

# Utah State Bar Long Range Goals and Values

2007-2008

**Vision of the Utah State Bar** *"To lead society in the creation of a justice system that understood, valued, respected and accessible to all."*

**Mission of the Utah State Bar** *"To represent lawyers in the State of Utah and to serve the public and the legal profession by promoting justice, professional excellence, civility, ethics, respect for and understanding of the law."*

## **Background**

On July 12, 2006, the Bar Commission engaged the international accounting firm of Grant Thornton to evaluate the governance and the organizational structure through which the regulation of the practice of law and other duties delegated by the Utah Supreme Court are being performed. On January 26, 2007, Grant Thornton presented their conclusions and made recommendations for improved operational oversight and management practices. Among the recommendations adopted by the Bar Commission on March 8, 2007 was to more "regularly format and document a long-term strategy for the Bar."

The Commission began developing a current strategic plan by reviewing the existing long-range planning work papers which had been developed over the past ten years and scheduled sessions to create a more formal strategy and planning document. On April 27, 2007 they reviewed goals for proposed planning meetings, defined a process to be utilized in organizing the plan and established timetables for further sessions. On June 2, 2007 they held a planning session with a discussion leader from Grant Thornton who specializes in creating long-range strategies for non-profit and related business organizations. They evaluated the Bar's mission, vision, and the Court's Rules for Integration, and discussed trends in the profession and society.

The Commission was encouraged to formulate a plan which would represent the Bar's values and goals in four areas of focus: Membership, Courts, Public Education and Service and Governmental Relations. They were also directed to create concise aspirational objectives within each area of focus and to permit leadership and staff to design specific tasks with implementation details and dates. Sub-committees were appointed to refine findings and to summarize recommendations. The document was to be not more than two pages in length and should be reviewed and revised as appropriate on a regular basis annually as trends in society and conditions in the profession will reasonably require.

On July 18, 2007 the Commission reviewed the preliminary recommendations of those sub-committees and adopted short-term priorities for the 2007-2008 year. On August 24, 2007 the Commission reviewed the final recommendations of the sub-committees. On September 21, 2007, the Commission adopted the following long-range organizational goals and values.

## **1. Membership**

- Inform and educate membership on the regulatory purpose and function of the Bar.
- Identify and enhance key services and benefits for members and publicize availability.
- Leverage latest technologies to improve communication with our members, improve educational opportunities for members and promote the public's access to justice.
- Maintain focus on human contact, personal relationships and networking by organizing and sponsoring conventions, Bar gatherings and other events; and promoting a higher level of professionalism by emphasizing the value of hard work, integrity, public service and respect for courts and judges.
- Fully integrate the value of Bar membership into the culture and development of students at University of Utah and BYU law schools.
- Work with the Supreme Court to assure that the Court's rules, policies and procedures provide appropriate admissions standards for new lawyers.
- Support, train and empower Bar sections and divisions to lead out on key issues of Bar priorities and to become more accountable to the Commission.
- Support regional bars and specialty bars and encourage them to lead out on key issues of Bar priorities and to improve communications with the Commission.
- Maintain appropriate dues and reasonable licensing fees to assure the healthy operation of the Bar.
- Operate the Bar so that members will regard Bar services, support and benefits offered as a positive "return on their investment".
- Promote diversity in the Bar and Bench to better reflect and serve a more diverse population.
- Work with the Supreme Court to assure that the Court's rules provide for a process of attorney discipline is both fair and efficient.

## **2. Courts**

- Advocate for the public's access to the judicial system.
- Lead out in educating the public on the role of the Courts and the need for judicial independence and utilize media to communicate and champion the importance of the courts in American society.
- Educate lawyers about the rewards of judicial service; promote programs designed to encourage lawyers to apply for judicial appointments. Support clear, fair and useful judicial evaluations and retention systems and legislation that will set judicial salaries and benefits at a level which will attract qualified candidates to the bench.
- Support alternative dispute resolution initiatives and programs.

### **3. Public Education and Services**

- Proactively engage and educate the public on the importance and societal value of lawyers through media sources.
- Establish a public relations plan to provide regular and reliable information to the public through press releases, editorials, radio appearances, press interviews, and public service announcements.
- Establish and support programs and means for promoting lawyers willing to offer reduced rate legal services to the public.
- Cooperate with legal service providers to promote appropriate *pro bono* initiatives and greater access to justice.

### **4. Governmental Relations**

- Expose and educate the Legislature to and about the Bar as a resource to improve the quality of legislation and to be an asset to legislators by aiding them in their roles.
- Strengthen the relationship between the Bar and the Legislative and Executive Branches.
- Increase member participation in the legislative process by participating on the Governmental Relations Committee and/or running for legislative office.
- Provide educational opportunities to lawyers to learn more about the legislative process.