information on this program, please contact Susan Etter, Director of County Bar Services or Bridget Gillespie, Director of Western Pennsylvania Services.

24/7/365 Confidential Helpline
1-888-999-1941
www.lclpa.org

PBA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Resources
www.pabar.org

Judges’ Confidential Helpline: 1-888-999-9706
www.jcjpa.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
LCL-PA RESOURCES FOR THE LEGAL PROFESSION DURING COVID-19 AUGUST 2021

From CoLAP: “Research consistently shows that lawyers are the most-often depressed professionals out of 105 professions, and suicide is the third leading cause of death among attorneys after cancer and heart disease. Despite these facts, few lawyers are educated about depression and suicide prevention.

www.lclpa.org

Resources for further learning

Attorneys of Color Reveal Alarmingly Higher Instances of Mental Health Struggles
By Dylan Jackson, June 08, 2021

• Roughly 31% of Black lawyers said they have contemplated suicide during their professional career, far and above the 19% of white respondents that said the same.
• About 20% of Asian attorneys and 23% of Hispanic and Latino attorneys have also said the same.
• The data tracks with a recent survey of 4,200 ABA members between September and October, which found that 47% of lawyers of color, and 53% of women of color, feel stress at work at least sometimes because of their race and/or ethnicity.
• In the ABA survey, the sense of anxiety was even more exacerbated when broken down by race. Roughly 35% of Black attorneys said they felt anxiety based on their race, compared to 12% of Asian attorneys and 5% of Hispanic attorneys.
• ALM’s 2021 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Survey laid out the caustic damage the pandemic has had on overall attorney well-being as the more than 3,200 respondents revealed clear upticks in depression and anxiety.
• But when the data is broken down by race, it is apparent that the last year and a half has not equally affected everyone: Minority attorneys reported higher rates of suicidal thoughts, depression and isolation than their white colleagues, aligning with a previous study by the ABA, which also tied race to mental health outcomes.

Women and Minority Lawyers Worry 'The Pandemic Will Define Their Career'
By Dylan Jackson, April 26, 2021

• An ABA survey has found that women and minority attorneys have disproportionately suffered in the pandemic.
• Liebenberg and Scharf also found that there was a notable amount of anxiety tied to race: 47% of lawyers of color, and 53% of women of color, feel stress at work at least sometimes because of their race and/or ethnicity. The sense of anxiety was even more exacerbated when broken down by race. Roughly 35% of Black attorneys said they felt anxiety based on their race, compared to 12% of Asian attorneys and 5% of Hispanic attorneys.
• Liebenberg and Scharf say that firms must take into consideration these differing statistics when emerging out of the pandemic. Failure to address race and gender obstacles will lead to the departure of the very attorneys many firms worked so hard to recruit.
“Black folks don’t do therapy, but Simone Biles has this journalist thinking about it”
• By Mara Rose Williams, August 13, 2021

"Pandemic Nation: Understanding its impact on lawyers from underrepresented communities"
“...the legal industry and other businesses have only begun to understand the potential immediate and long-term impact (of COVID-19) on the careers of attorneys. Couple this with the negligible progress the legal industry has made over the past decade towards diversifying its ranks and it’s clear to see why the advancement of attorneys from underrepresented communities is of great concern.
Given the critical nature of this situation, Thomson Reuters, the Association of Corporate Counsel Foundation (ACCF), and the Association for Law Firm Diversity Professionals (ALFDP) wanted to take a more in-depth look at the impact of the pandemic on lawyers from underrepresented communities. More than 400 lawyers responded to the survey, and responses were collected in February 2021. The authors of the report aspired to gain an understanding across underrepresented communities from the perspectives of gender, race and ethnicity, LGBTQ identity, and disability from across North America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific region.

The weight of 2020: Black law grads are ‘exhausted’ and ‘anxious’
by Sarah Schendel, May 10, 2021
“If we want to move forward as a profession, we must listen to these experiences of these graduates and make sure the experiences they had—and the changes they demand—are not forgotten.”

Legal Profession Can’t Leave Black Graduates Behind
“A survey of Black graduating law students focusing on how their career plans were affected by the pandemic and calls for racial justice last year showed many of their lives were seriously disrupted. Suffolk University Law School assistant professor Sarah J. Schendel summarizes the survey findings about the hardships some faced in preparing for and taking—or not taking—the bar exam.”

Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers
created by Anne M. Brafford for use by the American Bar Association
“... if we truly desire to improve well-being, we can’t focus only on individual strategies like making lawyers more resilient to stress; it is equally important (if not more so) to focus on systemically improving our professional cultures to prevent problems from developing to begin with. We are interdependent in that our organizational and institutional cultures—to which we all contribute and which, in turn, shape us all—have a huge impact on our individual well-being. When our cultures support our well-being, we are better able to make good choices that allow us to thrive and be our best for our clients, colleagues, and organizations.”

“This Toolkit is designed to help lawyers and legal employers improve well-being holistically and systemically. This goal will require new choices, considerable effort, and changes that likely will upset the status quo. Positive change agents might meet
with resistance—including complaints that there is no room, time, resources, or need for change. This Toolkit offers reasons for prioritizing lawyer well-being as well as information, strategies, and resources for implementing a plan for positive change."

**Cross-Cultural Barriers to Mental Health Services in the United States**

“Getting treatment for a mental illness can be difficult for any American—and more than half of all adults in the country will experience a mental illness during their lives. But for members of ethnic and racial minority groups, the road to treatment is often blocked by cultural views of mental illness and therapy, lack of insurance and access to appropriate care, and a critical deficiency of studies pertaining to nonwhite populations. Significant, national changes to the mental health field must be made in order for proper care to be widely available and accepted.”

**Disparities in Mental Health Service Use**

- People from racial/ethnic minority groups are less likely to receive mental health care. For example, in 2015, among adults with any mental illness, 48% of whites received mental health services, compared with 31% of blacks and Hispanics, and 22% of Asians.
- Asians are less likely to use mental health services than any other race/ethnic group.
  - Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Racial/Ethnic Differences in Mental Health Service Use among Adults. 2015.

**Barriers to Care**

Factors affecting access to treatment by members of diverse ethnic/racial groups may include:

- Mental illness stigma, often greater among minority populations
- Lack of diversity among mental health care providers
- Lack of culturally competent providers
- Language barriers
- Distrust in the health care system
- Inadequate support for mental health service in safety net settings (uninsured, Medicaid, Health Insurance Coverage other vulnerable patients)
- Lack of insurance, underinsurance

Source: Mental Health Disparities: Diverse Populations, American Psychiatric Association

Lack of cultural understanding by health care providers may contribute to underdiagnosis and/or misdiagnosis of mental illness in people from racially/ethnically diverse populations. Factors that contribute to these kinds of misdiagnoses include language differences between patient and provider, stigma of mental illness among minority groups, and cultural presentation of symptoms.

- Source: Mental Health Disparities: Diverse Populations, American Psychiatric Association

**Reclaiming Health, Wealth & Wisdom in the Post COVID-19 Era**

PBA’s 31st Virtual Minority Attorney Conference, October 7-8, 2021

Just Ask: How We Must Stop Minding Our Own Business in the Legal World

Lawyers are consistently near or at the top of the list of professions with the highest suicide rates. After cancer and heart disease, suicide is the third most common cause of death among attorneys. Research indicates that lawyers are also the "most depressed" of 105 surveyed professions. Despite these facts, few lawyers are educated about depression and suicide prevention.

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Pennsylvania, in collaboration with the Texas Lawyers’ Assistance Program, has published an educational video as part of a national campaign to raise awareness about mental health issues within the legal profession. Through this medium, attorneys share their own stories of struggle with anxiety and depression, and amongst these testimonies are messages of hope. “Getting help is a sign of strength. It is not a showing of weakness,” one such attorney stresses.

TLAP's "Just Ask: How We Must Stop Minding Our Own Business in the Legal World" is a film to help provide the legal profession with essential information about how get help for oneself, colleagues, or family members. The film includes personal stories from lawyers on how suicide and depression touched their lives and provides concrete ways to help colleagues or loved ones who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts. It emphasizes the importance of having a conversation with a person of concern, overviews resources, and emphasizes the importance of getting help.

If you are a member of the legal profession in who is struggling with depression, anxiety, or other mental health conditions, help is available. Call LCL’s confidential helpline at 1-888-999-1941.

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