



Greater Washington Area Chapter

A Legacy of Service. A Promise of Justice.

President, Melanie Bates *President-Elect, Brandes Ash* *Treasurer, LaKeeshia Fox*
Financial Secretary, Esther Coleman *Corresponding Secretary, Rashida Sims* *Recording Secretary, Christina Butler*
Acting Historian, Alicia McNeal

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Rozenia Cummings, Vice President of Regions & Affiliates
National Bar Association

FR: Melanie Bates, President
Greater Washington Area Chapter, Women Lawyers Division, National Bar Association

Alicia McNeal, Historian
Greater Washington Area Chapter, Women Lawyers Division, National Bar Association

RE: 2014-2015 GWAC Bar Year Activities and Achievements

DT: Sunday, June 14, 2015

Why GWAC Should Receive a 2015 Affiliate Award

GWAC is an ideal candidate for a 2015 Affiliate Award. GWAC has facilitated numerous activities and initiatives in support of the NBA's strategic planning goals. GWAC has worked consistently to advance the NBA's legislative agenda through comprehensive educational programs, engaging in voter protection, fighting for judicial equality, and participating in Know Your Rights town halls, among many other things.

With a financial membership of over 154 persons, GWAC is the premier bar association in the District of Columbia for Black women attorneys. Moreover, GWAC has been featured in various Vice President Regions & Affiliates News Briefs for its outstanding work. The GWAC President serves of the NBA Board of Governors. GWAC therefore prides itself in its immense involvement and collaboration with the NBA. Pursuant to the foregoing, GWAC should indisputably receive a 2015 Affiliate Award.

This memorandum highlights the notable 2014-2015 GWAC bar year activities and achievements. Please visit <http://gwacbar.org/blog.php> to learn more.

August

President Advisory Council. On August 11, 2014, GWAC passed an amendment to its bylaws to establish a Past President Advisory Council. The Council serves as an expert resource and provides support, guidance, and assistance to GWAC as needed.

Meeting of the Minds. On August 20, 2014, GWAC co-sponsored a “Meeting of the Minds” panel discussion with the Catalyst Network Foundation. Topics discussed included: bridging the color divide in technology, ensuring that America's technology industry looks like America, and the role of minority professional associations.

Annual Retreat. On August 23, 2014, GWAC kicked off the bar year with its Annual Retreat. The annual retreats provide a great introduction to GWAC and allows both new and old members to fellowship and develop a personal stake in the success of GWAC. The retreat was widely attended by new members eager to become involved and help shape the future of the organization.

Know Your Rights. Region XII held an informative and engaging panel discussion, “Know Your Rights (When Dealing with the Police) - Facilitating Awareness, Action, & Advocacy for Justice,” at Shiloh Baptist Church on August 23, 2014.

September

Installation Ceremony. On September 11, 2014, GWAC held an installation ceremony for the 2014-2015 Executive Board. Administered by the Honorable Fern Flanagan Saddler, GWAC gathered to celebrate the incoming Officers. GWAC membership elected the following members to serve on the Executive Board: 1) Melanie Bates, President; 2) Brandes Ash, President-Elect; 3) LaKeeshia Fox, Treasurer; 4) Esther Coleman, Financial Secretary; 5) Christina Butler, Recording Secretary; and 6) Rashida Sims, Corresponding Secretary.

Constitution Day. On September 17, 2014, GWAC, in conjunction with the National Bar Association, celebrated Constitution Day by teaching courses at local schools. Volunteers taught students about the Constitution and its significance by presenting a 40-minute lesson focused on the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and how it brought to fruition the promises embodied in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments.

Region XII BBQ. On September 20, 2014, GWAC fellowshiped with members of the Washington Bar Association (WBA) at the Annual NBA Region XII BBQ. Region XII came together to connect and celebrate both the end of summer and the beginning of the new bar year. Led by newly installed President Melanie Bates, both the Executive Board, and the galvanized membership set out to make this bar year one our founders would be proud of.

October

Sistas in the Law. One of the most important GWAC initiatives is forging meaningful relationships with members of the local legal community, especially connecting our trailblazing women attorneys with women law students. On October 16, 2014, GWAC hosted, “Sistas in the Law: A Networking Mixer and Happy Hour,” to achieve this objective. Local law students, as well as young attorneys met to fellowship over refreshments.

General Body Meeting. As a legal advocate, it is imperative that you give back to your community. Part of that service is manifested in Pro Bono work. On October 20, 2014, GWAC's General Body Meeting focused on

National Pro Bono Week. This meeting provided information about opportunities for pro bono work, as well as the need for service from the members.

40th Anniversary Tea. On October 26, 2014, GWAC celebrated its 40th year anniversary. GWAC highlighted 40 years of changing the face of the legal profession and shaping the way the women lawyers are both perceived and impacting the profession. The Tea brought together both new and seasoned members to celebrate our illustrious organization, as well as the phenomenal women who have run it.

Mock Interview Workshop. Interviewing is an art that takes both guidance and practice to perfect. On October 29, 2014, GWAC extended its mock interview workshop to the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. GWAC members offered help and guidance to law students as they prepared to interview for summer internships.

Brown Bag. On October 30, 2014, GWAC hosted its monthly Law Firm and Corporate Committee Brown Bag Lunch Series. This month's series was entitled, "The 3 Networks Every Lawyer Should Have." The program discussed the role your personal, operational, and strategic networks play in your overall success as an attorney. With a focus on the importance of networks, this series focused on the different networks in the life of an attorney that need to be both cultivated and optimized.

November

Election Day. On November 4, 2014, GWAC announced opportunities for Washington, DC attorneys to volunteer on Election Day. Attorneys were offered with opportunities to volunteer in one of the many Election Day call centers.

General Body Meeting. On November 17, 2014, GWAC hosted its monthly General Body Meeting. This meeting focused on supporting our incarcerated youth. Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop uses books, creative writing, and peer support to awaken DC youth incarcerated as adults to their own potential. Through creative expression, job readiness training, and violence prevention outreach, these young poets achieve their education and career goals, and become powerful voices for change in the community.

Brown Bag. On November 20, 2014, GWAC hosted its monthly Law Firm and Corporate Committee Brown Bag Lunch Series. This month was entitled, "The Key to thriving as an Attorney." Panelists included: The Honorable Charles Day, Federal Magistrate Judge; United States District Court for the District of Maryland; Ashley James, Associate, Kirkland & Ellis LLP; Danielle Conley, Partner, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP; and Adrienne Gurley, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia.

December

Vision Board Party. On December 3, 2014, GWAC hosted a Vision Board Party to ensure that the members of GWAC and invited guests kicked off 2015 with a strategic plan. Members were encouraged to take the first step to manifest their dreams and aspirations by associating tangible images to their vision. The boards represented both immediate goals, as well as future aspirations.

Meeting of the Minds. On December 10, 2014, GWAC co-sponsored a "Meeting of the Minds" panel discussion with the Catalyst Network Foundation. The discussion focused on creating meaningful change. The event highlighted the tools for change that exist outside of the ballot box within the black and brown community.

Bingo at Washington Center for Aging Services. On December 13, 2014, GWAC celebrated the holidays by playing bingo with the residents of Washington Center for Aging Services. The experience allowed members to interact and learn from the elder residents of Washington, DC.

General Body Meeting. On December 15, 2014, GWAC hosted a holiday party and Ugly Sweater Contest. Members fellowshiped over refreshments, games, and competition of the ugliest holiday sweater.

January

Mock Interview Workshop. On January 16, 2015, GWAC conducted its annual Mock Interviews at Howard University School of Law. Members of the organization offered help and guidance to law students as they prepared to interview for summer internships.

MLK Day of Service. On January 17, 2015, GWAC, in conjunction with IMPACT DC, worked to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend of Service. Since the dedication of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, DC, IMPACT DC has hosted a service event at the Memorial on the Saturday before the MLK Holiday.

Bingo at Washington Center for Aging Services. On January 24, 2015, GWAC played bingo with the residents of Washington Center for Aging Services. The experience allowed members to interact and learn from the elder residents of Washington, DC.

February

Brown Bag. On February 5, 2015, GWAC hosted its monthly Law Firm and Corporate Committee Brown Bag Lunch Series. This series was entitled, “Stay or Go: Determining How to When to Make a Transition to Another Firm/Office.” Panelists included: Charlie Bingham, Attorney, Microsoft Corporation; Danielle Davis, Associate, Mehri & Skalet, PLLC; Stacey Sublett, Associate, Beveridge & Diamond P.C.; and Harold Bulger, III, Associate, White & Case LLP.

Career Fair. On February 21, 2015, GWAC, in conjunction with the WBA, hosted the 12th Annual Career Fair at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. Attendees had the opportunity receive resume critiques, mock interviews, and employment opportunities.

Charlotte E. Ray. On February 25, 2015, GWAC hosted the 27th Annual Presentation of the Charlotte E. Ray Award, honoring Kirra L. Jarratt. Since 1989, GWAC and the GWAC Foundation, Inc. have recognized an outstanding African-American woman from our local bar in honor of Charlotte E. Ray, the first woman admitted to practice in the District of Columbia and the first African-American woman certified as a lawyer in the United States. In keeping with the GWAC mission and the trailblazing spirit of Charlotte E. Ray, honorees demonstrate a strong commitment to community involvement, mentorship, advocacy, and excellence in the Washington, DC community.

March

General Body Meeting. On March 16, 2015, GWAC held its monthly General Body Meeting with a focus on Resume building. As members evolve and grow in the legal community, it is important that their resume evolve and grow accordingly. The workshop provided the opportunity for attendees to receive assistance from different subject matter experts in multiple practice areas.

Bingo at Washington Center for Aging Services. On March 28, 2015, GWAC played bingo with the residents of Washington Center for Aging Services. The experience allowed members to interact and learn from the elder residents of Washington, DC.

April

Annual Auction. On April 10, 2015, GWAC and GWAC Foundation hosted its Annual Auction. This annual event includes both silent and live auction platforms to raise money to fund the Legal Intern Placement Program and other charitable activities.

Pink Party. On April 20, 2015, GWAC hosted its inaugural Pink Party. The Pink Party provided the space for an intimate conversation about breast cancer awareness and prevention. The program featured brief presentations from the medical community as well as candid testimonials from GWAC members and others who courageously won the battle against breast cancer.

May

Race for the Cure. On May 9, 2015, Team GWAC participated in the annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. GWAC started a team because it is the best way to experience one of the best races in the area. On Race Day, it was a powerful sight when teams from every neighborhood in the Washington, D.C. Metro area gathered before the start near the Washington Monument.

Past Presidents Brunch. On May 16, 2015, GWAC hosted a Past Presidents brunch at the GWAC Foundation condominium. Past Presidents of GWAC shared their thoughts and reflections about their presidency and its impact on the organization. The brunch provided an opportunity for the leadership of GWAC to learn about the trailblazing efforts that created and sustained the organization.

General Body Meeting. On May 18, 2015, GWAC hosted its monthly General Body Meeting. The meeting featured a panel discussion about building your brand outside of the office. Panelists included: Dionna Maria Lewis, Associate, The Fay Law Group PLLC; Onika Williams, Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Department of Transportation's Surface Transportation Board; and Meredith Graves, Past President and Senior Analyst at the U.S. Government Accountability Office. The panel highlighted the many opportunities outside of the practice of law that contribute to a person's brand, including community service and mentoring.

Brown Bag. On May 20, 2015, GWAC hosted its monthly Law Firm and Corporate Committee Brown Bag Lunch Series. This month's Series was entitled, "Networking as a Way of LIFE." Panelists included: Brittany E. Hamelers, Counsel, SEC Division of Enforcement; Will Wilder, Senior Associate, Groom Law Group and Immediate Past Chair, National Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division; Rohith Parasuraman, Associate, Latham & Watkins; and Jonathan Barnes, Associate, Armstrong, Donohue, Ceppos, Vaughan & Rhoades.

Bingo at Washington Center for Aging Services. On May 23, 2015, GWAC played bingo with the residents of Washington Center for Aging Services. The experience allowed members to interact and learn from the elder residents of Washington, DC.

Judicial Reception. On May 27, 2015, GWAC held its Annual Judicial Reception at BuckleySandler LLP. Each spring, GWAC recognizes the accomplishments of the women who serve as judges in the local and federal courts of the District of Columbia. This year, Judge Tanya Chutkan was the featured guest.

June

Bingo at Washington Center for Aging Services. On June 13, 2015, GWAC played bingo with the residents of Washington Center for Aging Services. The experience allowed members to interact and learn from the elder residents of Washington, DC. After bingo, GWAC enjoyed serving lunch and providing entertainment to the residents.

General Body Meeting (Annual Meeting). On June 15, 2015, GWAC will hold its final General Body Meeting (Annual Meeting) for the bar year. During the meeting, members will elect leadership for the 2015-2016 bar year. Members will also reflect on this year's accomplishments. The 2014-2015 bar year has been led by a phenomenal group of women who are both leaders and role models in their profession as well as within the organization.

Region XII Golf Outing. On June 18, 2015, Region XII will end its year the same way it started, together. GWAC, WBA, and Sigma Delta Tau will come together for an all-inclusive golf outing. The event will promote fellowship amongst the organizations, as well as the opportunity to enjoy a night of golfing.