Dear Members, Colleagues, and Friends:

This year has been unlike any other, here in Boston, throughout the Commonwealth, and across the nation. In the legal community, we have experienced unprecedented disruption in our professional and personal lives, as well as a surge in need for legal representation for the most vulnerable among us. Throughout this turmoil, one thing at the BBA has remained constant: the dedication and commitment of our members. In response to the many challenges of 2020, our volunteers have stepped up to contribute their time and talents to our profession and our greater community: from engaging in professional development programming, to supporting the next generation of lawyers, to donating time and expertise to underserved clients and legal services organizations.

Whether you participated in a virtual pro bono training, helped organize a webinar, attended a section or steering committee meeting, or signed into a virtual event, you have been a vital part of the success of this organization. Thanks to our 135+ sponsor institutions, 13,000+ members and countless community partners, the Boston Bar has been able to continue our critical work, even while working remotely:

- We continued to be an innovative leader in professional excellence, hosting over 150 virtual programs since March and reaching nearly 6,000 people.
- We remained passionate advocates, publishing critical reports, forming working groups and task forces, and drafting guides to assist pro se litigants in navigating virtual court proceedings.
- We served the needs of our members in every stage of practice, from launching a new Law Firm Leadership Forum, to forming a series of virtual programs and events for law students.
- We expanded our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts by growing our Diversity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship program, hosting a series of intimate and candid webinars, and continuing our important work with our Affinity Bar Partners.
- And we welcomed 11 new Sponsor Firms to the BBA community.

We hope you will read on to learn more about the incredible work made possible this year by our leaders, members, volunteers and partners, and maybe discover something about the Boston Bar Association that you might not have known before. As we continue to adjust to the evolving landscape, the Boston Bar Association remains dedicated to serving its members and our community, and we are deeply appreciative of your support.

Sincerely,

Christine M. Netski  
Boston Bar Association President  
2019-2020
To our Donors, Members, Volunteers and Community Partners:

It has been my privilege to serve as President of the Boston Bar Foundation for the past two years. I could not be more proud of all the work that we have accomplished together, particularly during challenging times like these.

Despite the uncertainty we have faced, and that ahead of us, the Boston Bar Foundation remains committed to its mission to promote justice by funding innovation in legal services, to improve access to justice for those who need it most, and to support the public interest activities of the Boston Bar Association.

This year, the Foundation supported many BBA projects, including the BBA's Right to Counsel in Eviction Cases Report, a series of virtual hearing resources guides for pro se litigants, and the formation of a Crisis Response Working Group, designed to meet the moment and focus on addressing the legal issues presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The BBF Joan B. DiCola Fund, established to support BBA professional development programs, was integral in supporting the BBA's capacity to provide members over 150 virtual programs, reaching nearly 6,000 people across the legal community.

In the year since our Drive for 5 Campaign was launched, over 150 new, existing, and sustaining members of the Society of Fellows contributed nearly $230,000 towards our endowment goal—bringing us closer to long-term stability for the Boston Bar Foundation.

This summer, the BBF was pleased to increase its granting level to over $1.1 million, and brought on several new grantee organizations. The legal support provided by BBF grantee organizations ensures that our most vulnerable community members can obtain equitable access to life-altering support during these challenging times.

All this work would not be possible without our many supporters throughout the year. Thank you to your commitment to the Boston Bar Foundation’s mission and I look forward to our continued work together as donors and volunteers.

Sincerely,

Diana K. Lloyd
Boston Bar Foundation President
2018-2020
Chief Justice Ralph D. Gants
September 29, 1954 – September 14, 2020

“In our courts, we seek to repair the world, sometimes even save the world, one person at a time. What that means is that our courts will step up to the plate and seek to address the challenging problems that come before us.”

– Justice Ralph Gants, 2015 State of the Judiciary

The Boston Bar Association is deeply saddened by the news of Chief Justice Ralph D. Gants’ untimely passing. He was a truly extraordinary Chief Justice—a visionary leader who was relentless in the pursuit of making the Massachusetts court system a place where access to justice was available to everyone.

Chief Justice Ralph Gants embodied the best qualities of a judge: compassion, humility, intellectual rigor and curiosity, commitment to the rule of law, a way with words, and dedication to equal justice for all. In his six-year tenure, Chief Justice Gants left an indelible mark on our justice system.

He will be missed beyond measure. We join the entire Massachusetts legal community in extending our deepest condolences to his family, his friends, and his colleagues on the Supreme Judicial Court and throughout our judiciary.

“One remarkable aspect of watching Chief Justice Gants at oral argument (apart from his sense of humor) was his ability to simplify complex issues into understandable legal principles, and then ask questions that tested how applying those principles would affect people in different walks of life. Justice Frankfurter once wrote of the “prophetic quality of piercing the future by knowing what questions to put and what direction to give inquiry.” The “simple” questions Chief Justice Gants asked often were the most difficult to answer (and not a few of us wished we could have gotten some of them back for a do-over). But like the opinions he wrote, they were designed to explain the law and to ensure that it was both just and fairly applied. His loss makes us poorer, even as his life’s accomplishments endure and inspire.”

– Former BBA President, Jonathan M. Albano, Morgan Lewis
Together:

Facing Challenges

BBA Sponsor Firm Conn Kavanaugh Joins the BBA in Celebrating #OneBostonDay
The COVID-19 public health crisis has rapidly affected and changed the practice of law and our community in unprecedented ways. Throughout these challenging times, the BBA remained committed to supporting our members and the profession with:

- The latest information and guidance about changes in the law and practice during this time of disruption.
- Substantive educational and skill-building programs in dozens of practice areas and industries.
- Resources for individuals to improve, maintain and advance diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives within their organization and community at large.
- Public service and pro bono opportunities to help those who have been severely affected by the pandemic.
- Virtual gathering spaces to exchange ideas, experiences and best practices with colleagues and friends.
- Ongoing advocacy concerning the administration of justice, access to the legal system and support for the rule of law.

BBA COVID-19 Response

March 11<sup>th</sup>
Following the March 10th declaration by the Governor of a state of emergency in the Commonwealth, the BBA moves all programming online.

March 12<sup>th</sup>
BBA streams first webinar, providing guidance to employers on how to respond to COVID-19.

March 17<sup>th</sup>
BBA Sections begin developing virtual resource guides for practitioners to navigate practice area and industry-specific challenges brought on by the pandemic.

March 20<sup>th</sup>
BBA Launches COVID-19 Resource Webpage for members to access breaking news about court operations, view the latest guidance from BBA partners, and view upcoming webinars and opportunities to connect with their colleagues virtually.

“It is both heartwarming and inspiring to witness the generosity, courage, patience and ingenuity the leaders and citizens of the Boston community are exhibiting day after day in response to a public health crisis that has no predictable end in sight. I feel especially fortunate to be part of the Boston legal community, in which so many lawyers in both the public and private sectors have quickly and thoughtfully mobilized into action to make sure our most vulnerable citizens have access to justice during this especially challenging time.”

– BBA President Christine Netski as the BBA leaders celebrated #OneBostonDay
April 1st
The Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission convenes a COVID-19 Task Force to identify emergent legal needs of the community and address barriers to justice due to the ongoing health crisis. Former BBA President J.D. Smeallie is the BBA liaison to this Task Force.

April 2nd
BBA President Christine Netski appoints COVID-19 Crisis Response Working Group led by BBA President-Elect Martin Murphy.

April 3rd
BBA Urges SJC Action to Reduce Incarcerated Populations in Response to Pandemic.

April 10th
Massachusetts law firms, nonprofits and government agencies launch COVID Relief Coalition for small Businesses and nonprofits. The Boston Bar Association joins this coalition to help mobilize volunteers and support from the legal community to assist small businesses and nonprofits access emergency loans and other sources of relief.

April 13th
BBA advocates for moratorium on evictions and foreclosures and endorses legislation to authorize remote notarization and witnessing of documents.

April 21st
The BBA sends a letter to the federal Department of Homeland Security, calling on the Acting Secretary to take steps to strengthen the healthcare workforce and to protect non- citizens seeking COVID-19 treatment and benefits from the impact of the #PublicCharge rule.

April 25th
Law Day in the Schools Program adapted to virtual format, curriculum focused on importance of voting rights.

April 28th
BBA advocates for legal services, loan forgiveness, and immigration in first-ever digital ABA Day.

April 30th
BBA Ethics Committee provides guidance on some of the most commonly raised issues for lawyers during this time.

May 7th
BBA files testimony urging action on releases from incarceration.

May 13th
BBA introduces BBA Podcasts, a new format for the legal community to stay informed, on-the-go.

May 20th
Law Firm Leadership Forum brings together managing partners and firm administrators for a roundtable discussion on law firm reopening challenges after COVID closures.

COVID-19 Crisis Response Working Group

BBA President Christine Netski appointed a COVID-19 Crisis Response Working Group to identify and monitor the impact of emerging issues during the COVID-19 crisis, and to recommend changes in or clarifications regarding practice. Some of the Working Group’s top priorities included:

Release and treatment of individuals held in custody

The BBA actively advocated on behalf of incarcerated individuals, who face special health risks from COVID-19. We submitted an amicus letter to the SJC, recommending it establish a system-wide mechanism for considering the release of broad categories of pre-trial detainees and also suspend rules that limit the time period during which judges can revise or revoke a sentence. In April, after the Court partially fulfilled that request, we turned to the Legislature, supporting legislation that would expand the Parole Board’s authority to grant release to qualified applicants and ensure access to counsel for incarcerated individuals. And in May, we sent a letter to the Governor, urging universal COVID-19 testing within state prisons and county Houses of Correction, the easing of furlough restrictions and the temporary expansion of the Parole Board. In addition, we advocated for transparent reporting on the status of COVID-19 infiltration into facilities where individuals are civilly committed for alcohol/substance abuse disorder.

Moratorium on evictions and foreclosures

With far too many renters and homeowners unable to make their monthly payments to landlords or mortgagees, we endorsed legislation, which has since been enacted, to impose a temporary moratorium on most foreclosures and evictions, so as not to aggravate the current public-health crisis by forcing potentially tens of thousands of residents out of their homes because of their inability to pay. In anticipation of the scheduled end to the eviction moratorium on October 17th, the BBA is preparing to mobilize the legal community through pro bono trainings and clinics with our legal services partners to assist the vulnerable residents likely to be affected.

Remote notarization and witnessing

Responding to concerns of practitioners who found themselves unable to have legal documents executed in person due to the pandemic, we joined a coalition that successfully pushed for legislation that now offers a temporary framework for remote notarization.
May 22\textsuperscript{nd}
BBA sends letter to governor urging swift action to protect people in custody.

May 26\textsuperscript{th}
BBA hosts area diversity, equity and inclusion experts for a webinar on how to practice inclusivity while working remotely.

May 28\textsuperscript{th}
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship Program expands to three positions and continues virtually in its second year.

May 29\textsuperscript{th}
BBA announce a revamped and expanded Bar Coaching Program and Career Transition Mentoring Program to support law school grads entering the profession.

June 1\textsuperscript{st}
BBA launches summer associate program to support remote career development.

June 2\textsuperscript{nd}
BBA issues statement on George Floyd and equal rights under the law.

June 24\textsuperscript{th}
BBA hosts webinar on protecting voting rights during the pandemic.

June 25\textsuperscript{th}
BBA releases report on right to counsel in eviction cases in Massachusetts.

June 29\textsuperscript{th}
BBA releases Virtual Hearing Resource Guides for practitioners and self-represented litigants.

June 30\textsuperscript{th}
300+ participated in BBA webinar on how to be an effective ally in the workplace.

July 2\textsuperscript{nd}
BBA & SJC Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being collaborate on affinity bar town halls on well-being challenges.

July 15\textsuperscript{th}
BBA hosts first-ever virtual Industry Conference, Energy Law, followed by a virtual Higher Education Legal Conference later that month.

July 30\textsuperscript{th}
BBA hosts first-ever Virtual Law Day Celebration, focusing on the strength of community.

August 4\textsuperscript{th}
Boston Bar Association launches Task Force on Ensuring Police Accountability.

August 17\textsuperscript{th}
BBA hosts virtual MBE bar exam prep training to support recent graduates preparing for the first-ever remote bar exam.

August 19\textsuperscript{th}
Amplifying Unheard Voices Series begins with a panel highlighting the Black male voice and features perspectives from Black lawyers and business leaders.

“Although the BBA has a longstanding commitment to improving our justice system, we recognize that our society still has not made equal rights under the law a reality. We therefore recommit to listening to and collaborating with those members of our community who have suffered especially heightened pain and grief as a result of these inequities, so that during the weeks ahead we can then take tangible steps toward identifying long overdue solutions. As a community and as a society, we simply cannot tolerate the broken system that the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others continue to expose.”

– BBA President Christine Netski, BBA Statement on George Floyd and Equal Rights Under Law
Webinars and Complete Transition to Online Programming

In the span of just five months, BBA volunteers transitioned to all programming online, resulting in over 150 webinars, virtual events and two virtual industry conferences reaching nearly 6,000 people. These programs have focused on everything from substantive updates in various practice areas and soft skills trainings on how to work in a remote environment, to diversity, equity and inclusion seminars and critical pro bono trainings. We launched on-demand videos and podcasts, allowing our members to access programming not just in real time, but anytime, anywhere.

The Latest COVID Guidance and Navigating Remote Practice

Section, Forum and Industry Group leaders mobilized quickly to provide relevant, high-quality programming and resources on pandemic-related changes in the law, best practices for meeting client needs, and how to navigate remote proceedings. Some of our top programs in this area included:

- Navigating Operational Issues for Life Sciences Companies During the COVID-19 Crisis
- The Impact of COVID-19 on Individuals Incarcerated in Massachusetts
- COVID-19 Relief for Nonprofits - Demystifying the CARES Act, FFCRA, and Other Forms of State and Federal Relief
- Governing Massachusetts Nonprofits Remotely During the COVID-19 Crisis
- Return to Work and COVID-19: What Employers and Employees Need to Know
- Protecting Voting Rights in the Pandemic Era
- Transitioning a Law Practice to a Remote Workforce: Addressing Cybersecurity & Data Privacy
- Practicing Social Distancing in Discovery: The Virtual Deposition
- Best Practices for Remote Proceedings
- Ethical Challenges for Attorneys During COVID-19: A Discussion with the BBA Ethics Committee Co-Chairs
- Civil Litigation in the Superior Courts During the Pandemic
Staying Connected & Supported

One of the top challenges facing the bar during the COVID-19 pandemic was the inability to connect in person and access social connectivity and camaraderie across the legal community through traditional events and gatherings. Remote work also posed hurdles for new lawyers dependent on mentorship and career development.

In response to these challenges, the BBA expanded its mentoring programs and hosted several roundtables for practitioners to stay connected, discuss shared challenges and offer best practices to foster well-being.

These challenges were particularly acute for 2020 law school graduates entering the profession. To support these graduates, we expanded our popular Bar Exam Coaching Program to include Career Transition Coaching. To date, we have paired over 50 recent graduates with attorney volunteers to provide mentorship and guidance.

“As we find ourselves more isolated than ever, we are focusing on providing mentorship and educational opportunities to less experienced practitioners through our Divorce Fundamental CLEs and a new mentorship program that connects practitioners of varying years of experience. This connectivity is more important than ever, and the very foundation of what a bar association should be.”

– David Friedman, Verrill, Family Law Section Co-Chair
Law Firm Leadership Forum

This past fall, the BBA launched the Law Firm Leadership Forum to bring together managing partners and firm leaders to discuss shared experiences and trends impacting the legal community and law firms, share best practices, and identify programs and initiatives for the BBA to host specifically for firm leaders. As law firms across the city grappled with the unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the forum distributed a survey to firm leaders and administrators to gather information on how firms were responding to the pandemic. The forum then hosted a roundtable with over 65 firm leaders from across the city to share the results of the survey to help inform the law firm community and talk through how to collectively navigate the challenges surrounding business continuity and support for attorneys. The forum will continue to convene firm leaders to address ongoing developments.

Connecting with Industry

The BBA Industry Conferences continue to provide valuable educational and business development opportunities for practitioners working in a variety of sectors. This year, we hosted 10 conferences—including an inaugural Real Estate Conference and three virtual conferences. We welcomed top regulators, general counsel, leading practitioners, and industry experts from the financial services, health care, technology, education, development, and consumer sectors to learn and connect.

2019–2020 Conferences
- Life Sciences Conference
- Employment Conference
- Cannabis Law Conference
- Privacy & Cybersecurity Law Conference
- White-Collar Crime Conference
- 20th Annual Intellectual Property Year in Review
- Real Estate Conference
- VIRTUAL 30th Annual Bankruptcy Bench Meets Bar
- VIRTUAL Higher Education Conference
- VIRTUAL Energy Law Conference
Together for:

Access to Justice
Task Force on Ensuring Police Accountability

Responding to the brutal killing of George Floyd by a police officer, and to the national reckoning on structural and institutional racism that it sparked, the BBA established a Task Force on Ensuring Police Accountability, co-chaired by Ralph Martin, the General Counsel for Northeastern University and former Suffolk County District Attorney, and by Natashia Tidwell of Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr LLP, a former federal prosecutor and police lieutenant. The Task Force members will explore avenues for reforming of laws and policies that govern policing in Massachusetts, as state lawmakers, municipalities, and police departments continue to grapple with these issues.

“As a former police officer, I know from experience how difficult and challenging police work can be. But it is time for us to evaluate how we can best hold officers accountable when they break the law and violate the rights of the people they are sworn to serve. Without an effective system for ensuring accountability, the deep and abiding distrust of law enforcement within so many of our communities is bound to continue.”

– Co-Chair Natashia Tidwell, Saul Ewing

Advocating for the Rights of Immigrants

Since the release of our Immigration Principles in 2018, we have kept a close watch on policies affecting immigrant communities, with those principles continuing to inform our advocacy. We reached out in April to the Federal Department of Homeland Security to ask that they enlist the help of non-citizen healthcare workers in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, expedite the review of petitions and applications involving healthcare workers, and clarify that they will refrain from penalizing applicants for permanent residency who have been treated for COVID-19 for accepting public benefits. At the state level, we endorsed legislation to eliminate the unjust disparity in the federal CARES Act’s treatment of taxpayers who use an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), leaving them ineligible for stimulus payments of up to $1,200 per person, despite paying the same share of taxes as those taxpayers with a Social Security Number.
A Focus on Housing

Right to Counsel in Eviction Cases Report and Advocacy

Following up on our influential 2014 report that showed how funding for legal services actually produces a positive return on investment, the BBA released a report this year demonstrating that establishing a right to counsel for indigent tenants in eviction cases will save the state at least $2.40 for every $1 invested. The BBA commissioned the report by Analysis Group in support of efforts, led by the broad-based Massachusetts Right to Counsel Coalition, to implement such a right to counsel for both low-income tenants and landlords, funded with new sources of revenue.

“A right to counsel in eviction proceedings—which can prevent the trauma of eviction for thousands of people every year—is now more important than ever. But establishing such a right will be for naught if it comes at the expense of existing funding for legal services. Thus, it is critical that a housing right to counsel be a companion to—not a replacement for—those appropriations.”

– BBA President, Christine Netski

Annual Meeting Speaker Addresses Housing Discrimination

At our Annual Meeting last fall, the keynote speaker was Richard Rothstein, whose work explores the various insidious ways that housing policies have discriminated against African-Americans for decades and how the effects of these systemic inequities continue to persist in the current landscape of our neighborhoods. Rothstein is the author of The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America, which recovers a forgotten history of how federal, state, and local policy explicitly segregated metropolitan areas nationwide. Those issues have taken on even greater urgency during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has brought these concerns into sharper relief.
In addition to emerging priorities brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the BBA remained an active voice in a number of our core issues including funding for legal services (MLAC), the court system and public defenders (CPCS). In April, BBA President Christine Netski and President-Elect Martin Murphy took part in the first Digital ABA Day to meet with the Massachusetts delegation in Congress and lobby for legal services funding and the public-service student loan forgiveness program. In addition to emerging priorities brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the BBA remained an active voice in a number of our core issues.

An Active Year for the Amicus Committee

Over the past year, the BBA’s Amicus Committee has been unusually active: The BBA participated as amici in cases involving:

- Immigration enforcement in and around courthouses
- The disposition of unidentifiable funds in IOLTA accounts
- Right to counsel in certain civil-contempt hearings
- Emergency shortage of bar advocates to represent criminal defendants

We expect the coming year to be a busy one for the BBA on this front as well.

Judicial Independence: Promoting Justice and Maintaining Democracy

Since our August 2019 report on the topic, we remain focused on threats to judicial independence, and on the role of lawyers in defending individual judges and the judicial system from unjustified attacks. Unfortunately, the past year presented further opportunities for us to help advance public understanding of the importance of judicial independence from political interference. We will stay attuned to public discourse on these issues and speak out as warranted, because public trust in the judicial system, once lost, cannot easily be restored.

“The BBA will continue to support the independence of our judiciary, both by advancing the public’s understanding of the role of the judicial branch within the context of our government and by speaking when criticisms of judges cross the line into destructive, ill-informed, and personal diatribes.”

– March 6th Statement on Recent Verbal Attacks Against Judges
Together in:

Service

CRIMINAL RECORD (CORI) SEALING CLINIC
CORI Sealing Clinic Continues

The BBA was pleased to continue our monthly CORI Sealing Clinic this year. Our CORI Sealing Clinic assists low-income clients in asking courts to seal their criminal records with help from volunteer attorneys. The BBA conducts this clinic along with our partner, Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS). The project engages practitioners and law students from across the Boston legal community, including in-house counsel. Although the clinic was on a brief pause in response to COVID-19 court closures, the clinic has now been adapted to a virtual format and will continue in fall 2020. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CORI Sealing Clinic engaged 15 volunteer attorneys and served 20+ clients in January, February and March.

Virtual Hearing Guides for Self-Represented Litigants

In May of this year, the BBA joined forces with the Massachusetts Access to Justice Commission's COVID-19 Task Force to draft resource guides for both practitioners and self-represented litigants attending virtual hearings. These guides are composed of the best practices and fundamental information necessary to successfully navigate telephonic and video hearings in the Courts. They also provided self-represented litigants clear, comprehensive information for attending a virtual hearing and how to continue accessing the Courts during the closures. After their release, the guides were shared widely on various listservs, amongst practitioners, on judicial websites, and were lauded for their straightforward and helpful approach for practitioners and pro se litigants alike.
Law Day in the Schools Adapted to a Virtual Format in 2020

This year’s Law Day in the Schools was set to begin just as schools were forced to close their doors due to COVID-19. The BBA quickly altered the lesson plan so that it could be given virtually as classrooms switched online. This year’s theme, “Your Vote. Your Voice. Our Democracy: The 19th Amendment at 100,” and the virtual lesson plan were distributed to Boston Public Schools, all BBA Members, and anyone that requested it so that it could be used by all teachers and first-time homeschool teachers alike. The new virtual format allowed the program to be shared and accessed in homes by students and families across the Commonwealth. The adapted lesson plan celebrated the 100th anniversary of the enfranchisement of women and featured a book entitled, “Marching with Aunt Susan,” which highlighted Susan B. Anthony’s role in the women’s suffrage movement. The lesson plan centered the movement in a broader conversation about students utilizing their voting power when they are of age. Teachers, parents, caregivers, and students were encouraged to engage in conversations about representation and what voting means in a democratic society.

“Like so many other families, my family knew we had to stay away from our typical activities to support the nurses, doctors, and other caregivers keeping us all safe. But with schools closing, parents in the legal industry knew that they had one (or several) very demanding clients that took precedence and had newfound time on their hands: our kids. Educators and educational platforms have been great in terms of sharing materials, but BBA’s lesson plan added a nice twist because it focused my interest in the law and civil rights issues with my oldest son’s interest in history.”

– Phil Catanzano, Holland & Knight
Together for:

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
The BBA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Section remained active this spring and summer, meeting the moment as a nationwide dialogue on racial injustice and inequality in our society sparked necessary reflection and action, and the ongoing public health crisis amplified racial disparities within the community and legal profession. The DEI Section hosted three significant programs this summer including:

- Practicing Inclusivity While Working Remotely: How are Organizations Maintaining and Advancing D&I Initiatives
- How to Be an Effective Ally
- Amplifying Unheard Voices Series

These programs brought together over 500 participants collectively—amplifying Black voices within the profession, providing an in-depth, actionable roadmap for individuals to be an ally for their colleagues in the workplace, and strategies for organizations to ensure genuine inclusivity and the retention of diverse talent. We are pleased to continue this programming in the coming year and advance our work to promote a diverse, equitable and inclusive profession.

“You should wake up every day trying to figure out how to be anti-racist. How can you do better at it than you did yesterday? Challenge your assumptions and practices. Look at the young people who are leading. Otherwise, you’re merely perpetuating historic injustices.”

– Jonathan Allen, The Leadership Brainery on allyship
The 2019 Beacon Award for Diversity & Inclusion was held at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center, welcoming over 200 members of the Boston legal community to celebrate work to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession.

The Voice of Change Award, recognizing a leader in the legal community who has forged a new path and played an extensive role in advancing diversity and inclusion within the profession, was presented to Yalonda T. Howze of Mintz.

“We stand together today at a critical time in history. A vibrant, diverse, inclusive and multicultural society can not be taken for granted.”

– Yalonda Howze, Mintz

The Corporate Champion Award, recognizing an in-house legal department that has been a leader in internal or external projects and practices that promote a more diverse and inclusive legal profession, was awarded to Liberty Mutual. Accepting the award was Liberty Mutual’s Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, Jim Kelleher. Kelleher explained that the company and its legal department strive not only to increase diversity among employees, but, just as importantly, to foster a welcoming environment.

“All the diversity is for nothing if it’s not an inclusive environment where employees can bring their entire selves,” Kelleher said. “We can’t expect people to check their religion, sexual orientation, or other identities at the door.”

– Jim Kelleher, Liberty Mutual

The Empowerment Award, presented to a powerful advocate that works to create systemic change in the wider community by amplifying the voices of underrepresented groups was presented to the partnership between Greater Boston Legal Services’ (GBLS’s) Asian Outreach Project and the Asian American Resource Workshop (AARW) for their collaboration in responding to the escalated deportation action against Southeast Asian refugee and immigrant communities by raising public awareness, mounting a legal defense campaign, and building community networks and organizing power. Kevin Lam, Organizing Director at AARW, and Bethany Li, Senior Staff Attorney and Director of the Asian Outreach Project at GBLS, accepted the award on behalf of their respective organizations.

In total, the event raised over $140,000, and the silent auction raised close to $11,000 for the BBF Beacon Fund to support the BBA’s Diversity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship program, which places Massachusetts law students into paid internships in public interest law offices. This record breaking total enabled us to expand the program to three paid positions.
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Summer Fellowship Expands and Continues Virtually in Second Year

This summer, we continued our new Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summer Fellowship Program, which provides access to critical work experience through paid summer internships. The program grew this year, with three fully paid summer positions with public interest law offices, working virtually with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, the Bankruptcy Court, and the Attorney General’s office. Funding for these three positions was made possible by generous support of the Boston Bar Foundation, including a donation from BBA Sponsor Firm, Pierce Atwood.

“Perhaps my favorite thing about the experience was how my fellowship never came up in discussions, I was simply part of the class of interns during last summer. It was never announced that the AG’s office had a D&I fellow, and I was never singled out for any reason. To me, this is what diversity and inclusion looks like: I am here, I am occupying space that was once denied to me and continues to be harder for me to access, and my contributions are respected and valued. I am proud to be in a city that recognizes that there has been a systematic failure to include women and people of color in the legal profession, and works towards a more equitable future not by using people of color as tokens but by encouraging us to bring our full selves to work and treating us with the same respect and understanding as our white peers.”

– Anna Cardoso, 2019 DEI Fellow

“Diversity and Inclusion is a lifelong commitment—I will always promote and strive for diversity and inclusion in all spaces for all people in and beyond my legal career. I appreciated the commitment that the Office displayed in ensuring a space in which marginalized individuals felt heard, seen, and supported. Summer of 2020 is definitely one for the books, and I am grateful that I could spend this summer at the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office.”

– Rosa Kim, 2020 DEI Fellow

Affinity Bar Partnerships

We have been able to work with the Affinity Bars on utilizing BBA resources during the pandemic to support their remote programming and meetings logistics. Since March of 2020, the BBA has hosted our Affinity Bar partners virtually in dozens of meetings, including Board Meetings, an Annual Retreat, several programs and panels including a SABA GB webinar on e-networking during the pandemic, and a joint MLB&A & MAHA Meet the Candidates Q&A forum with the candidates for Governor’s Council, in addition to many other social happy hour events. We partnered with the SJC Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being to support a series of Affinity Bar Town Halls engaging with members of the legal community in candid discussions on well-being challenges. The Town Hall style meetings were held with individual Affinity Bar Associations to discuss specific well-being challenges for their communities and ideas for change.
Annual Meeting

The 2019 Annual Meeting breakfast was a morning of important and insightful discussion on the history of housing and segregation in 20th century America.

Keynote Speaker Richard Rothstein spoke about his 2017 book, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America*. He discussed how decades of local, state, and federal housing policies that mandated segregation created a racial and cultural divide and continue to have enormous and lasting impacts on American society today. In his book, Mr. Rothstein notes, “The segregation of our metropolitan areas today leads … to stagnant inequality.”

The BBA presented the 2019 John G. Brooks Legal Services Award to four area organizations working together to fight housing displacement: City Life Vida Urbana, Greater Boston Legal Services, Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, and the WilmerHale Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School.

Adams Benefit

The 2020 John & Abigail Adams Benefit welcomed over 1,200 members of the Boston’s legal community to support the Boston Bar Foundation’s mission of expanding access to justice and engaging members of the bar in public service. BBF President Diana Lloyd presented the 2020 Public Service Award to Eastern Bank Chair and CEO, Bob Rivers, for his long-standing commitment and leadership in community service and philanthropy.

Thanks to our sponsors and attendees, we raised over $740,000. The net proceeds from this event support the BBF’s important work in our community, including direct grants to local legal aid organizations.

Virtual Law Day

Our annual Law Day Celebration was took place virtually on July 30th, with over 250 registrants and 25 event sponsors from across the Greater Boston community. BBA President Christine Netski opened the celebration by recognizing the unwavering dedication and commitment of lawyers here in Boston after a time of unprecedented challenges and transformative changes to our society.

Christine Netski presented the Thurgood Marshall Award to Ropes & Gray LLP for their pro bono work on a landmark voting rights case and the 2020 President’s Award to Jayne B. Tyrell, outgoing Executive Director of the Massachusetts IOLTA Committee, in recognition of her outstanding career in public service.

The keynote panel featured Chief of Economic Development for the City of Boston, John Barros, Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards, and Emerson College President, Lee Pelton. The panelists shed light on how Boston, and lawyers specifically, can leverage the strength in community to address issues of systemic racism and social inequity.

Thank you again to the Boston Bar Association. You are such a critical connector and source of resources for people in the Boston area. We all benefit from the organization and its focus on the needs of lawyers and the community around it.”

– Rob Jones, Partner at Ropes & Gray accepting the Thurgood Marshall Award on behalf of the firm
The BBA Law Day in the Schools Program has successfully transitioned to a virtual format. Members, parents, caregivers, and teachers alike have engaged with our new learn-at-home lesson plan. The curriculum this year explores the theme “Your Vote. Your Voice. Our Democracy: the 19th Amendment at 100” and seeks to engage students in thoughtful discussion about voting rights.

This program is supported in part by the BBF Francis Moran Fund, established in 2002 to help support and implement the goals of the BBA’s former Children and Youth Outreach Project.

The Joan B. DiCola Fund was established in 2015 to support the Boston Bar Association programs and initiatives that foster the education and professional development of lawyers. This fund has been integral in supporting our capacity to provide our members programming in a virtual landscape. In the past five months, we have hosted over 150 educational webinars, pro bono trainings, social gatherings, industry conferences, and major events remotely.

In 2019 The Boston Bar Foundation launched the Drive for 5 Campaign in an effort to reach the $5 million endowment goal set by the organization eight years ago. The campaign calls on existing members of the Society of Fellows to consider upgrading their pledges or expediting their pledge payments, which are permanent gifts to our endowment that will benefit the Greater Boston community for years to come.

In the year since the campaign was launched, over 150 new, existing and sustaining members of the Society of Fellows, have contributed nearly $230,000 towards our endowment goal. With just over $100,000 to go to $5 million, we are closer to this goal, and a future of long-term stability for the Boston Bar Foundation, than ever before.
The vital work done by these incredible organizations helps to ensure access to justice – particularly during these difficult times when the most marginalized and vulnerable members of our community are facing unprecedented hardship,” stated BBF President Diana K. Lloyd. “This year we are pleased to increase the number of grantees and expand the critical work in the community for direct legal services, and to support impact litigation and administration of justice matters. These grants would not be possible without the lawyers, law firms and area businesses who support the work of the Boston Bar Foundation throughout the year.”

After a year of unprecedented challenges, the Boston Bar Foundation was pleased to award $1,172,500 in grants to 25 organizations that provide critical legal services and advocacy for members of the Greater Boston community in need. This funding is composed of proceeds from the BBF’s annual John & Abigail Adams Benefit and Interest on Lawyers’ Trust Accounts (IOLTA).

The legal support provided by BBF grantee organizations ensures that our most vulnerable community members can obtain equitable access to life-altering support during these challenging times. These organizations assist clients that include: those seeking access to unemployment and food assistance benefits, communities of color facing unjust discrimination, low-income landlords and tenants facing housing insecurity, incarcerated individuals, survivors of domestic violence seeking safety from their abusers, and immigrants and asylum-seekers hoping to make a new life in the United States.

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The Boston legal community lost one of its finest this year. Edward J. Barshak passed away peacefully on August 12, 2020, at age 96. Ed served as president of the Boston Bar Association from 1974 to 1976 and was honored with the BBA’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014.

“1970’s Boston was a time of upheaval and controversy. The city’s future stood on a knife edge, with communities torn apart by the contentious desegregation of Boston Public Schools and resulting busing crisis. At the time, the BBA was not known for weighing in on community issues. Ed, with a steadfast belief in the nobility of the legal profession, believed that lawyers could help guide progress and make a difference. Ed worked tirelessly throughout his presidency to educate the public about desegregation and the busing movement, cementing the BBA’s reputation as not only a trusted voice in the legal profession, but the community at large. During his presidency, the BBA established the still active Legal Advocacy and Resource Center, which provides low-income residents of the Greater Boston area with free legal advice and referrals. Ed also led the BBA’s call for a comprehensive review of the judicial nominating process, which resulted in the formation of the Judicial Nominating Committee by Governor Dukakis.”

– BBA Awarding Ed Barshak with the Lifetime Achievement Award

“Ed’s unyielding commitment to public service and access to justice, whether in support of racial justice, the right to counsel, voting rights, civil liberties or fair housing, was a wonderful example to all of us that, as lawyers, we have the ability and responsibility to create a more equitable society.”

– BBA President and Managing Partner of Sugarman Rogers, Christine Netski

Richard Renehan
December 30, 1933 – March 4, 2020

Richard Renehan, renowned trial attorney and former Boston Bar Association President, passed away on March 4, 2020 at the age of 86. Dick was revered not only as a brilliant trial lawyer, but as a tremendous leader, friend and mentor to many.

BBA President 1985–1986

“Over time one large law firm after another sought him out, and he became the quintessential “lawyer’s lawyer.” Dick was a legend and a leader of the Boston Bar, and a great friend and mentor to me and dozens of other younger lawyers. We will not see the likes of him again any time soon.”

– Richard Zielinski, Goulston & Storrs
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