



Judge Scott M. Bernstein, Chair
Florida Supreme Court Standing Committee on Fairness and Diversity
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*Florida Supreme Court Standing
 Committee on Fairness and
 Diversity*

2012-2014 Term

The Honorable Scott M. Bernstein, Chair

The Honorable James E.C. Perry,
 Supreme Court Liaison to the Standing
 Committee

The Honorable Peter F. Estrada, Circuit
 Court Judge

The Honorable Kevin Blazs, Circuit Court
 Judge

The Honorable Ken Burke, Pinellas
 County Clerk of Courts

The Honorable Gill S. Freeman, Circuit
 Court Judge

The Honorable Alicia Latimore, Circuit
 Court Judge

Ms. Pamela Guerrier, Attorney at Law

The Honorable S. Sue Robbins, Circuit
 Court Judge

Ms. Michelle Ku, Attorney at Law

Ms. Raquel Matas, Attorney at Law

The Honorable Errol H. Powell,
 Administrative Law Judge

Ms. Monica J. Williams, Attorney at Law

Mr. Larry Wang, Attorney at Law

Mr. Alan Lopez Perez, Attorney at Law

The Honorable Marva Crenshaw,
 Appellate Court Judge

The Honorable Claudia Isom, Circuit
 Court Judge

The Honorable Walter M. Green, County
 Court Judge

Ms. Shelia Sims, Senior Deputy Trial
 Court Administrator

Ms. Vivian de las Cuevas -Diaz, Attorney
 at Law

Ms. Linda Calvert Hanson, Director, The
 Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism

The Standing Committee on Fairness and Diversity was established by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida to help advance the State Courts System’s efforts to eliminate from court operations bias based on race, gender, ethnicity, age, disability, socioeconomic status, or any characteristic that is without legal relevance.

The Florida State Courts System continues to make enormous strides on matters of fairness and diversity. Among the initiatives carried out by the Standing Committee are:

- **Court Accessibility Initiative:** This multi-year project included conducting updated self-evaluations of all court facilities. The final report on this initiative is entitled, *Access to the Florida Courts: Identifying and Eliminating Architectural Barriers*.
- **Diversity Training:** In concert with the Florida Court Education Council, the Standing Committee developed clearly stated statewide goals and learning objectives for the diversity training program, and this training initiative continues today.
- **Diversity of Staff Attorneys and Law Clerks:** A Law Clerk

Applicant Database was developed and implemented. The database serves as an automated repository by storing law clerk and staff attorney candidates' résumés and allows judges and court managers to review résumés electronically, and contact those candidates they are interested in interviewing.

- **Perception of Disparate Treatment in Florida Courts:** The Standing Committee conducted public forums, commissioned surveys from lawyers, judges, litigants and jurors, and heard extensive evidence to document perceptions of bias in the court system. Findings were published in a lengthy report, entitled *Perceptions of Fairness in the Florida Court System*. This report, as well as information on current and past work of the Standing Committee on Fairness and Diversity, can be found on our web site at: http://www.flcourts.org/gen_public/family/diversity/index.shtml.

In part, the Standing Committee on Fairness and Diversity was tasked with, and has accomplished the following during its current term, effective July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014:

1. Identify and explore strategies that chief judges of the trial and appellate courts could use to promote and encourage diversity in the administration of justice.
2. Continue its efforts to build partnerships and collaborations with The Florida Bar Commission on Professionalism, local bar associations, community organizations, and Florida law schools for the purpose of advancing fairness and diversity initiatives within the legal profession; and,
3. Develop recommendations, for consideration by the Supreme Court, relating to the reassessment of perceptions of disparate treatment in the Florida court system.