

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

In 1872, Charlotte E. Ray was the first African-American woman to be admitted to the bar in the United States. Despite her superior legal abilities and the path she so bravely forged for all minority female attorneys, she soon gave up the practice of law because she could not attract sufficient clients to stay in business.

Though the legal landscape of our country has undergone drastic changes since Ms. Ray's time, the difficulties she experienced a woman of color in the legal field still plague the profession today. The acknowledgement of this problem and the desire to find solutions recently spurred the American Bar Association to release a report entitled *Visible Invisibility: Women of Color in Law Firms*. The 2006 report is a culmination of surveys, focus groups, and other research that asked male and female lawyers to discuss their career experiences, motivations for staying in a law firm, reasons for leaving a law firm, and salaries. After comparing the data of minority female attorneys to that of other groups, the report uncovered marked differences between the experiences of minority women and their counterparts. The report not only addresses these challenges but also presents solutions to some of the problems it brought to light.

Given the subject matter of this report, when it was brought to the attention of *The Modern American*, it sparked significant discussion. However, though the focus began with the experience of minority women, we soon found ourselves discussing the challenges faced by any person who finds that they identify with multiple minority groups. As a direct result of that conversation and our own attempts to push the boundaries of the issue, our second annual spring symposium is entitled: *Retaining the Two-fers: The Opportunities and Limitations Facing Those Within the Legal Field Who Identify with Multiple Minority Groups*. Our goal is to present stimulating discussion of the topic, featuring a panel of accomplished persons in the legal field who can speak to the issue based on their own experiences and observations. Given that many of our subscribers and readers are employees of or are soon to be employees of law firms and other legal institution, we think it is especially important that you join us for this unique discussion. We hope that you will not only enjoy discussion of such a

timely and important issue, but that you will also take the tools that you learn from our talk back to your respective places of employment, institutions of learning, and daily life.

As evidenced by events like our symposium, we are pleased to say that *The Modern American* continues to be dedicated to our goal of providing our readers with a forum for frank, yet healthy discourse of the issues facing America's minority groups. As has become our custom at this time, we would like to take a few moments to inform you of our recent accomplishments. First, as of last semester, you can now find *The Modern American* on [v.lex.us](http://v.lex.us), a new online international legal database.

Additionally, as mentioned in prior issues, we are working hard to make our decision to provide a third, summer issue of *The Modern American* a reality. Therefore, we are pleased to announce that this year's summer issue will be the result of the collaborative efforts of *The Modern American* and the WCL chapter of the Latino/a Law Student Association (LaLSA). The summer 2007 issue will commemorate the recently held *Tenth Annual Hispanic Law Conference – The Voice of the Latino/a Lawyer: Accomplishment and Challenges*. Like the topic suggests, the issue will feature articles and other written works pertaining to the legal issues relating to the experiences of the Latino/a attorney and community as a whole. If you have any interest in being a part of this ground-breaking issue, please see our submission guidelines. We strongly encourage you to submit your piece for what will surely be a stimulating issue.

In summation, we would like to extend a warm thank you, first, to our staff who truly exhibit admirable levels of dedication to the mission of *The Modern American*. We would also like to thank our ever-expanding board of advisors. Their diligent advice and words of encouragement continue to inspire us and stay our focus.

Sincerely,  
The Executive Board  
*The Modern American*

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