

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

As the lines separating race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation move closer together; and as everyone it seems has adopted their own notions concerning diversity, what it means, or the lack thereof, it is easy to be lulled into thinking that we have said and done all that we can regarding the topic. However, one can quickly discover just how premature this way of thinking is by clicking to the website of your preferred news source or picking up a newspaper – national or local. Everywhere you turn, you can see old diversity issues masquerading as new ones, previously ignored facets of diversity resurfacing, truly novel diversity problems emerging, and diversity issues finally finding solutions.

In fact, it seems that in the past year, diversity issues have particularly found themselves in the spotlight of American culture. From the Jena 6 protests in Louisiana, to the resurgence of noose incidents around the country, to the broad spectrum of presidential candidates, and the adoption of anti-immigrant ordinances across the nation, issues relating to underrepresented people have been a reoccurring theme in our country. Thus, despite what some may think, and if the past is any indication, American discourse surrounding diversity is anything but over.

Even the sometimes isolated environment of a law school reflects the nature of the larger conversation regarding diversity taking place in the nation today. One particular incident at WCL embodies this reality. Recently, the Immigration Rights Coalition (“IRC”) at the school hosted a lunch-time panel on day laborers and day labor activists. To publicize the event, the group hung signs around the school. Later, signs placed in the elevators were defaced when the words “Undocumented Day Laborers” were crossed out and replaced with “Illegal Aliens.” As the IRC and other diversity organizations have petitioned the administration for an opportunity to address the incident at a town-hall style meeting, it is important for us to also realize that

incidences like these are exactly why a publication like *The Modern American* is so important. For it is by fostering meaningful dialogues in forums such as this publication that we as a legal community and society can dissect the complexities of diversity issues and find workable solutions.

This is also why, as a publication, *The Modern American* proudly continues to bring you quality articles and other writings on topics related to diversity and the law. The Special Summer/Fall 2007 Issue that you will find on the next few pages is no different. In fact, we are pleased to provide an expanded issue that discusses topics ranging from equal treatment in athletic scheduling, to the application of anti-discrimination laws to ocean vessels. This issue also contains a special insert of articles commemorating the Tenth Annual Hispanic Law Conference. This year’s conference, entitled *The Voice of the Latino/a Lawyer: Accomplishments and Challenges*, took place on March 9, 2007. Given the conference theme, the articles in this issue commemorating the event come from some of the brightest scholarly and legal minds in the Latino community. As always, *The Modern American* is proud to do our part by providing a forum for these authors.

Finally, at *The Modern American*, we are undergoing a season of transition following the appointment of the new Executive Board. Therefore, those of us who have gone before would like to wish the newest leaders of this publication the best. We know they will preserve the vision of *The Modern American* and will be proud to continue the work that we have been so privileged to perform. To our readers, we thank you for the opportunity to have brought you issues in the past year that have stimulated your minds and furthered the overall discussion of diversity and the law.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed making it!

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