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Contact: Sandra Yamate or Deborah Weixl

Phone: 312/628-5885

E-Mail: news@theiilp.com

Online: <http://theiilp.com>

NEW DATA POINTS TO PERSISTENT PIPELINE PROBLEMS IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

CHICAGO, AUGUST 31, 2011 – The first annual review of the state of diversity in the legal profession from the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession clearly points to a serious problem in the pipeline, despite numerous programs, studies and individual efforts to effect change in the representation of diverse groups in the profession. The review shows that the legal profession continues to lag behind others with slow progress and that minority lawyers take different career paths.

Highlights of the study include:

- Minority representation in the profession has grown from 9.7% in 2000 to 11.6% in 2009.
- Women now compose 32.4 percent of the profession, but are underrepresented in top level jobs such as partner (19.4 percent), federal appellate judge (26.8 percent) and law school dean (20.6 percent).
- African Americans are the best represented minority group at 4.7 percent, but their entry into the profession has slowed in recent years.
- Minority and women's representation among law graduates has dropped slightly in recent years.
- Employment patterns for white and minority law graduates have converged since the late 1990s, except for judicial clerkship rates, where the divergence has increased.
- Women's initial employment continues to differ from men's among both white and minority law graduates; women are less likely than men to enter private practice and business.
- African Americans and Native Americans continue to be significantly less likely than other groups to enter private practice; Asian Americans are more likely than other groups, including whites.
- Lawyers with disabilities are less likely than other groups to enter private practice, and significantly more likely to enter public interest jobs.
- Women are more likely than men to go into public interest jobs.
- The percentage of LGBT lawyers is small, but increasing.

These new demographics in the review were compiled and analyzed by Prof. **Elizabeth Chambliss**, co-director, Center for Professional Values and Practice, at New York Law School. As editor-in-chief of the review, she has brought together a number of outstanding lawyers and commentators to provide detailed analysis, digging deep into the facts to examine the data in an effort to identify new approaches to seeking solutions and increasing diversity in the profession. These essays examine common elements in

diversity and inclusion and focus on the important differences and unique challenges across groups. Essayists include Melinda S. Molina, Capital University Law School; Takeia R. Johnson, a practicing lawyer in Indianapolis with Frost Brown Todd LLP; Kathleen Dillon Narko, Northwestern University School of Law; Lawrence R. Baca, former deputy director, Office of Tribal Justice of the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division; Jacob Herring, Creative Cultural Changes LLC, Sarah Olson, Professional Development and Diversity Director, Wildman Harrold Allen & Dixon LLP; and others in private practice and academic settings. Chambliss' analysis points out that better data are needed to advance the analysis beyond general comparisons and she urges the legal profession to provide better general and ethnic breakdowns across the profession and across various subgroups.

“The IILP Review is a comprehensive and thoughtful document that will help us better understand the facts and provide a basis for candid discussion about individual experiences. Some of the data is encouraging – some troubling – but a shared understanding of the data and a continued focus on the facts and figures is essential to finding, and fixing, problems. The essays are a must read as we begin a national dialogue to chart a course for the future,” said **Marc S. Firestone**, chair of IILP and executive vice president, corporate and legal affairs, and general counsel, Kraft Foods, Inc. “The review reinforces data we found earlier that showed we had a long way to go to realize success in fostering diversity in business. The symptoms are there, we need to find an effective cure.”

Noting that a shared conversation about diversity and inclusion has been difficult to sustain, Chambliss urges more communication and coordination of pipeline and other efforts to make it easier for busy lawyers, judges, law professors, students, employers and diversity professionals to stay current on the latest thought trends, research programs and challenges facing the profession.

The IILP is hosting seminars in several cities around the country throughout the fall featuring discussion of the data and presentations by several of the authors with a focus on local solutions and programs that meet the needs of the community. Headlining the sessions will be a thought-provoking presentation by Stuart Buck, doctoral fellow, Department of Education Reform, University of Arkansas and the author of the book, *Acting White: The Ironic Legacy of Desegregation*. Sessions are scheduled for Sept. 7 in San Francisco; Sept. 9 in Seattle; Sept. 20 in New York City; Sept. 21 in Washington, D.C.; Oct. 4 in Houston; and Oct. 26 in Chicago.

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About the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession

Through its programs, projects, research, and collaborations, the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession is dedicated to improving diversity and promoting inclusion in the legal profession. IILP is a leader in supporting new approaches and inventing and testing methodologies that will lead to real change and eliminate bias in the legal field. Through comprehensive outreach and original programming, IILP works closely with legal, judicial, professional, educational and governmental institutions to help the profession advance diversity as a core value. For more information, please visit the IILP at www.theiilp.com.

Editors' note: For more information, contact Deborah Weixl at deborah.weixl@theiilp.com. The review can be found at www.theiilp.com/StateofDiversity. Information and registration details for the seminars can be found at www.theiilp.com. Reporters are welcome to attend to cover these sessions for free. To obtain press credentials, contact Deborah Weixl at deborah.weixl@theiilp.com. On site, please see Sandra Yamate.