

The D.C. Bar

Strategic Plan

*Adopted by the D.C. Bar Board of Governors
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D.C. Bar Strategic Planning Committee

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OVERVIEW

In the fall of 2008, the D.C. Bar's Board of Governors appointed a special committee with the charge of preparing a strategic plan that would serve as a guideline for the organization's future.

The committee engaged a professional with specific expertise in strategic planning and thinking and developed a comprehensive work plan that included:

- A review of the D.C. Bar's founding documents, court rules, bylaws, referenda, budgets, organizational charts, and current demographic composition;
- A design session to create a strategic planning process to meet the specific needs of the D.C. Bar, setting out the various constituencies that should be consulted in the process and the issues that should be explored;
- One-on-one telephone interviews and focus group sessions with various D.C. Bar constituencies to obtain their views on the organization's effectiveness and future direction;*
- An electronic survey sent to all D.C. Bar members, staff, and past presidents; and
- The development of a list of assumptions about the profession's future from the research data.

The committee considered the information collected during several strategic thinking and planning sessions held over the spring and summer of 2009 and developed this strategic plan document. The document was approved by the committee in October 2009 and forwarded to the Bar's Board of Governors with a recommendation that it be implemented.

* The committee made telephone interviews available to individuals representing the D.C. Courts, leaders and staff of the Bar's disciplinary system, legal services providers, the D.C. Bar Foundation, donors to the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program, active volunteers, sole practitioners, contract lawyers, government lawyers, small firm practitioners, large firm practitioners, young/new lawyers, and representatives of the D.C. Access to Justice Commission. The committee hosted focus groups of nine stakeholder groups: active committee members, members of the D.C. Bar's Pro Bono Committee, section leaders, voluntary bar association leaders, leaders of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, members of the Bar's Board of Governors, representatives of the Board on Professional Responsibility, and managers of the Bar's headquarters staff.

The goal of the planning process was to create clarity and focus on how the Bar should invest its valuable resources in meeting the future needs of its members and other stakeholder groups it serves.

The resulting strategic plan includes the following:

- A Core Ideology for the organization, including its mission, purpose, and values;
- A statement of the D.C. Bar's Envisioned Future outlining an aspiration for its longer-term future position;
- Focused Goal Areas that identify where the D.C. Bar will direct its energy in the next five years; and
- A set of strategic objectives in each goal area, setting direction for the D.C. Bar in pursuing its goals.

The D.C. Bar's leadership and staff views strategic thinking and planning as an ongoing process within the organization. This is not a "strategic planning project" that has been completed. The adoption of a plan is an affirmation of the general intent and direction articulated by the D.C. Bar's vision, goals, and objectives. Progress toward achieving the plan's objectives will be assessed annually, and the plan will be updated based on achievement and changes in the needs of the stakeholders served.

10-15 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON
~ CORE IDEOLOGY AND ENVISIONED FUTURE ~

Core ideology describes an organization's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of three elements – **mission, core purpose, and core values** – that collectively describe its reason for being and its essential and enduring principles that guide its activities.

Envisioned future conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision. It includes a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort, and a vibrant and engaging description of what it will be like to realize that vision.

Core Ideology

Mission:

- Aid the courts in carrying on and improving the administration of justice.
- Promote access to justice and enhance the delivery of legal services to those in need.
- Foster and maintain high ideals of integrity, learning, competence in public service, and high standards of conduct.
- Safeguard the professional interests of the members of the Bar.
- Encourage and support the activities of voluntary bar associations.
- Provide a forum for and publish information about the practice of law, the science of jurisprudence and law reform, and the relationship of the Bar to the public.
- Carry on a continuing program of legal research and education.

Core Purpose:

To enhance access to justice, improve the legal system, and empower lawyers to achieve excellence.

Core Organizational Values:

- Outstanding service
- Absolute integrity
- Visionary leadership
- Inclusion

Envisioned Future

The D.C. Bar is recognized as the national leader in the legal profession for professional excellence, preeminent programs, and exemplary public service.

The D.C. Bar's programs and resources for the legal profession and the public are acknowledged globally as the finest examples of leadership, service, and integrity. Because of its location in the nation's capital, the D.C. Bar is recognized by the legal profession for its unique content, high-profile members, expertise, and access to decision-makers. Other bar associations consistently turn to the D.C. Bar for best practices in serving the needs of lawyers and in responding to the needs of the community. The D.C. Bar is recognized as being on the forefront of utilizing technology applications to deliver educational content and facilitate online communities anywhere in the world immediately. The D.C. Bar's Pro Bono Program is nationally recognized as the preeminent model. The D.C. Bar is recognized for upholding the highest level of professional ethics and is regularly consulted on issues related to the regulation of the legal profession. The community is aware of the services available from the Bar and its members. The D.C. Bar serves as a resource to law schools in preparing students to become effective members of the profession. The D.C. Bar will continue to grow as lawyers across the nation recognize the great value of membership.

As a result of achieving its vision, the D.C. Bar will have enhanced the standing of the profession and dramatically improved access to justice for all.

3-5 YEAR PLANNING HORIZON
~ OUTCOME-ORIENTED GOALS, OBJECTIVES,
AND STRATEGIES ~

The following are the D.C. Bar's Goal Areas for the next three to five years. These outcome statements define "what will constitute future success." The achievement of each goal will move the D.C. Bar toward the realization of its envisioned future. All of the goals listed below are considered important and are not listed in priority order. Objectives provide direction on how the organization will accomplish its articulated goals. Success toward achieving the goals is reviewed annually by the D.C. Bar's leadership. Strategies will be developed by volunteers and staff to describe how the organization will accomplish the articulated goals set out in this plan.

Goal Area: Access to Justice

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar maintains leadership in developing and implementing innovative programs and strategies to enhance the delivery of legal services.

Objective (1): Enhance the effectiveness of partnerships between lawyers and legal services providers.

Objective (2): Enhance the Bar's engagement with the courts and legal services community to develop new delivery strategies.

Objective (3): Design and implement new initiatives for Bar-sponsored legal services and encourage continuing commitment to pro bono activities.

Goal Area: Positioning of the D.C. Bar

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar is known for its national and distinguished membership, depth and breadth of its offerings, and commitment to public service.

Objective (1): Brand the D.C. Bar based on the unique composition of its members and key thought leaders, its access to the resources of the nation's capital, and its pro bono program.

Objective (2): Increase the engagement of the D.C. Bar's prominent members.

Objective (3): Develop an organizational culture that produces outstanding leaders who are committed to making the D.C. Bar the national leader in the legal profession for professional excellence, preeminent programs, and exemplary public service.

Goal Area: Professional Integrity and Conduct

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar offers programs and services that enhance professional integrity and conduct.

Objective (1): Increase the accessibility of programs and services that advance professional integrity and conduct.

Objective (2): Increase awareness of programs and services that support members' achievement of professional integrity and conduct.

Objective (3): Proactively address the need for changes in the D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct as the practice of law evolves.

Goal Area: Technological Engagement and Communications

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar and its members regularly engage through multiple channels and members are actively communicating with one another through Bar-facilitated technology tools.

Objective (1): Increase opportunities for D.C. Bar members to engage online.

Objective (2): Enhance the effectiveness of the D.C. Bar's member communication mechanisms.

Goal Area: Educational Programs and Resources

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar provides high quality educational programs and resources online and on-demand.

Objective (1): Enhance access to D.C. Bar information and resources.

Objective (2): Expand the online delivery of CLE and other educational programs and materials.

Objective (3): Expand marketing and promotion of CLE and other educational opportunities.

Goal Area: D.C. Bar Sections

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar's sections are recognized as an integral part of the Bar, providing substantial value to members through professional development and career enhancement activities, and are viewed as a national model of excellence.

Objective (1): Increase the consistency of the quality and reach of programs and services across all sections.

Objective (2): Enhance the delivery options for section-sponsored programs.

Objective (3): Improve the long-term financial sustainability of the sections' operations.

Objective (4): Strengthen the relationships between the sections and other components of the D.C. Bar.

Objective (5): Expand the engagement of both new lawyers and government lawyers in sections.

Objective (6): Enhance opportunities for leadership development.

Goal Area: Financial Stability

Goal Statement: The D.C. Bar has the ability to fund new initiatives articulated in the strategic plan.

Objective (1): Increase nondues revenue sources as a percentage of the Bar's revenue.

Objective (2): Enhance opportunities for increasing membership.

Objective (3): Review the financial structure of the D.C. Bar.

Objective (4): Periodically assess the effectiveness and impact of the Bar's programs and services to assure the most appropriate allocation of resources.