



BLAC-CBA Round Table

5 Year Strategic Plan

2019-2024

**ADVOCATE. EDUCATE. ELEVATE.
TOGETHER**

EXTERNAL VISION

The Greater Cincinnati legal profession and its leadership is a genuinely diverse and inclusive reflection of the African-American community and effectively serves the needs of African-American attorneys in all aspects of the legal profession.

INTERNAL VISION

The BLAC-CBA Round Table is the recognized and respected champion of, and resource for, diversity and inclusion on behalf of African-American attorneys in all aspects of the legal profession in our region.

MISSION

The BLAC-CBA Round Table helps diversify the legal profession in Greater Cincinnati by advocating, educating and evaluating progress toward inclusion of African-American attorneys in the practice of law as well as in leadership positions in the profession and throughout the community.

BELIEFS/VALUES

- ❖ When it comes to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession, the *status quo* is unacceptable.
- ❖ Diversity and inclusion in the legal profession benefits everyone involved in the justice system.
- ❖ Diversity without inclusion will not sustainably support recruitment, development, advancement, or retention of African-American attorneys in the profession.
- ❖ Diversity and inclusion in the legal profession must be intentional and requires diligence to be sustained.
- ❖ Collaboration is key to achieving the vision of a diverse and inclusive profession.



KEY RESULT AREAS - PROGRAMS, RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

1. PROGRAMS

- a. **Goal:** Support the placement, retention and advancement of African-American attorneys in all aspects of the legal profession in our region.
- b. **Strategy:** Advocate for, educate regarding and evaluate the placement, retention and advancement of African-American attorneys in the Greater Cincinnati legal community.
- c. **Success Measures:** Increases (based on quantitative assessment and trend analysis) in placement, retention and advancement of African-American attorneys.

Action Step	Potential Activities	Measure	Timing
Advocate – create more champions by making and publishing the business case for diversity and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish business case and best practices • Publicly recognize diversity and inclusion champions • Promote LLI, SWEL, GCMCP and other talent life cycle efforts • Advocate for transparent and/or consistent hiring and advancement criteria 	Numbers of decision makers and individuals actively engaged in Round Table and similar efforts	Year 1
Educate – create more understanding of proven approaches to sustained hiring, retention and advancement of African-American attorneys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold panels and/or symposia for employers to share best practices • Provide LinkedIn group on diversity and inclusion for the legal profession as a source of networking and access to latest research • Support or host skills development training and similar efforts proven to help with hiring, retention and advancement 	Attendance at educational events; post-program evaluations; number of individuals in LinkedIn group; statistical data and qualitative surveys of changes made (e.g., what have you done to change; how many more partners)	Year 2 and annually thereafter
Educate – develop self-assessment and tools for better placement, retention and advancement practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct baseline, individualized assessment of legal employers’ diversity/inclusion statistics related to placement, retention and advancement • Develop toolkit(s) for assessing placement, retention and advancement at a given employer 	Completed or not	Year 1

Action Step	Potential Activities	Measure	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop employer reporting tool for the Round Table to assess placement, retention and advancement 		
Evaluate – evaluate placement of African-American attorneys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with African-American law students to develop their skills and to increase opportunities for hiring Work with law schools to develop strategies and necessary skills for increased hiring of African-American law students Work with employers to reassess and rejuvenate hiring criteria and practices of African-American law students 	Increased percentage of African-Americans hired by all types of legal employers in our region	Year 2 and annually thereafter
Evaluate – evaluate retention of African-American attorneys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue career satisfaction/personal success survey Work with attorneys (both African-American and others) to understand challenges related to success and retention Work with decision-makers to address challenges Work with employers to develop and/or improve exit interview processes Develop an anonymous exit interview process for Round Table to aggregate data on why individuals have left 	Maintain and/or increase retention rates of African-American attorneys	Year 2 and annually thereafter
Evaluate – evaluate advancement of African-American attorneys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with employers to ensure consistency in advancement Work with attorneys (both African-American and others) to understand challenges related to success and advancement Work with decision-makers to address challenges 	Maintain and/or increase the advancement of African-American attorneys based on the definition of advancement for a given employer	Year 2 and annually thereafter

2. RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- a. **Goal:** Maintain sufficient volunteer and financial resources to support and sustain mission-effectiveness.
- b. **Strategy:** Create and maintain a systematic approach for ensuring adequate financial and volunteer resources, as well as garnering additional business and individual support as needed.
- c. **Success Measures:** Adequate volunteer recruitment and retention, fundraising and cash on hand when needed.

Action Step	Potential Activities	Measure	Timing
Operate with a budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop annual calendar of activities and ensure suitable funds to cover anticipated expenses (e.g. develop budget/calendar prior to CBF grant request period) 	Budget process in place and used	Year 1
Maintain steady flow of members/ volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct membership drives when needed • Maintain membership roles for certain positions (e.g., President of CBA, President of BLAC, etc.) and assess what positions we want to recruit as members 	All seats filled with highly engaged volunteers	(See governance and membership sections)
Plan fundraising activities at suitable frequencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop timeline, milestone and/or decision matrix for when fundraising should occur 	Fundraising plan in place and used	Year 2

3. GOVERNANCE

- a. **Goal:** Structure the organization to best advance the vision, mission and programs.
- b. **Strategy:** Adopt a functional organization that blends the current co-convener/member model with a traditional nonprofit volunteer board of trustees.
- c. **Success Measures:** Structure is effective in ensuring performance criteria (financial, membership, programs outcomes, stakeholder relations) are met.

Action Step	Potential Activities	Measure	Timing
Define governance structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop structure considering the strategic plan • Revise current policies and procedures to reflect new governance structure 	Structure in place	0-3 months
Evaluate efficiencies of governance model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct board and member surveys • Assess progress against strategic plan 	Satisfaction with progress of the organization	Year 2

4. MEMBERSHIP

- a. **Goal:** Maximize membership to optimize resource development, community and stakeholder engagement, collaboration and program results.
- b. **Strategy:** Provide opportunities for members to advocate, educate and evaluate diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the legal profession; and to build support for the Round Table's mission.
- c. **Success Measures:** More members are actively involved and engaged in programs, dedicated to the mission and vision and satisfied with the work and progress of the organization.

Action Step	Potential Activities	Measure	Timing
Define requirements/ expectations and benefits of membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine what is required, including some level of commitment • Define the benefits of membership (e.g., access, networking) • Update policies and procedures as necessary 	Requirements set	0-6 months (after governance determined)
Develop membership structure to support key result areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine committees or other structures necessary to ensure progress toward key result areas 	Structure in place	0-6 months (after governance determined)
Assess membership commitment and satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct membership satisfaction survey 	Members are engaged and satisfied with efforts	Year 2 and annually thereafter
Conduct initial membership drive and additional membership drives as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the community of the refreshed Round Table • Solicit new members 	Increased membership	Year 1 and as needed thereafter
Promote the work of Round Table members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the work of the Round Table and its members on a regular basis 	Completed or not	Ongoing

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- a. **Goal:** Key stakeholders respond to the Round Table’s efforts to increase diversity and inclusion of African-Americans in all aspects of the legal profession.
- b. **Strategy:** Promote and make the business case for adoption of the Round Table’s strategic plan and stakeholder engagement.
- c. **Success Measures:** Stakeholders are aware of, engaged in and supportive of the Round Table’s vision, mission and programs.

Action Step	Potential Activities	Measure	Timing
Educate the stakeholders about the strategic plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize existing platforms (e.g., CBA e-news and Report magazine, BLAC e-blast, organization meetings and other organizations’ platforms) to disseminate the strategic plan or materials concerning the strategy • Have meetings with leaders/decision makers and diversity officers of area legal employers • Have meetings with African-American attorneys and law students 	Completed or not	Year 1
Secure initial engagement of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define what engagement looks like • Task members with recruiting and engaging stakeholders • Engage stakeholders in the implementation of the strategic plan 	Completed or not	Year 1
Secure active engagement of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain stakeholder commitment to participate in programs and to implement initiatives 	Commitment obtained or not	Year 2
Evaluate stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop assessment tool • Continuously assess stakeholder engagement and support 	Stakeholders respond to requests for information, participation etc. in a meaningful way	Year 3 and annually thereafter