

TUPOCC (The United People of Color Caucus) NEC Report

January 15-16, 2005

INTRODUCTIONS OF NATIONAL CO-REPRESENTATIVES

Ranya Ghuma is a 2nd year evening law student at the University of Baltimore. She works full time at an international relief and development organization and is the coordinator of the U. of Baltimore NLG chapter.

Renée Sánchez is a 3rd year law student at New College of California in San Francisco. She is a member of the New College NLG chapter and is on the Civil Rights Committee of the SF/Bay area chapter. Renee also holds position with her school's chapter of La Raza Law Students Association.

HISTORY

The Guild at the national and local level has made significant improvements in its efforts to bring students of color to the Convention in Birmingham. The 2003 Convention was a stark contrast to Conventions of years past—for example, in Minneapolis there were just four students of color versus the 50 people of color that attended the Birmingham Convention. In Birmingham, the first ever convening of TUPOCC took place, where approximately 20 members attended our Caucus thanks to the hard work of TUPOCC members Maunica Sthanki and Kenavon Carter. Laura Raymond worked tirelessly to organize the anti-racist training and fundraiser for the Student of Color Travel Stipend. Both at the national and regional level a commitment was made to raise money to encourage and support students to travel to the Convention. Michael Avery continues to offer encouragement, support, and guidance in making the Guild accountable to the communities it purports to work for. We believe that the success of the Birmingham Convention is directly related to the Guild's decision to make the representation of people of color a priority.

WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE BIRMINGHAM CONVENTION

- Convening of first ever people of color caucus at Birmingham
- Applied for and received a seat on the NEC
- Drafted and approved a mission statement (see Alabama Manifesto)
- Created TUPOCC listserv
- Received \$1,000 as seed money from Tex-Oma Region
- Wrote an article for Guild Notes, Winter 2004 issue
- Outreach to both students and lawyers--added a significant number of members to the listserv
- Encouraged TUPOCC members to join and become active in committee work at both the national and local levels
- Invited and attended SF/Bay Area chapter Board Retreat

- i. Distributed TUPOCC mission statement (the Alabama Manifesto)
- ii. Statement featured in chapter newsletter
- iii. Received official endorsement of the Alabama Manifesto and commitment to prioritizing organize anti-racist training
- iv. Board travel support to send Renee Sanchez as Co-Rep to NEC meeting

TWO YEAR PLAN

Objective #1: Increase recruitment and retention of people of color in the NLG

- Institutionalize the student of color travel stipend-add to National budget (\$7,500/\$300 per student @25 students)
- Encourage regions and local chapters to continue to raise funds to send additional students of color to the Convention
- Outreach to students of color
 - Include info about TUPOCC in disorientation handbook
 - Outreach to historically black colleges and law schools with significant numbers of students of color
- Provide guidance to student chapters on building coalition with student groups of color and other community groups
- Add TUPOCC to membership materials to help identify POCs in the Guild

Objective #2: Foster a culture within the Guild that encourages self-criticism and an awareness of anti-racist practices.

- Ask for NEC to be a formal signatory of Alabama Manifesto
 - Formal signatories to date:
 - Anti-Racism Committee
 - SF Bay Area Chapter
 - Student Caucus
- Ask RVPs to “pledge” to:
 - Present Alabama Manifesto to their regions and ask regions to sign on to the Manifesto
 - Implement ideas stated in “pledge” (see accompanying document)
- Work with Anti-Racism committee to organize an anti-racist training at every National Convention during “prime time”; simultaneous TUPOCC meeting for people of color (\$1000 x 2 trainings /convention=\$2,000)
- Provide resources to RVPs for local anti-racist trainings and workshops
- Encouraging people of color to assume positions of leadership in the Guild in a way that is meaningful and not “tokenism”
- Prioritizing work within Guild that is responsive to communities of color

THE UNITED PEOPLE OF COLOR CAUCUS PLEDGE

We, the _____ pledge to support the mission of the United People of Color Caucus by:

1. Signing on to the Alabama Manifesto
2. Organizing anti-racist trainings and workshops at regional/local/committee/chapter level
3. Raising money for the Student of Color Travel Stipend
4. Recruiting students of color
 - a. Outreach to students of color at law school chapters
 - b. Outreach to law schools not represented within the Guild
 - c. Outreach to law schools with significant student of color population
5. Recruiting legal workers, jailhouse lawyers, and lawyers of color

We recognize that these goals will not be met overnight, and this pledge is part of an ongoing commitment to the United People of Color Caucus and the future of a self-sustaining National Lawyers Guild.

In solidarity,
