



HansonBridgett

Diversity and Inclusion Network

The Din

Published by the Hanson Bridgett Diversity & Inclusion Network

OUR COMMITMENT

We are dedicated to establishing a workforce that reflects the needs and interests of our clients and a work environment that provides opportunities for people with varied backgrounds. Our commitment begins with the law schools where we seek to recruit diverse candidates and support the needs of minority students.

Welcome Statement from Committee Chair



Hanson Bridgett's Diversity & Inclusion Network is excited to present the "Hanson Bridgett Din." A "Din" is an act that makes a loud noise, and that is what we hope to achieve with the content of this publication—we want to contribute

to the dialogue about issues pertaining to diversity in the legal profession, inform and inspire decision makers to take action, and be a catalyst for the change we hope to see.

In this inaugural issue we are proud to feature leaders such as John Page, General Counsel of Golden State Foods Corporation. Our firm has a longstanding relationship with the National Bar Association and we look forward to working with John as he ascends to lead that organization.

We are equally excited to profile our most recent Gerald Marcus Scholarship Fellow, Anthony Bestafka-Cruz. Hanson Bridgett attorneys are passionate about helping young and diverse leaders like Anthony succeed.

The DIN is also a platform to promote organizations with whom we partner. One organization we are proud to continue partnering with is the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD). Our membership in LCLD enables us to promote our mission at every level—empowering diverse law students

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entering the profession, developing diverse junior attorneys and young partners into industry, and realizing institutional change by engaging the leaders of top law firms and corporate legal departments.

We were fortunate enough to be awarded the 2011 Diversity Award from the State Bar of California for our long-term, sustained accomplishments toward increasing diversity in the legal profession. We will continue to do our part to promote diversity and inclusion in our chosen profession.

Thank you for subscribing to our publication. **Browse our website for the latest updates on our Diversity & Inclusion Network's efforts.** 

Sincerely,

- John Cu, Chair, Hanson Bridgett Diversity & Inclusion Network

Feature Story: Interview of National Bar Association President-Elect, John Page

Meet John Page

John Page is General Counsel for the Golden State Foods Corporation. Last Fall, John became the President-Elect for the National Bar Association. Founded in 1925, the National Bar Association is the nation's oldest and largest association of predominantly African American lawyers and judges. Hanson Bridgett attorneys interviewed John Page to learn about his career path, current practice, and insight on diversity in the legal profession.

Hanson Bridgett (HB): *Did you always intend to go in-house?*

John Page (JP): After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, I first worked at a law firm doing real estate transactional work. When the market for real estate legal work took a downturn in the 1990s, I made the switch to commercial litigation practice. However, I found I still had a desire to do transactional work. Going in-house was the way to combine my transactional and litigation practices. After eight years at firms, I went in-house at Lucent Technologies where I worked in a support division that eventually spun-off and became another company—Avaya. I was motivated to go in-house because of the opportunities I saw for growth in leading companies. My move happened during a period when legal departments were growing and there was a change in perception in the legal profession; a change that started to view in-house counsel as attorneys with the capacity to make changes regarding diversity in the profession.

HB: *As General Counsel, what do you do?*

JP: My work is a blend of transactional work and litigation. On the one hand, I need to address adversarial matters such as employment disputes, contract disputes, and things of that sort. On the other hand, my overall role as General Counsel is supporting the business as a legal function. My day-to-day work tends to have more emphasis on helping the company meet its strategic business goals.

HB: *Do you have any advice for young attorneys interested in an in-house career?*

JP: First, if I could do it all over again, I would do more research to understand the entire legal landscape. It is important to know the many options out there for attorneys including not just the Fortune 500 companies, but also the small to mid-size companies, privately held companies, foreign companies, companies based in small to mid-sized markets, and learning industries; it also includes government work, academia, and policy work, in addition to big law. Second, young attorneys should take time to assess the “Where” and the “Why.” What I mean by that is: Where—Identifying where you have developed expertise and what skills you bring to the table. Why—Taking the time to reflect and understand why you want to apply your talents at a particular company. This goes back to knowing the landscape and having an understanding of what companies align with your expertise, skills, and values.

HB: *What challenges do General Counsel face in their work?*

JP: The role of a General Counsel is to know how to steer the reins of the company. The key is having the ability to do work efficiently and with a company whose business you have a genuine desire to learn. An ongoing challenge any GC faces is integrating the legal functions with business decisions from the onset.

HB: *What do you seek in attorneys you hire for outside counsel?*

JP: I look for lawyers who are well versed and adept at understanding all aspects of the business they represent. Lawyers who understand how our company's people are affected by the legal issues that surface, how the company makes money, and how we lose money. I want to retain counsel who are committed to being fully engaged in our business.

HB: *What role does diversity play when you choose to retain outside counsel?*



JP: A law firm's commitment to diversity is a big factor in my decision to hire outside counsel. It is important for my company to work with people at good law firms whose values regarding diversity align with ours. The focus of in-house counsel [regarding diversity] needs to be on the engine that runs the law firms we retain. Not simply looking at the number of minority associates and partners at a firm, but also on how many of its partners from ethnic minority groups are in positions of influence— equity partners, promotion and recruitment committee membership, and other important decision making roles.

HB: *What role do you think in-house counsel play in improving diversity in the legal profession?*

JP: The responsibility to do something to increase the number of minority partners at law firms is shared. The law firms need to commit to showcasing their talented attorneys and in-house counsel also have an obligation to go out and find new talent that is out there. In short, we need to affect the enterprise of law firms, not merely track numbers. The reports and initiatives on diversity over the past 20 years have played a pivotal role in advancing the dialogue on these issues and sustaining the number of minority attorneys in the profession, but we need more growth.

HB: *How do we resolve the problem of the dearth of minority partners in major law firms?*

JP: Resolving the issue requires having people involved at every level of the spectrum. On the one hand we need to confront the barriers to access and empower more minorities to get their foot in the door. But, growing the pipeline is a long-term endeavor, and I feel we also need to think outside that box to consider who else we might be missing. We need to find innovative ways to engage minority accountants, engineers, math teachers, and other professionals who could potentially do well in law school and join the legal profession. We need a critical mass of minority attorneys to solve this issue. Of course there are obstacles to achieving this, but obstacles are only the things that happen when you take your eyes off the prize.

HB: *What are your priorities for your upcoming leadership term with the National Bar Association (NBA)?*

JP: Growth for the purpose of bringing people together for a common purpose; and that purpose is harnessing human capital—growing intellectual capital, growing our voice and level of influence, growing the pipeline, growing the professionalism. Our mission is improving people for the benefit of the profession, and improving the profession for the benefit of all people. Additionally, I have a goal for every American 250 Law Firm to pay the yearly NBA membership dues for all its African American attorneys, and other attorneys who want to become members. This is a challenge to the leadership of major American law firms, in particular to management and diversity directors, to commit their resources to helping advance diversity and help drive the solution to the problems we have discussed.

A dedicated family man, John resides in Southern California (Orange County) with his wife, Michele, and sons Brandon, Isaiah and Joshua. Together, they enjoy playing basketball, football and dancing.

Our People: Profile of Anthony Bestafka-Cruz, 2L UC Berkeley School of Law

Meet Anthony Bestafka-Cruz

Anthony Bestafka-Cruz is a second-year law student at the University of California Berkeley School of Law. Anthony serves as the Co-Chair for the Berkeley La Raza Law Students Association. The Berkeley La Raza Law Students Association develops and enacts projects that provide opportunities for its members to develop their leadership abilities and to serve local Latina/o communities, such as the Fruitvale District in Oakland, California. Hanson Bridgett attorneys interviewed Anthony to learn about his path to law school, experience in law school thus far, and his insight on diversity in the legal profession.

Hanson Bridgett (HB): Tell us about your background.



Anthony Bestafka-Cruz (ABC): I was born in Los Angeles, California and raised in Kansas City, Missouri. My childhood was spent in the Midwest, but I came back to California for college and stayed here for law school.

HB: Tell us about your education and experiences during your undergraduate career. What experiences do you feel defined your college experience?

ABC: I attended Stanford University. I was a student activist and leader at Stanford; and was very involved in the labor action coalition, which is a group that fights to improve conditions for workers on the campus. My activism fed into student leadership. I was appointed by the student government to lead the University's Diversity and Tolerance Initiatives for two years. In this capacity I worked with campus community centers, student organizations, and community-based organizations on the university's pipeline initiatives and projects aimed at promoting cultural awareness. Our purpose was to get persons from impoverished backgrounds into college generally, and Stanford University in particular. Stanford has great diversity in its undergraduate class, but there is a big drop off at the graduate student level, so this is something we sought to address. I worked on university policies that developed pipeline outreach programs that assisted undergraduates from underrepresented backgrounds prepare for careers in academia, in addition to other professional degree programs.

HB: What motivated you to come to law school?

ABC: This might sound like a cliché, but I knew since I was young that going to law school was in my future. I grew up in Missouri during the waning years of desegregation when busing programs were still in effect. So, growing up I was conscious that education was the key to uplifting community—and becoming an attorney would help me fulfill my desire to give back, be a role model, and make a change in my community.

HB: What type of work did you do this past summer?

ABC: I spent this past summer working for the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. I worked in the chambers of the President—who is the Presiding Judge—on issues related to war crimes and genocide charges.

HB: What are your priorities for your current leadership term with the Berkeley La Raza Student Association?

ABC: My priorities are aligned with the Raza Association's Mission statement and that is...“the Association seeks to empower Latina/o students; by studying law with *conocimiento*, we learn how to shape the law to enhance our diverse communities' cultural, economic, political, social, and spiritual vitality.” I identify strongly with our organization's purpose to have a consciousness of the common struggles of where we [as Latino/as] came from and what we need to do to uplift our communities.

Our mission statement intimately ties into [diversity] pipeline initiatives. Identity communities, such as La Raza, foster peer mentoring with cultural background in order to assist students with succeeding during law school. Our groups are the blood and soul of the movement to realizing the goals set out in diversity initiatives. When I came to law school I wanted to be somewhere where there was a strong feeling of community. As a first-year student I benefited from the resources the Raza Association provided and now as I advance I am able to give back to the students who are just entering—it is a beautiful cycle and network of support built here. We realize that we have to put our time and energy back into the system because it benefits the community at every level.

HB: What types of programs will you be involved with organizing in the upcoming year?

ABC: Our goal is strengthening our existing programs. One is the Cruz Reynoso Social Justice and Judicial Fellowship program. Our numbers of students have increased at the law school, so we need to continue helping fund the professional ambitions they come into law school with. Given the economic climate we know we have our work cut out for us to continue fundraising successfully, and are committed to it. Another program is the Workers' Rights Clinic—here we'll be focusing on improving the delivery of services provided to the community. Also, regarding the diversity pipeline—we want to keep focusing on ways to help students of color adjust to law school by providing academic support for our peers. We care about our members, so beyond test preparation we believe that the personal peer



support we foster is important for retention of the Latino/a students who get in. Finally, we are looking at ways of strengthening our mentoring opportunities between law students, undergrads, and professionals.

True to his Midwest roots, Anthony enjoys visiting barbecue restaurants in the Bay Area. He remains loyal to his undergraduate alma mater, Stanford, for college sports and is also an avid Kansas City Chiefs fan.

Anthony is a current recipient of Hanson Bridgett's Gerald Marcus Fellowship. The fellowship honors Mr. Marcus, one of the law firm's founding partners, and his contributions over the last 50 years to the promotion of diversity in the legal field.

Career Development: Interview Workshop

Hanson Bridgett 1L Interview Workshop

On November 5, 2011 we sponsored our 9th Annual Interview Workshop for first-year law students. The program is a key part of our diversity pipeline program and targets students affiliated with minority law student organizations at local schools. This year's Workshop was the largest ever—115 law students from Golden Gate University, UC Hastings, Stanford, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, and the University of San Francisco participated in the program.

The Workshop included a seminar presented by Hanson Bridgett Partner Mike Moye on interviewing skills and preparation for interviews and practice interviews. Following the seminar each student had at least two practice interviews with attorneys. More than 50 attorneys, including 25 attorneys from several corporate legal departments, government agencies, bar associations, and other law firms volunteered their time to conduct practice interviews with the law students. The program concluded with a networking lunch for all the student and attorney participants.

Student Testimonials:

"The Interview Workshop taught me how to showcase professionalism, common sense, and a desire to learn. Mike Moye explained how the interview starts the moment you enter the building and the kind of preparation needed to impress prospective employers in this job market. Both of my interviewers gave me candid feedback on how to highlight and relate my prior work experiences as a retail meat cutter and oral historian to the practice of law. I left this workshop armed with inspiring anecdotes, practical advice, a helpful interviewing manual, and most importantly, a strong belief that I will be ready for my next job interview!"

Everardo Mora, J.D. Candidate, 2014, University of San Francisco School of Law

"The Interview Workshop far exceeded my expectations. Not only did I receive resume and interview feedback that will help me land a job, but I also connected with attorneys who ranged from first-year associates and partners, to in-house counsel at Fortune 100 companies. In addition, I met First-Year Law Students from other Bay Area law schools, and we were able to share experiences. I appreciate this workshop because it taught me the practical aspects of interviewing and networking that are not taught in law school."

Sherry Patterson, J.D. Candidate, 2014, UC Hastings College of the Law

Leadership: LCLD Program

Leadership Council on Legal Diversity

The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) was formed in 2009 to advance diversity in the legal profession. It is an organization of corporate chief legal officers and law firm managing partners dedicated to a truly diverse profession. Our firm shares LCLD's belief that for the profession of the law to prosper, it is necessary to hire, engage, retain, and promote the best talent; and a critical component of having the best talent is having diverse talent.



Hanson Bridgett attorneys are currently participating in LCLD's Success in Law School Subcommittee Mentoring Program. The primary objective of this program is to ensure that minority students who are accepted into law school receive the mentoring and preparation they need to maximize their potential.

We are proud that, in addition to having six of our attorneys act as mentors, we are coordinating the development of the San Francisco chapter's program.

We are also participating in the 1L LCLD Scholars Program. This program gives law students from diverse backgrounds

the opportunity to work side-by-side with attorneys and other legal specialists in our member organizations on legal issues. Our firm welcomes this opportunity to foster opportunities for these future attorneys from diverse backgrounds to learn about our firm culture and practice areas.

Hanson Bridgett in Action



Mike Moyer with Susan W. Bateson, Alameda County Food Bank Executive Director and Congresswoman Barbara Lee



Hanson Bridgett DIN committee members



David Abella and Danielle Hinton with California Attorney General Kamala Harris

