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H. Thomas Wells Jr.

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"TOMMY"

HOWARD VOGEL

**It is a pleasure and an honor to be
with you here this morning. Thank you,
Charla Long, Allan Ramsaur, the
Lipscomb University Center for Law,
Justice & Society, and the Tennessee Bar
Association for organizing this event. And
I especially thank all of you for attending
and participating in our important
dialogue this morning.**

MARCIE
EASON

**At this early point in my year as ABA
President-Elect, I am gathering
information to solidify and fine-tune the
areas we will focus on during my
leadership year—the legal profession's
common core values. Later today, as part
of my visit here in Nashville, some of us
will be discussing the profession's
common core values of access to justice,
independence of the bar and the**

**judiciary, and rule of law. But now, I'm
glad we have the opportunity to delve
deeply into a crucial core value of the
legal profession: promoting diversity in
our ranks.**

**Every time a gifted person of color
faces systemic barriers to entering law
school, passing the bar, or advancing in
our profession, it's not just a *lack of
opportunity* for that person – it's a *lost***

***opportunity* for all lawyers as we strive to
serve a diverse society.**

**I came here to listen, to learn, and to
encourage you in your efforts. It's
especially gratifying to see such a broad
representation of the legal community
and other stakeholders here.**

**For the next few minutes, I'd like to
start our discussion by sharing with you**

some of the ways the ABA is working on diversity pipeline issues.

For more than 20 years, one of ABA's operating principles has been to promote full and equal participation in the legal profession by traditionally underrepresented groups, including people of color. There are enormous reserves of talent and creativity and energy and strength in our diverse

communities, with riches that can only improve and enhance the law and our service to the public.

The ABA has long recognized that a diverse profession cannot, and will not, exist without sufficient diversity at all points along the educational pipeline.

Next year, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the ABA's founding of a premier national pipeline institution: the

Council on Legal Education

Opportunity—known by its acronym

CLEO.

CLEO extends the pipeline to the legal profession by providing training and workshops for minority college students who want to attend law school and pursue a legal career.

Recognizing that the pipeline to the profession continues into law school itself,

**CLEO offers placement assistance,
academic support and counseling,
financial assistance, bar prep classes, and
online tutoring programs for law
students. CLEO also conducts weekend
seminars and workshops that describe the
need for legal services to low-income
communities and encourage law students
to provide these services as lawyers.**

For now, CLEO serves the college and law school points on the pipeline, but the ABA is working to expand the program's reach farther down the pipeline, at least to high schools. AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Interestingly, in all my years and various leadership positions in the ABA, the only congressional testimony I've ever given was related to CLEO, requesting a subcommittee of the House

Appropriations Committee to increase funding for the Thurgood Marshall Legal Education Opportunity Program. At that time I was serving as Chair of the ABA's House of Delegates, and was honored to have been asked to present this testimony by then ABA President Dennis Archer, the first African-American president of the ABA.

More recently, the ABA has continued its pipeline activities with support from the Office of the President. Our Presidential Advisory Council on Diversity, working with the Law School Admission Council, sponsored a major conference titled "Collaborating to Expand the Pipeline." Since this national multidisciplinary event was held in 2005, the Advisory Council and its partners

-LSAT-

have produced a substantive pipeline diversity report and held several regional conferences. You can find this report and other pipeline resources by visiting the ABA's web site at www.abanet.org/diversity and clicking on the link to the Presidential Advisory Council.

Working closely with the Law School Admissions Council, we also developed

the online pipeline diversity directory—a

searchable database of initiatives from

across the country that encourage and

equip diverse students to pursue legal

careers. If you haven't already done so, I

look at programs listed as to →
invite you to enter any pipeline programs

you are aware of into the directory. You

can easily submit your entry online. It's a

great way to publicize these programs to

potential participants, collaborators, and

fundere. To do so, [see handout, or] visit www.abanet.org/diversity and follow the links to the Presidential Advisory Council on Diversity.

The pipeline conference produced another significant outcome that can have a far-reaching ripple-effect. Based on the clear message from the pipeline conference attendees, at the 2006 ABA Annual Meeting, our House of Delegates

adopted official pipeline diversity policy.

It urges all bar associations to collaborate with groups across the full range of the educational spectrum—from elementary school through law school and bar examiners—to address pipeline diversity issues.

This strategic move was much more powerful than mere pontification on a policy that will only sit on a shelf. In an

unprecedented effort, we secured over 70 co-sponsors for this policy. This meant that the topic of pipeline diversity graced meeting agendas for each one of the bar associations, internal ABA groups, or affiliated legal organizations that co-sponsored the policy. In short, we got their attention and got them talking about it. And, because it is now ABA-approved policy, our leaders can speak on behalf of

**more than 413,000 ABA members to
proclaim the Association's support of
diversifying the pipeline into the
profession.**

**The ABA and its member groups have
many other successful diversity pipeline
programs and projects. I'd like to**

**highlight ^{two} ~~one~~ in particular that I know
— YLD CHOOSE LAW —
well. The ABA's Section of Litigation**

conducts an annual Judicial Intern

Opportunity Program. This full-time, summer internship is open to all first- or second-year minority or financially disadvantaged law students who want to do legal research and writing for state or federal judges in several cities. In the program's first year, 2000, it placed 14 students with judges in two states. The 2007 program placed more than 200 students with judges in seven states.

We can claim some measure of success on increasing diversity in the pipeline. Yet we also acknowledge that progress has too often seemed to move at glacier speed—or even regressed in some areas.

We all know—and have undoubtedly experienced—various obstacles in pursuit of pipeline diversity progress. But, we will not allow them to stymie our efforts or weaken our resolve. We will take actions

**that will make a difference—one student
at a time, if needed.**

**Working together, we spotlight ^{share} and
support existing projects. Empowered
and encouraged by each other, we
replicate and build upon successful
pipeline diversity initiatives. Through
partnerships, we broaden our reach and
compound our outcomes.**

Let us continue to work together. Our sustained efforts will not only benefit the diverse students and the professions that receive them. Equipping more American students—from every corner of our country—to better compete in this global society benefits us all.

Again, thank you for being here today to work on this common core value of the legal profession. I look forward to hearing

**your views and learning about your
efforts.**