

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

### MECKLENBURG COUNTY BAR SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY

The Mecklenburg County Bar (“MCB”) Special Committee on Diversity recognizes that the legal profession can more effectively address societal and individual needs with varied perspectives, experience, knowledge, and understanding by people involved in the practice of law. Individual and full participation by diverse groups in law firms, corporate law departments, governmental agencies, and the courts will better serve the administration of justice to which the legal profession is dedicated. To this end, the Committee will examine the extent to which the MCB and the various private law practices, corporate law departments, governmental agencies, and judicial bodies that make up the Mecklenburg County legal community have successfully incorporated lawyers from traditionally underrepresented groups in their organizations. The Committee will focus both internally and externally – on the MCB itself (including its various committees and sections) and on its various constituent groups. The Committee will strive to have its own membership reflect the diversity of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. The Committee intends to gather empirical information on issues of diversity and inclusion, where available; to provide recommendations for addressing these matters; and to propose methods for measuring the success of efforts to address these issues.

The Committee recognizes that the term “diversity” encompasses a broad range of subject matters, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability. The Committee believes that each of these issues merits attention and should be addressed in an appropriate way. Rather than attempting to address these broad and complicated topics collectively, the Committee intends to address several of these topics individually, over successive time periods.

The Committee will initially address race and ethnicity, including the recruiting, hiring, training, mentoring, retention, and promotion of minority lawyers. In this effort, the Committee will consider the following topics, among others:

- The involvement of minority lawyers as active members in the MCB and its sections, on MCB committees, in other positions of leadership, and in MCB continuing legal education and other program activities.
- The establishment of working relationships between the MCB and bar groups traditionally comprised of primarily minority lawyers (such as the John S. Leary, Sr. Bar Association).
- The appreciation of the benefits of diversity in the local legal community and the unique challenges facing minority lawyers in this community.
- The understanding of unique challenges that may face minority lawyers in solo practice and in small firms.
- The appreciation of the benefits to the community, the bench, and the bar of ethnic diversity among judges and judicial staffs.
- The inclusion of minority lawyers in Mecklenburg County law firms, corporate law departments, and governmental agencies.
- The training, mentoring, utilization, and promotion (to supervisory and “equity” positions) of minority lawyers in these organizations.
- The flow of appropriate, quality legal work to minority lawyers both (i) within law firms, corporate law departments, and governmental entities and (ii) from clients to minority law firms and minority lawyers within law firms.

- The development and implementation of programs to encourage minority students to attend law school and join the legal profession.
- The development of methods to increase the appeal of the Mecklenburg County legal community to minority lawyers and law students and ways in which the MCB and its constituents can cooperatively address this goal.

**Special Committee on Diversity Subcommittees:**

- Bench, Bar, and Community Subcommittee
- Charlotte Legal Diversity Subcommittee
- Diversity Day Subcommittee
- Law Firm and Legal Department Subcommittee