

To: The Yale Law School Community

Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2016

RE: Report of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Yale Law School has been no stranger to the conversations and controversies that have enveloped schools across the country around issues of diversity and inclusion. It is right and appropriate that we seize this extraordinary opportunity to rethink how our community lives, works, and learns.

Last spring, I appointed a committee to evaluate the challenges and the opportunities that we face with regard to issues of diversity and inclusion. Committee co-chairs James Forman, Heather Gerken, and Tom Tyler joined with students, additional faculty, and members of the Law School administration (see full list of committee members below) to explore these issues in depth. They have been working to gather information and to recommend needed changes.

The committee has produced an outstanding report that provides a road map for creating a stronger and more inclusive community. The report includes numerous recommendations that focus on these broad areas of reform:

- Creating a more diverse student body
- Building a more diverse faculty
- Mentoring and classroom climate
- Enhancing support for student groups
- Ensuring ongoing monitoring of progress

I am impressed with the thoughtfulness and dedication of the committee and by the work of other members of our community who have participated in this important report. Many of the committee's recommendations are so compelling that we have taken the unusual step of implementing them even before the report was issued today.

For example, based on committee recommendations, we have already

streamlined our administrative support and fund raising processes for student groups. We have begun to improve our data collection. We are increasing the opportunities for student mentoring, and we have begun to hire and train more teaching assistants for first-year classes. We have hired diversity representatives and enlisted additional faculty members to reach out to prospective students. We have made programmatic changes to both our upcoming Admitted Students Weekend and our orientation schedule. We have begun to build out our alumni networks, and we have made significant changes in the schedule for Alumni Weekend that will allow more involvement with affinity groups. We have also created a diversity and inclusion fund to which alumni can target their donations.

One of the committee's most important recommendations is to appoint a diversity consultant who will assist in the implementation of some of its many recommendations. As you may know, Sharon Brooks '00, our former Associate Dean in charge of Student Affairs and the Career Development Office, has returned to the School to help us move forward on goals articulated by the committee report with respect to our Offices of Admissions and Alumni Affairs.

Implementing the committee's recommendations will, of course, be an ongoing effort. We can always do more to ensure that all here feel welcomed, respected, supported, and included. But we are committed to working toward that goal. We can do better, and we will do better. In this regard, I especially approve of the committee's recommendation that we periodically review our progress toward the goals of diversity and inclusion. This must be an ongoing conversation that does not end just because the committee has filed its report.

A copy of the report of the Diversity Committee and an appendix with detailed recommendations is attached.

I look forward to working together on these initiatives to make change happen at the Law School, and I thank the committee for its extraordinary work.

Robert

Members of the 2016 Committee on Diversity & Inclusion

Faculty: James Forman, Heather Gerken, Tom Tyler (co-chairs); Ellen Cosgrove; Henry Hansmann (fall); Tracey Meares (spring); Susan Rose Ackerman; Anika Singh Lemar

Students: Rakim Brooks; Conchita Cruz; Rhea Fernandes; Clark Hildabrand; Amber Koonce; Stephanie Krent