

Belonging + Inclusion Committee

by Arthur Polott, Esq.

The Belonging and Inclusion (B+I) Committee is NALSC’s newest committee. It is a Committee of the Corporation rather than a standing committee, which means that it is open to the participation of any member of NALSC, not just Board Members. Currently, the committee consists of Esther Alpert, Ethel Badawi, Natalie Thorsen Harris, Patrick Moya, Melissa Peters, Kathy Richardson, Connie Rinaldi, Bahareh Samanian, and Stuart Tenhour, with me as Chair. I want to thank everyone who gave their time and energy to this important inaugural effort, I am proud of the work we did - thank you!

The purpose of the committee is to educate and increase the belonging and inclusion of people from a wide variety of backgrounds within NALSC, our member organizations, and the legal community as a whole. Committee members include past and current Board Members and Officers as well as our regular members. They come from large and small search firms across the country and bring a broad range of lived experiences. We are pleased that the committee composition reflects our membership and grateful for the vibrant discussions we enjoyed in our many formative meetings.

For the past six months, the B + I Committee has met regularly to draft a Statement of Purpose, a Mission Statement, and a Values Statement to define NALSC’s principles and guide the organization when making important internal decisions. These will be presented to the NALSC Board for consideration at the September Board meeting.

The Committee is setting goals and discussing initiatives to promote these values via action. For example, earlier this year, the Committee selected Jami de Lou, a top Culture & Inclusion Strategist, to train both incoming and outgoing Board Members to better serve our membership and the community at large. Jami presented to the group in addition to conducting individual coaching sessions with the participants. This collaboration demonstrates NALSC’s commitment to creating a vibrant community where the needs, perspectives, and contributions of all legal search consultants are valued and integrated into our association.

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We also are bringing Jami’s wisdom and expertise to NALSC’s 2024 Fall Symposium on September 27th in Washington, D.C. In her session, “Recruiting for the Future: Unleashing the Power of Cultural IQ,” Jami will show us how Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is the key to inclusive legal recruiting. She will give us strategies that go beyond tolerance to effectively embrace and adapt to cultural differences. We will learn how these insights can impact our approach, ultimately making more and better placements for the benefit of the legal profession as a whole while also increasing inclusion and belonging for candidates.

There is more work to be done. If you would like to join us on the NALSC Belonging + Inclusion Committee, please contact me at arthur@gatewaylegal.com or NALSC headquarters at info@nalsc.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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