

# ALWD

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## ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL WRITING DIRECTORS

October 18, 2017

TO: Council of the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar  
Maureen O'Rourke, Chair  
Barry Currier, Managing Director

FROM: Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD)  
Megan McAlpin, President 2017-18

RE: Report of Activities Since May 2017

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Thank you for inviting ALWD to submit a written report of activities over the last few months. ALWD values its long affiliation with the Council on behalf of the legal writing discipline and appreciates the opportunity to engage with the Council's members and its work.

1. **ALWD Biennial Conference on Diversity and Inclusion:** In July, the University of Minnesota hosted *Acknowledging Lines: Talking About What Unites and Divides Us*, a three-day conference that directly addressed issues of implicit bias, stereotype threat, diversity, inclusion, and justice. Four plenary speakers drew on their deep research and expertise to challenge participants in exploring their own biases and those that exist in law school classrooms and in the legal academy. Almost 200 participants courageously reflected on how biases impact our relationships with students and colleagues, the effectiveness of our organizations and schools, and the debates in our nation. Many conference participants said it was the most important academic conference they had ever attended.
2. **ALWD Strategic Plan:** At its summer retreat, the Board engaged in strategic planning that identified the following three areas of focus.

- a. Organizational Diversity and Creating Institutional Expertise:** Building on the success of the summer conference, ALWD will begin making organizational changes to promote diversity and inclusion within our organization and to be a resource to our members in pursuing greater diversity and inclusion in their classrooms and at their schools. In addition, our long-term goal is to support members in gaining expertise on issues of organizational diversity and cross-cultural training so that they can serve as visiting consultants to advise schools on achieving greater diversity.
  - b. Leadership Institute:** ALWD's mission since its inception has been leadership within legal writing and within the academy as a whole. A committee is currently working to form a Leadership Institute. That committee is considering possibilities such as providing leadership training and mentorship opportunities, providing diversity training, and creating opportunities to engage in presentations and scholarship around all aspects of leadership.
  - c. Website:** The Board is undertaking a major reworking of the ALWD website to bring more content and greater accessibility to members and others who turn to ALWD for resources.
- 3. New ALWD Officers and Directors:** The current Board of Directors began serving on August 1, 2017. Joining me as officers are President-Elect Jodi Wilson (Memphis); Immediate Past President Wanda Temm (University of Missouri – Kansas City); Secretary Tamara Herrera (Arizona State); and Treasurer Catherine Wasson (Elon). Continuing on the Board of Directors are David Cleveland (Valparaiso); Lucy Jewel (Tennessee); Tonya Kowalski (Washburn); Katrina Lee (Ohio State); and Ellie Margolis (Temple). Our four newly elected or re-elected members of the Board are Brenda Gibson (North Carolina Central); Anne Mullins (North Dakota); Susan Salmon (Arizona); and Amy Vorenberg (New Hampshire).

Again, ALWD very much appreciates the opportunity to share its recent work with the Council, and we look forward to continuing to work with you in ongoing efforts to improve the quality of legal education.