



2009-2010
Community Service
&
Chapter of the Year
Guide

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NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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Good day NBLSA!

My name is Allison Monyei and I am delighted to serve as your 2009-2010 National Director of Community Service. As we undertake a new year, there are several opportunities for NBLSA to ensure that the community service efforts that we pursue reaffirm the organization's commitment to service, community improvement, and supplementing the needs of the Black community.

First, there are time specific initiatives. This means that in order to meet these initiatives, chapters should plan service projects on the specified day or within the specified window.

- Founders Day of Service – observed October 31st, 2009
- Community Service Week – observed during the month of October
- MLK Day of Service – observed January 18th, 2010

Second, there are programmatic initiatives. These are initiatives that can be completed anytime during the school year, including during the time specific service projects. All of the programmatic initiatives encourage mentorship and tutoring.

- Adopt a Community/ Non-Profit/ School
- Educational Empowerment:
 - College 101
 - Adult Education and Resource Sharing
 - Law Student for a Day

In addition to the national initiatives, each region has committed to initiatives specifically designed to address needs within that region. The regional initiatives are designed to be outgrowths of the national initiatives and should dovetail with the service efforts of your chapter.

- MABLSA – Poverty, Education, and Health Care Disparities
- MWBLSA - Adopt-a-Detention Center, Health Awareness Program
- NEBLSA - Each One, Reach One
- RMBLSA - Cross-Collaboration, Pipeline Programming
- SRBLSA – Poverty, Economic Development, Community Justice
- WRBLSA - Health Awareness, Pipeline Programming

We hope each chapter is able to fully implement the initiatives and show the nation that NBLSA is committed to advocating for and bringing awareness to our community as we continue giving back. Please feel free to contact me or any of the Regional Community Service Directors with questions.

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NATIONAL SERVICE INITIATIVES

COMMUNITY SERVICE WEEK:

Chapters are asked to plan a week of community service. This week provides local chapters with the opportunity to service areas in their communities that are not directly targeted by NBLSA service initiatives. Community Service Week should consist of at least three events and should occur preferably in October.

FOUNDER'S DAY OF SERVICE:

This is a great opportunity to give back to the community by remembering and honoring the vision of our founder. In addition, it will create a sense of consistency within our Community Service programming across the nation. Founders Day of Service is observed on the last Saturday of October.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE:

Local and sub-regional directors should work together to plan a service project to be done on MLK, Jr. Day. The Day of Service is intended to motivate students to honor the memory and legacy of Dr. King by serving the community. Should your chapter choose to plan a larger-scale project, the Corporation for National and Community Service makes funding available to non-profit groups who are organizing and implementing a King Day service project.

ADOPT A COMMUNITY/NON-PROFIT/ SCHOOL:

The Adopt a Community and Adopt a Non-Profit are expansions of NBLSA's national Adopt a School program. Each local chapter adopts a community by concentrating its service programming in one community that has lower academic resources, poorer housing conditions, and limited community supports. The Adopt a Non-Profit program will encourage local chapters to choose a nonprofit, which they will assist in fundraising or volunteer efforts. This initiative focuses on being visually present in our communities as we serve as mentors, tutors, role models, and leaders.

ADULT EDUCATION AND RESOURCE SHARING:

BLSA Chapters may reach out to young alumni and practitioners in the community for help planning an adult education project. If possible, these programs should target underserved adult populations.

Workforce Development: Find out if homeless shelters in the area would be willing to allow your chapter to do a session on job preparedness, interview techniques and/ or resume critique. You can also provide information to the community about local vocational training programs and technical schools in your area. Chapters may choose to pursue other topics such as computer skills for senior citizens, tax preparation, mortgages, financing higher education, or regional issues such as emergency preparedness.

COLLEGE 101/ PRE-LAW 101:

This program should target high school and undergraduate students preparing for the next step in their education. BLSA members can host a Saturday session that includes resume and personal statement critique, PSAT/ SAT/ LSAT prep and Q&A panels. It is strongly encouraged to use this initiative to reach the College Student Division members. Programming between January 15 and March 15 that targets minority high school students and undergraduates may qualify for a LSAC Minority Program Grants. Please visit the LSAC website for more information about the grant.

LAW STUDENT FOR A DAY:

If your school already has a program similar to Law-Student-For-A-Day, I encourage your chapter to ask your school administration how BLSA can become involved. The Law-Student-For-a-Day program targets middle and high school students. A sample Day would consist of a mock trial activity and a question and answer lunch. Local chapters may choose to include age appropriate talks on the law and the legal field, or other similar activity. If possible, chapters should invite students from their adopted school or from a school that feeds into their adopted school so that the relationships established become ongoing ones.

ADDITIONAL REGIONAL SERVICE INITIATIVES

MABLSA

- (1) Poverty
Local Chapters should focus on combating the raise in poverty by collaborating with non-profits in their communities. Emphasis should be placed on food banks, clothing drive (e.g. Dress for Success), and foreclosure education.
- (2) Education
Focus should be on collaborating with undergraduate universities within the local chapters' communities and strive to increase the number of minority students admitted to their respective law schools.
- (3) Health Care Disparities
Chapters are encouraged to collaborate with local non-profits that work to combat health care disparities in their communities. Focus should be on increasing access to health care and on education.

MWBLSA

- (1) Adopt-a-Detention Center
Local chapters should adopt a detention center or home where they institute a mentoring program with a pen-pal component. The goal of the program is for troubled youth to have role models who can show them that they have options and can pursue their dreams through an education. To accomplish this goal, chapters should collect and donate age-appropriate books to the detention center and arrange to speak to the children.
- (2) Health Awareness Program
The Health Awareness Program is intended to address the health concerns in our community. Local chapters are asked to hold a health fair with free screenings for diabetes, hypertension, HIV, and an on-site nutritionist. Local chapters will also have pamphlets and guides to be distributed to members concerning nutrition, exercise, the National Marrow Donor Program, and help centers.

NEBLSA

- (1) Each One, Reach One
This is a two-part service initiative that requires each school to reach one community and one other chapter. First, each local NEBLSA chapter must adopt a local community that has significant need and should focus the chapter's direct service, advocacy, and fundraising in that community. Additionally, each NEBLSA local chapter should execute the regional and national programs tailored to the needs of the adopted community.

Second, each local NEBLSA chapter must work with at least one other NEBLSA chapter on at least one community service program. Schools in close proximity should physically work together and those far apart should find other ways to collaborate (such as a fundraiser).
- (2) Adult Economic Empowerment
Examples include education, employment, housing, and prisoner re-entry.
- (3) Early Childhood Education
Focuses on children ages 0-5 years old and the goal is to advocate/teach importance of early childhood education to parents/local officials.
- (4) Community Development
Examples include community clean ups, beautification projects or the creation or maintenance of green space.

ADDITIONAL REGIONAL SERVICE INITIATIVES

RMBSA

(1) Cross-Collaboration

Local chapters should be encouraged and rewarded for working with other area BLSA chapters. Areas that have another BLSA chapter nearby should co-sponsor community service events. This can mean anything from each chapter joining the other in their respective selected community or combining to reach out to a separate community.

(2) Pipeline Programming

RMBSA Chapters may design or participate in “Pipe-Line” Initiatives that will help avert youth from a life of poverty and crime. Members can design programs to inform youth participants about ways to avoid the triggers that lead to crime and poverty, e.g., teen pregnancy, dropping out of school, delinquency, and the use of drugs and alcohol. Partnering with local groups in their communities is encouraged.

SRBSA

(1) Poverty

SRBSA Chapters may focus on joining forces with communities and organizations dedicated in curbing the rising number of chronic homelessness, people in need of emergency short term shelter services, feeding the hungry clothing drives, or even participating in programs that raise funds to assist the poor in paying their utility bills. Each SRBSA Chapter may also create their own Poverty Initiative by conducting food drives, clothing drives, or fundraising.

(2) Economic Development

BLSA Chapters can engage communities, and organizations to participate in Economic Development Initiatives, e.g., Community Gardens that produce and provide much needed food to those struggling. BLSA members may offer their tangible professional skill sets, e.g., resume writing, interview strategies, or conducting ready to work sessions, to assist communities and organizations in their efforts to provided direct services to the long term unemployed and hard-to-serve (ex-offenders, high school drop outs, adult mentally ill, etc.)

(3) Community Justice Initiatives

Community Justice focuses on assisting the hard-to-serve ex-offenders or the offender who is on probation, parole or pre-trial release in transition back into the community and relying on natural resources of that community. SRBSA Chapters may partner with local bar associations, community organizations and even faith-based organization to assist them in delivering direct services.

WRBSA

(1) Health Awareness

WRBSA Chapters should work diligently throughout the year to raise awareness of the effect that AIDS is having on our community. Chapters are encouraged to distribute information, hold information sessions, host fundraising events, participate in the regional AIDS Walk, and participate in local efforts on World Aids Day (December 1).

(2) Pipeline Programming

Chapters should support CSD efforts and reach to local undergraduate institutions and local high schools. There are opportunities to mentor, visit classrooms, and administer competitions, such as moot court, mock trial, negotiations, or creative writing.

CHAPTER OF THE YEAR GUIDE

The Chapter of the Year is one that has made a difference in its communities, and has improved the quality of its law school by enhancing social awareness and communal activism while representing the ideals and executing the initiatives of NBLSA. There are three parts to the process of becoming Chapter of the Year:

- The Application
- The Scrapbook and Event Documentation
- The Interview

Please find included in this guide the Chapter of the Year Rubric and the Chapter of the Year Application, as well as the calendar of events from the 2008-2009 National Chapter of the Year and a sample attendance record. Every region will use this national rubric and application and each chapter will be graded on a numeric scale and can receive up to a total of 200 points.

It is critical that chapters create sign-in sheets for each event and submit the appropriate attendance record for each event documented in the Chapter of the Year application. In the absence of an attendance record for a documented event, the selection committee will automatically assign a participation value of 15% for the event. A sample method of keeping attendance records has been provided at the end of this handbook.

More specific information regarding submission will be forthcoming from your regional community service director. Frequently asked questions have been included at the end of this guide to provide more guidance. We hope that this year's competition is as spirited as years prior and look forward to receiving your submissions. Please email communityservice@nblsa.org if you have any questions about the competition.

CHAPTER OF THE YEAR RUBRIC

45 pts SOCIOPOLITICAL AWARENESS

- Attorney General (20 pts)
 - Census 2010
 - CBC Weekend
 - Lobby Day
 - Political and Social Awareness activities
- Social Action (25 pts)
 - Death Penalty Moratorium
 - Project Katrina
 - Student Loan Lending Legislation & Rally

40 pts COMMUNITY SERVICE

- National service initiatives, Regional service initiatives, Additional community service programming

30 pts EDUCATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Academic Programming
- 1L Support
- Professional Career Events

20 pts COLLEGE STUDENT DIVISION

- CSD Programming
- Pre-law Programming
- Law Camp Participation

10 pts INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- Project Haiti
- World AIDS Day

15 pts REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

- Job Fair Participation
- Academic Retreat Participation
- Competition Participation
- Regional and Intraregional Participation (committees, sponsorship, etc)

5 pts NATIONAL PROGRAMMING

- Charles Hamilton Houston: President's (Leadership) Retreat Participation

5 pts SOCIAL EVENTS

- Internal Relationship Development (parties, socials, mixers, dinners)

170

Programming Subtotal

15 pts INTERVIEW

15 pts EVENT DOCUMENTATION

1. Scrapbook
2. Master Attendance List (Attendance Records)
3. *Optional – Multimedia presentation (e.g. Slideshow, video, etc)*

200

TOTAL

2009-2010 CHAPTER OF THE YEAR APPLICATION

CHAPTER NAME: _____

CHAPTER MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CHAPTER PRESIDENT: _____

NUMBER OF MEMBERS: _____ NUMBER OF ILS: _____

CHAPTER EMAIL: _____

CHAPTER WEBSITE ADDRESS (IF APPLICABLE): _____

I have read the application thoroughly and I agree to abide by the terms as set forth by my respective regional selection committee and the national selection committee. I affirm that the information provided herein is correct and truthful and I agree that if the provided information is found to be false, this application will be immediately disqualified.

SIGNATURE OF CHAPTER PRESIDENT (TYPE NAME) _____

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN A SEPARATE WORD DOCUMENT:

PART A: SOCIOPOLITICAL AWARENESS

- 1) Census 2010: In chronological order, please list and describe the projects that your chapter implemented in concordance with NBLSA Census 2010 initiatives.
- 2) List and discuss any speakers or programs that your Chapter has hosted to make the community aware of social and political issues of special importance to African Americans.
- 3) Please list any programs that address the NBLSA Social Action initiatives.
- 4) Did your chapter participate in any of the NBLSA sponsored Congressional Black Caucus Weekend activities?
- 5) Did your chapter implement any of the Lending Advocacy initiatives? Please elaborate and attach any petition signatures obtained by your chapter.
- 6) Did your chapter participate in any of the Lending Advocacy Events? Please elaborate.
- 7) Please note your chapter's involvement in Project Katrina.

PART B: COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 1) In chronological order, please list all community service projects your chapter participated in during the 2009-2010 School Year and give a detailed description of each program, your participation in each project to date, and the national and/or regional initiatives that it satisfies, if any.
- 2) In chronological order, please list all community service projects your chapter plans on hosting or has not completed at the time of this application submission for the remainder of the 2009-2010 School Year and give a detailed description of each program and the national and/or regional initiatives that it satisfies, if any.

PART C: OTHER PROGRAMMING

1) EDUCATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- A. Please list in chronological order and describe any academic sessions your Chapter has hosted and denote those programs that are designed to acclimate 1Ls to law school and promote their academic success. (*Examples include review sessions, mentoring initiatives, how-to study sessions, law review write-on preparation, moot court try-out preparation*).
- B. What has your chapter done to better prepare your members for the job market? (*Examples include hosting mock-interviews, participating in local professional organizations, and networking events*)

2) COLLEGE STUDENT DIVISION

- A. Discuss all College Student Division activities hosted by your chapter.
- B. If your chapter does not actively participate with a CSD chapter, has your chapter made an effort to establish a CSD chapter? Please explain.
- C. If your chapter did not have any CSD activities, please list your programming that was focused on pre-law and undergraduate students.

3) INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- A. Please note your chapter's involvement in NBLSA's commitment to Haiti.
- B. Please describe your chapter's participation in World AIDS Day or in increasing awareness about the global affect of HIV/AIDS.

4) REGIONAL PROGRAMMING

- A. Did your chapter participate in its regional job fair?
- B. Did a member of your chapter attend another region's job fair? If so, please note the region.
- C. Was your chapter represented at its regional and/or sub-regional academic retreat?
- D. Is your chapter participating in any of the regional/national competitions? Please list.
- E. Has your chapter been active within the region? (examples include regional committee participation, securing sponsorships, and other regional events)

5) NATIONAL PROGRAMMING

- A. Did your Chapter President or another designated member attend the Charles Hamilton Houston President's (Leadership) Retreat?

6) SOCIAL EVENTS

- A. Discuss all social activities hosted by your chapter that were designed to build community from within.

7) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Discuss any additional information about your chapter and/or programs like to bring to the attention of the selection committee.

PART D: ESSAY

**Why should your chapter be selected as the Chapter of the Year?
(Please limit your answer to 500 words)**

PART E: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please attach your chapter's 2009-2010 Calendar of Events.

2008-2009 NATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE YEAR CALENDAR

(Use as a sample guide)

August:

22 – Welcome to Law School 1L Cookout

September:

9-12 – Business Card Drive

12 – BLSA Fall Fling

16 – Voting Registration Drive

24 – Trial Team and AR informational Meeting

October:

Food Drive

Clothing Drive

Fall Outline Bank

1 - Judge Charleston – Program-in-a-Box

2-5 – Voter Registration Drive at the Virginia State Fair

9 – Absentee Ballot Drive

14-15 – Absentee Ballot Drive

16 – Exam Preparation and Outlining Workshop

18 – The Top 10 Things I Wish I Knew about the Job Search

20 – Angel Tree Child Adoption

23 – Troy Davis Rally

25 – 21st Annual Law Day

28 – Election Protection Training

November:

1 – MABLSA Regional Law Camp

3 – FutureVote Program

4 – Election Protection at the Polls

12 – Exam Tips Session with LexisNexis

13 – Guest Speaker: The Honorable Raymond A. Jackson

14 – Warhill High School Fall College Tour

14 – 1st Annual Innocence Symposium

18 – The Top 10 Things I Wish I Knew about the Job Search

20 – Angel Tree Child Adoption

24 – Thanksgiving Food Drive with Legal Skills Firms

25 – Student Faculty Mixer

December:

1 – Angel Tree Gift Return

1 – World AIDS Day Informational Table

2 – Moot Court Workshop

January:

22 – Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Program

26-27 – BLSA 1L Bake Sale

February: Black History Month

2 – Weekly Hanging File Drop

4 – Movie Night: The Great Debaters

5 – Second Semester Survival Guide

7 – 2nd Annual Death Penalty Symposium

9 – Weekly Hanging File Drop

11 – Movie Night: Something the Lord Made

11 – MABLSA Service Week Project: Matthew Whaley Elementary

12 – Hip Hop: Help or Hindrance

16-24 – Calendar/Business Card Sale

18 – Movie Night: Malcolm X

25 – Guest Speaker: Professor Burch

26 – Remembering *Brown v. Board of Education*

27 – Warhill High School Mentorship Black History Program

SAMPLE ATTENDANCE RECORD

Please consider using this method in tracking member attendance to chapter events as it is the preferred method of recording attendance for the Chapter of the Year competition.

BLSA Members	Year	1L Welcome Cookout (8/22)	Business Card Drive (9/9-12)	BLSA Fall Fling (9/12)	Voting Registration Drive (9/16)	Adopt- a-School (9/22- 9/26)	Adopt- a- School (9/22- 10/3)
Sample Student 1	3L	X	X	X		X	X
Sample Student 2	3L		X	X		X	X
Sample Student 3	3L	X	X		X	X	X
Sample Student 4	2L	X	X	X	X		
Sample Student 5	2L	X	X	X			
Sample Student 6	2L	X					
Sample Student 7	2L						
Sample Student 8	2L			X		X	X
Sample Student 9	1L	X		X		X	
Sample Student 10	1L	X			X		X
Sample Student 11	1L	X		X	X		X
Sample Student 12	1L	X			X		
Sample Student 13	1L	X		X	X		
Sample Student 14	1L		X				
Sample Student 15	1L	X	X	X			

Chapter of the Year FAQs

- **Why do I need to turn in attendance records?**
 - Our Chapter of the Year point system is based on a variable rate of participation percentage as well as chapter size, which is determined by voting strength. A competitive chapter will have consistent participation rates, because its programming is adequately meeting the needs of its membership.
- **Why is the application so long?**
 - In order for the competition to remain fair and impartial, the judges need as much information as possible to make a fair assessment of your chapter's good deeds.
- **Do I have to follow the rubric?**
 - NBLSA programs are merely suggestive. However, the selection committees need a measuring rod to compare each chapter's accomplishments.
- **We don't have a CSD chapter. How can we get those points?**
 - The College Student Division is one of NBLSA's most important initiatives and we want chapters to assist in getting CSD chapters started. However, we understand establishing a CSD chapter is not always a viable option. This year, the CSD point allocation includes CSD programming, pre-law programming, and law camp participation. So even if there is no CSD chapter established, there are still methods of acquiring those points.
- **Can regional or national board members represent their schools?**
 - In the COY race, we strive for impartiality and fairness. The measuring rod is whether the board member attends an event in his or her capacity as a board member (e.g. mandatory attendance) or whether the board member attends to represent his or her school.
- **What exactly is a week for Community Service Week purposes?**
 - Chapters are free to designate any amount of time that they would like to serve as Community Service Week. In short, a traditional week is not the only option, but more than 10 days from beginning to end looks strange.
- **My chapter doesn't have a lot of resources and that makes it difficult for us to host and attend some events. Is there anything that we can do?**
 - In years past, few chapters, if any, have been able to attend everything and do everything. If you look at the rubric closely, you will find that there are still several opportunities for a chapter to host other events (e.g. academic programming, professional programs, etc.) that will allow the chapter to tap into those resources that are plentiful (and free!). The key is to be creative and strive to bring your chapter to a level of programming and activity that can be sustained in years to come.
- **My region is doing something slightly different than the rubric. Which standard should I follow?**
 - Remember that the Chapter of the Year Competition is a regional competition first. Do your best and be creative to meet both sets of initiatives. The regional community service initiatives are outgrowths of the national initiatives and upon closer inspection, you will find that they dovetail into one another.
- **My chapter is doing really good work this year. Shouldn't all chapters be receiving some type of recognition?**
 - The COY Competition is merely one way for chapters to receive recognition from NBLSA for their contributions. However, there is only one regional winner and one national winner. If your chapter is doing a great work and is positively affecting its community, recognition will come from other places. The true goal of service is not recognition; it's making a difference.

Please direct further inquiries to communityservice@nblsa.org