

# Highlights of BBA History:

*Our Work Advancing Justice and Equality in our Community and Society*

## —1968— *○ The BBA and Eight Boston Law Firms Launch The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the Boston Bar Association*

The Lawyers Committee – now called Lawyers for Civil Rights (LCR) - is formed to support and advance civil rights in our community. Amidst civil rights demonstrations and a collective interest in taking action to end discrimination and segregation, the Committee is formed. In 1973, the Lawyers Committee becomes the first pro bono project of the Boston Bar Association. Then-BBA president John G. Brooks announces that the BBA would be “breaking ground new to the organized bar in further fulfillment of the obligations of our profession to the public,” and launches the privately-supported public interest law office that LCR is known as today. Although Lawyers for Civil Rights is now separate, it maintains strong ties with the Boston Bar Association and is a grantee of the Boston Bar Foundation.

## —1969— *○ BBA Works to Expand Affordable Housing*

President Haskell Cohn is the driving force behind a BBA effort to help expand affordable housing stock in Boston. The BBA receives \$180,000 in grants from the Office of Economic Opportunity and other local foundations. Headed by Richard Banks, former vice-president of the Boston branch of the NAACP, a team of lawyers worked alongside neighborhood groups, banks, and government agencies to obtain financing and secure locations to produce low-income housing in the Boston metropolitan area.

## —1974— *○ BBA Works to Educate the Community on School Desegregation in Boston*

The BBA forms a Committee on School Desegregation in response to Massachusetts Judge Arthur Garrity's decision in *Morgan v. Hennigan*. The Committee publishes a report, “**Desegregation: The Boston Orders and Their Origin,**” to promote public understanding of the decision's controversial busing plan. The report explains the power of the federal court, discusses the content of the opinion and desegregation orders, and provides a list of various resources available for further explanation. Read more in the 2014 article “**A Retrospective – The BBA and Busing, 40 Years Later.**”

## —1977— *○ BBA Starts Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Boston Bar Association*

The Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) of the Boston Bar Association is established to provide legal representation in civil matters to the indigent of Boston primarily through the pro bono services of private attorneys and paralegals. Today, the Boston Bar Foundation continues to support VLP as one of its core grantees, and the BBA collaborates on many pro bono projects and trainings each year, including the signature Lawyer for the Day in the Housing Court Program, which has assisted over 20,000 low-income tenants and landlords since its inception in 1999.

## —1987— *○ BBA Joins Task Force on Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts*

The BBA participates in the Task Force on Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts. Recommendations from this group include permitting multi-lingual attorneys to serve in more than one county, increasing funding for translator services, preparing a directory of multi-lingual attorneys, and increasing minority representation on juries.

## —1987—○ *Boston Bar Foundation Becomes an IOLTA Grantee*

Interest on Lawyers' Trusts Accounts (IOLTA) is a program mandated by the Supreme Judicial Court. IOLTA funds are distributed to three charitable entities, including the Boston Bar Foundation. These funds are granted out to support legal aid organizations and projects, as well as programs that improve the administration of justice. Today, the BBF grants support legal services, administration of justice projects, and the public service and pro bono projects of the BBA. Support is made possible by IOLTA receipts, in addition to the proceeds from the John & Abigail Adams Benefit. In 2021, the BBF awarded funding to **26 organizations** totaling \$1,200,000. The 2021, BBF grantees provided legal assistance to over 31,000 low-income clients - nearly 60% of those receiving assistance are people of color and 53% are women.

## —1988—○ *BBA and MBA Launch Lawyers Clearinghouse on Affordable Housing and Homelessness*

A joint project of the two major bar associations in Massachusetts, the Lawyers Clearinghouse is created to bring the pro bono resources of the private bar to bear on fighting homelessness. With its success, the Clearinghouse partnered with the BBA in 2001 to form the Business Law Pro Bono Project to bring more pro bono opportunities to business and transactional attorneys, and expand the nonprofit client base outside of affordable housing and homelessness organizations. Twenty-three years later, the BBA and Lawyers Clearinghouse continue to work together on a shared desire to address issues of affordable housing, homelessness, and harness the volunteer energy of transactional lawyers to provide pro bono support to local non-profits assisting the community.

## —2002—○ *BBA Files Amicus Brief in Goodridge*

The BBA files an **amicus brief** in *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* in support of same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue, stating that discrimination against same-sex couples unacceptable and unconstitutional. Depriving same-sex couples the right to marry violates their equal protection under the law and denies them the rights, benefits, and privileges afforded to opposite-sex married couples. In a landmark decision, penned by Chief Justice (and former BBA President) Margaret Marshall, the SJC agreed with the plaintiffs that the state's civil-marriage laws violated the equal-protection provision of the Massachusetts constitution, allowing same-sex couples to legally wed in the Commonwealth and paving the way for marriage equality to become the law nationwide in *Obergefell v. Hodges*. In a landmark decision, penned by Chief Justice (and former BBA President) Margaret Marshall, the SJC agreed with the plaintiffs that the state's civil-marriage laws violated the equal-protection provision of the Massachusetts constitution, allowing same-sex couples to legally wed in the Commonwealth and paving the way for marriage equality to become the law nationwide in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

## —2005—○ *BBA Files an Amicus Brief in Comfort v. Lynn School Committee*

The BBA filed a brief pertaining to the legality of a desegregation plan implemented by the Lynn School Committee. By signing onto an amicus brief in support of the plan, the BBA reiterated its position that segregated schools are unacceptable, and that children learn best in a diverse and inclusive environment. In June 2005, the First Circuit Court of Appeals sitting en banc upheld the *Lynn* desegregation plan. In applying the Supreme Court's rulings in *Grutter* and *Gratz v. Bollinger* to the context of K-12, the Court found the *Lynn* Plan to be "narrowly tailored to meet this compelling interest."

## —2005—○ *BBA Signs onto Amicus Brief in Green*

The BBA signs onto an **amicus brief** -- alongside the Committee for Public Counsel Services and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers -- in a mandamus petition before the First Circuit in *US v. Green* on the matter of jury selection and the importance of representative juries. The brief highlights that the exclusion of Black jurors in the selection process results in defendants being deprived of a jury representative of the community. The brief recommends creating an equal opportunity for all residents by ensuring each neighborhood receives a proportionate number of valid jury summonses. The Court ruled in line with this argument, finding that the District Court's suggestion of multiple juries relied on a misinterpretation of the Federal Death Penalty Act, but it did not address the concerns over disparate racial impact, as expressed in the brief.

## —2005—○ *BBA Files Amicus Brief in Cote-Whiteacre*

Consistent with its position in *Goodridge* that discrimination against same-sex couples is unacceptable, the BBA filed this amicus brief supporting the plaintiffs' claims that the Department of Public Health's enforcement of M.G.L. c. 207, §§ 11-12 to prevent city and town clerks from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples residing in other states violated provisions of the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions. The SJC ruled that, in the absence of a home state's "express prohibition" against marriage by same-sex couples – through a constitutional amendment, statute, or controlling appellate decision – Massachusetts must allow same-sex couples from that state to marry.

## —2011—○ *BBA Signs on to Amicus Brief in Gill*

Committed to ensuring that the Constitution's guarantees of equal protection effectively protect all people from invidious discrimination, whether on account of race, gender, national origin, religion, alienage, or sexual orientation, the Boston Bar Association signed onto an amicus brief arguing that classifications based on sexual orientation must be subjected to heightened scrutiny. The brief concerned two cases that involved a constitutional challenge to Section 3 of the federal Defense of Marriage Act ("DOMA") being heard before the First Circuit. The Court held that Section 3 was unconstitutional, and the US Supreme Court ultimately agreed (albeit in a separate case, *US v. Windsor*: see below).

## —2012—○ *BBA's Public Interest Leadership Begins Community Reentry Readiness Program*

The BBA Reentry Education Program provided information to federal probationers on key civil-legal issues that they face when re-entering society. The initiative originally emerged as a project of the BBA's Public Interest Leadership Program (PILP) in collaboration with U.S. District Judge Leo T. Sorokin and U.S. District Judge Timothy Hillman. The curriculum of workshops addressed the civil legal needs of Federal probationers receiving supervision through two programs: Court Assisted Recovery Effort (CARE) for those struggling with drug addiction, and Reentry: Empowering Successful Today's and Responsible Tomorrows (RESTART), for those who present a particularly high risk of recidivism. **Seven workshops topics**, including debt management, CORI, public benefits, and more were presented through 2018, when changes to the CARE/RESTART program were implemented and programs were suspended. The BBA's CORI Sealing Clinic continues today in a partnership with Greater Boston Legal Services.

## —2013—○ *Restatement of BBA Opposition to the Death Penalty*

The BBA released a **report** that extended its long-standing opposition to capital punishment in Massachusetts state cases to cover federal cases as well. In doing so, it emphasized that – in addition to the risk of executing the wrong person and the misuse of resources – our opposition springs from the disproportionate impact that capital punishment has on members of racial and ethnic minorities. The report stated, "While it may be difficult to pinpoint their cause, a system that produces such different results depending on a defendant or victim's race or ethnicity raises serious questions."

## —2013—○ *BBA Signs on to Amicus Briefs in Windsor and Hollingsworth*

Underscoring its long-standing support for marriage equality, the BBA joined a coalition of bar associations, civil and human rights groups, and public interest and legal services organizations in *United States v. Windsor and Hollingsworth v. Perry*, both of which were before the Supreme Court of the United States. In *Windsor*, the Supreme Court ruled that the "Defense of Marriage Act" (DOMA) was unconstitutional on equal-protection grounds, and that the federal government cannot discriminate against married lesbian and gay couples for the purposes of determining federal benefits and protections. In *Hollingsworth*, the Supreme Court ruled the petitioners, who were challenging the lower court's ruling that the California law (enacted by ballot initiative brought by petitioners) banning same-sex marriage was unconstitutional, had no standing to appeal where the state itself had declined to do so.

## —2017—○ *BBA Releases Report on Criminal-Justice Reform*

In the midst of a statewide debate on comprehensive reforms to criminal-justice laws, a BBA task force filed a report that offered a set of recommendations across six main issue areas, all of them framed as critical to address disturbing racial and ethnic disparities throughout the system – hence the title, *No Time to Wait*.

## —2018—○ *BBA Drafts Immigration Principles*

A BBA working group put together a set of principles to help guide our positions on immigration issues. This **Statement of Principles** Concerning Immigration and Related Issues focused on four key beliefs, and concluded, “As lawyers, and as a Bar Association, it is our special calling, privilege, and obligation to be vigilant guardians of the rule of law, and to ensure that it protects all people to whom it extends—including all immigrants—when their rights are under attack.”

## —2018—○ *BBA Launches Service Innovation Project*

The **Service Innovation Project** engages lawyers in service with a goal of advancing solutions to address systemic injustices in our community. Through support of the BBF’s Burnes Innovation in Service Fund, the BBA began to participate in work seeking to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline in Massachusetts. This pipeline encompasses the various issues within our education system that result in students being excluded from school and instead funneled into the criminal legal system, with disproportionate impacts on students of color, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families. In 2018, the BBA’s PILP class partnered with GBLS in a public outreach program informing students, parents, and community members about school discipline rights under a settlement agreement GBLS reached with Boston Public Schools, which ended unlawful suspensions of young students.

## —2018—○ *BBA Joins Freedom For All Massachusetts: Yes on 3 Campaign*

In keeping with its mission of promoting equal justice for all, the BBA builds on its **decade-long advocacy** for transgender rights by joining the Yes on 3 Campaign. The campaign was the shared effort of a broad coalition of more than 1,500 organizations and convened to rally support for the transgender antidiscrimination law, which provides protections for transgender individuals from discrimination in public places such as restaurants, stores, and doctors’ offices. The coalition’s members ranged from individuals in the community to businesses, nonprofits, law enforcement, elected and public officials, faith leaders, labor unions, sports teams and more. The Boston Bar Association served as a member of the Coalition Leadership Committee. Thanks to grassroots organizing and volunteer involvement, the campaign was a success – and the states’ anti-discrimination laws endured to protect this vulnerable population.

## —2019—○ *BBA Launches CORI Sealing Clinic*

The CORI Sealing clinic, building on the work of the BBA’s comprehensive criminal justice reform report, *No Time to Wait*, aims to alleviate some of the collateral consequences of the racial and ethnic disparities identified in the report. Many of the report’s recommendations were eventually **signed into law** by Governor Charlie Baker, including a decrease in the time individuals must wait before having certain records administratively sealed. As a result, the BBA, in collaboration with Greater Boston Legal Services, launched a monthly CORI Sealing Clinic. Since then, over 205 members of the community have been assisted by pro bono volunteers to remove the barriers of a CORI, enabling them to be better positioned to obtain jobs, housing, educational opportunities, and more. The CORI Sealing Clinic continues even through the pandemic, in a remote format twice monthly.

# Highlights of BBA History:

*Our Work Towards Fostering A More Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Profession*

## —1969—○ *BBA Forms Special Committee to Assist Minority Students*

The BBA creates a special committee that votes to commit itself to providing financial support to law students of color. Recognizing that the representation of law students of color attending area law schools was very low, the program aimed to make law school more accessible to underrepresented students by providing scholarships. By 1970, close to \$30,000 was raised to support the program. Today, the BBA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fellowship Program continues to support the pipeline of young lawyers of color through paid stipends to students pursuing summer internships in the public interest.

## —1987—○ *The First Law Day in The Schools Program Begins*

The first Law Day in the Schools program was sponsored by the Young Lawyer's Section in 1987. Co-sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education, attorneys visited Boston area schools with Special Education programs. Today, the BBA participates in **Law Day**, an annual national celebration of the role of law in our society, in conjunction with the American Bar Association. Locally, the BBA's program brings together hundreds of volunteers, typically reaching over 1,700 Boston-area K-12 students on a theme of importance, proving a unique opportunity for students to engage with a lawyer, and for lawyers to get directly involved in local schools. Prior themes include Miranda Rights, Voting Rights, and Free Speech.

## —1989—○ *BBA Reaches Out to Affinity Bar Associations*

Rudolph Pierce, the BBA's first Black president, approves a proposal to offer members of four affinity bar associations a credit on BBA dues to increase participation in the BBA and to help alleviate economic barriers for lawyers of color. The initiative would eventually grow to include seven affinity bar partners: Asian American Lawyers Association (AALAM); Massachusetts Association of Hispanic Attorneys (MAHA); Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association (MBLA); Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys (MBWA); South Asian Bar Association Greater Boston (SABA GB); Hispanic National Bar Association – Region 1 (HNBA) and Massachusetts LGBTQ Bar Association.

## —1989—○ *Task Force on Parenting and the Legal Profession*

In the fall of 1989, President Rudolph Pierce appointed The Task Force on Parenting to address issues around parental leave, direct day-care services, tuition assistance, and part-time work within the profession. The resulting report published in 1991 produced recommendations within the four areas. Additionally, a joint Task-Force on Part-Time Lawyering between the BBA and the Women's Bar Association extended the analysis, which created a second report in 1995.

## —1993—○ *BBA Launches Summer Jobs Program: An Important Pipeline Initiative*

President Sandra Lynch starts the Summer Jobs Program, a collaboration with the Boston Public Schools and the Boston Private Industry Council, providing opportunities for high-school students to earn a paycheck and gain professional experience working in law firms, government agencies and non-profit organizations. Since its inception, more than 850 students – most of whom are young people of color - have participated in the program, enabling participating firms to reinvest dollars into the community, and increase economic stability in the short run and economic mobility over time.

### —1997—○ *BBA Forms First Diversity and Inclusion Committee*

The BBA formed a Diversity Committee which was the result of meetings between President Joel Reck and the presidents of the affinity bars. Renée M. Landers became the Committee's first chair. The mission of the Committee was to advance diversity within our community; to improve the diversity of the BBA's membership; to help implement the recommendation of the various BBA task forces that have worked on that topic, and to analyze the progress made since the SJC Commission to Study Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Court. Today, the work of the DEI Steering Committee continues, providing educational and networking opportunities to lawyers from all backgrounds.

### —1998—○ *BBA Organizes Strategies for Success for Summer Associates*

Strategies for Success is an annual event that brings together summer associates from all backgrounds to discuss the challenges of starting a career, and the importance of enhancing job skills. Since 2015, over 270 summer associates have participated in the series. Many Strategies for Success panelists go on to hold leadership positions in the BBA, in government, and in the community.

### —1999—○ *New Co-Chair Appointment Policy Doubles the Amount of BBA Leaders*

The BBA enacts a new Section Co-Chair policy as a deliberative measure to ensure the BBA is able to have a more diverse and inclusive leadership team. Today, approximately 44% of the Section and Forum leaders are lawyers of color or members of the LGBTQ+ community.

### —2003—○ *Public Interest Leadership Program (PILP) is Launched*

With help from Judge Mark L. Wolf, BBA president Michael Keating led efforts to establish a program to showcase the public interest work of young attorneys. This leadership program serves as an important pipeline for diverse leaders within the BBA and the legal community. Many PILP alumni have gone on to hold Section co-chair positions, or seats on the BBA Council and the BBF Board of Trustees.

### —2003—○ *BBA Adopts Diversity Statement*

Under the leadership of Renée M. Landers, its first Black female president, the BBA adopts a statement reaffirming the Association's commitment to achieving diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the legal community by striving to be inclusive of all people regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin and heritage, religion, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability, in all BBA activities and as BBA members and staff. The statement includes a call to action to involve lawyers in community projects and to partner with professional lawyers' organizations that share the BBA's commitment to a more diverse and inclusive profession.

### —2003—○ *BBA Files Amicus Brief in Grutter*

The BBA submits an **amicus brief** in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, opposing the abolition of race conscious admissions policies that harm efforts to diversify the legal profession. The brief argues that maintaining race-conscious admissions at higher-education institutions, particularly law schools, is necessary to promote a fair and representative judicial system and legal profession. The Court holds that the Equal Protection Clause does not prohibit law schools' narrowly tailored use of race in admissions decisions to further a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body.

## —2006—○ *BBA Receives American Bar Association (ABA) Partnership Award*

The BBA receives the ABA Partnership Award, which honors bar association projects directed at increasing the participation and advancement of lawyers of color as well as other underrepresented communities. The BBA is recognized for its many pipeline activities, funded by grants from the Boston Bar Foundation (BBF), which offer mentoring, tutoring, teaching and employment programs for young people that connect them with local attorneys and foster an interest in the law and support legal careers. Among these pipeline activities are the Law Day in the Schools program, the annual Strategies for Success luncheons for summer associates of color, and the BBA Summer Jobs Program. These activities reach students of all ages, from Boston public school students to those currently in law school.

## —2006—○ *BBA Forms Diversity Leadership Task Force*

BBA President Jack Cinquegrana forms the Diversity Leadership Task Force, charged with creating and endorsing a plan for the recruitment, retention, and advancement of a diverse and inclusive community of lawyers in Boston. The Task Force addresses the issues of broadening the pipeline of diverse law students, mentoring young lawyers, tracking their career trajectories, and instilling in them a commitment to clients and best practices.

## —2008—○ *The BBA Creates the Diversity & Inclusion Section*

At the recommendation of the Diversity Leadership Task Force, the Section (now called the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Section) is created to coordinate and provide oversight to the BBA's numerous initiatives to increase diversity, equity and inclusion in the profession. The Section also focuses on amplifying the voices and perspectives of those from underrepresented populations. The president or a representative of each affinity bar association serves on the Section Steering Committee.

## —2009—○ *BBA Creates a Mentoring Program*

The BBA Mentoring Program, at its inception, aimed to build networks for lawyers of color by fostering lasting relationships between seasoned attorneys in Greater Boston and a group of new attorneys and law students. Today, the BBA runs four mentoring programs, including the Bar Coaching program in which nearly 60% of its participants have been bar applicants of color.

## —2010—○ *BBA Launches the Beacon Award for Diversity and Inclusion*

The BBA's Beacon Award recognizes and celebrates outstanding efforts toward advancing these principles by honoring an individual, organization, group, or firm that demonstrates exceptional leadership in creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive legal profession in Boston. The event continues to grow in scale and impact: today the proceeds of the silent auction support the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship program. The list of prior Beacon Award Honorees can be found [here](#).

## —2010—○ *BBA Signs MOUs with Six Local Affinity Bar Association*

The BBA signed Memoranda of Understanding with six local affinity bar associations (MBLA, MAHA, Mass LGBTQ Bar, AALAM, MBWA, SABA GB) to formally institutionalize their partnership with the BBA. In 2017, the BBA welcomed its seventh Affinity Bar partner – the Hispanic National Bar Association – Region 1 (HNBA). This partnership includes access to BBA staff and resources, but our increased engagement with these organizations also helps us flag issues, learn from their experience and expertise, and identify

opportunities for collaboration, and build a pipeline of leaders, many of whom go on as Section Co-Chairs or Council Members. Additionally, the president or a representative of each association serves on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Section Steering Committee.

### —2012—○ *BBA Files Amicus Brief in Fisher*

The BBA files an **amicus brief** in *Fisher v. University of Texas, et al.*, recognizing that diversity within the legal profession cannot be achieved without diverse representation at both undergraduate institutions and law schools. The BBA's amicus brief in "*Fisher II*" **later argues** that under-representation of lawyers of color harms the legal profession and society as a whole. Joining the BBA in signing the briefs are the Asian American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Association of Hispanic Attorneys, Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association, Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys, Massachusetts LGBTQ Bar Association, South Asian Bar Association of Greater Boston and the Women's Bar Association. The US Supreme Court ultimately ruled that the admissions process here did not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Use of race as a factor in the holistic review was narrowly tailored to serve a compelling state interest.

### —2012—○ *BBA Collaborates with Boston Municipal Court on Judicial Internship Program*

The BBA's Diversity & Inclusion Section's Pipeline and Recruitment Committee oversees a judicial-law internship program at the Boston Municipal Court. For 8 years, the program placed over 100 law students who may not have had other legal internship opportunities, offering them the chance to work directly with a judge, observe courtroom proceedings, and enhance their legal research and writing skills. Today, the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship program evolved and instead provides law students with a paid summer opportunity, including at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

### —2015—○ *BBA Endorses ABA Resolution 113*

In November 2016, the BBA Council votes to formally support **ABA Resolution 113**, which calls on providers of legal services to expand and create opportunities for diverse attorneys, and urges clients to assist in that effort. The Council creates a working group to consider issues related to implementation of the Resolution and the accompanying general counsel commitment letter and **Model Diversity Survey**.

### —2015—○ *Beacon Fund for Diversity & Inclusion Established at the Boston Bar Foundation*

The Boston Bar Foundation Board of Trustees votes to establish the Beacon Fund to support the diversity, equity & inclusion projects of the BBA. Today, it supports the **projects and programs** that engage hundreds of members each year, including the DEI Summer Fellowship Program.

### —2017—○ *Partnership with Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association on Building the Legacy Scholarship Fund*

The Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association launches the MBLA Building the Legacy Scholarship Fund, created through a fiscal sponsorship partnership with the Boston Bar Foundation. Each year, the MBLA awards scholarships to deserving students from area law schools who intend to remain in the Boston area to practice law, harnessing the area's concentration of law schools and addressing a troubling gap in diversity of the local bar. To date, over \$25,000 in scholarships have been disbursed to well-deserving Black law students.

## —2017— *BBF Supports Trial Court Transgender Training Project*

The Boston Bar Foundation provides a \$10,000 grant to the Massachusetts Trial Court to support the Transgender Training Project, a training designed to create an inclusive environment for staff and the public. The training, created in collaboration with GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) on issues and obstacles that transgender persons face in society and in using the courts with an objective of increasing staff's awareness of and sensitivity to issues affecting this population, with the ultimate goal of improving transgender court users' experience of the Trial Court and increasing access to justice for this all-too-often marginalized group. All 6,300 trial court employees participated.

## —2019— *BBA Launches Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship Program*

The BBA partners with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court to provide a paid fellowship opportunity to law students who demonstrate a commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion within the legal profession, to gain practical experience, develop legal research and writing skills, and expand their professional networks. Funding for these positions is made possible by the Boston Bar Foundation. Reflections from participants can be found [here](#) and [here](#). The 2020 Summer Fellowship program expands to one additional location at the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) and the fellowship proceeds remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## —2020— *BBA Expands Programming to Maintain Commitment to Advancing DEI in a Virtual World*

Recognizing that keeping diversity, equity and inclusion topics front and center was even more important in a remote world, the DEI Section expanded their programming, including a panel on *How to Be an Effective Ally*, left 300+ viewers with practical tools to become a better ally to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) members of the community. The DEI Section co-sponsors a series on *Amplifying Unheard Voices* in partnership with several organizations and affinity bars, seeking to highlight and amplify underrepresented perspectives of attorneys, clients and communities that engage with the legal system regularly, and to move towards more equitable representation of and opportunities for these communities.

## —2020— *BBA Facilitates Affinity Bar Town Halls in Collaboration with the SJC's Standing Committee on Lawyer Wellbeing*

The BBA facilitates Town Hall meetings, organized with each of the seven leading Affinity Bar organizations and the SJC's Standing Committee on Lawyer Wellbeing. A [report](#) summarizing these listening sessions is released in 2021, highlighting the extraordinary challenges underrepresented and historically excluded lawyers face. In a 2021 [statement](#), the BBA pledges to continue to expand upon efforts to provide programming addressing the needs of law students and lawyers from underrepresented and historically excluded groups and vows to persist its efforts to address systemic racism and exclusion.

## —2021— *BBF Support Doubles the Summer DEI Fellowship Program Size*

By 2021, the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship program expands to include additional Fellowship positions at the Massachusetts Office of the Solicitor General, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, and the Committee for Public Counsel Services. **Six students**, who demonstrated a commitment to advancing the values of DEI in law school and beyond were selected for the Summer of 2021 Fellowship Program. This pipeline project ensures that law students of color, first generation law students, LGBTQ+ law students and students from other underrepresented groups can afford to work in public interest summer internship programs, which are normally unpaid. It also provides additional mentoring and professional development opportunities through the BBA.

—2021 — *Amicus Brief in Federal Case Is in Keeping with BBA’s Commitment to Diversity and Equity in Education*

The BBA signs onto an **amicus brief** by the **Anti-Defamation League** (ADL) in support of the Boston Public Schools’ one-year policy for admission to its three exam-based high schools. Several other community groups with an interest in ameliorating long-standing educational disparities also joined the brief, which argues that the school system has a compelling interest in advancing diversity of all kinds at the exam schools, and that it helps the City of Boston compete in a global marketplace where “having more diverse, well-credentialed graduates is an essential competitive advantage.” Ultimately, the **ruling** upheld the one-year policy that enhances the racial, socioeconomic and geographical diversity in the city’s exam schools.