



AMERICAN **BAR** ASSOCIATION™

Young Lawyers Division

2024 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY REPORT

The Young Lawyers Division

Home of The Young and New Lawyer

October 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division (Division) has served as the national home for the young and new lawyer for ninety years. Through championing professional development, leadership, policy advancement, and service to the profession with a dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all its efforts, we strive to be the best home possible for our members. We celebrate a robust membership of nearly 100,000 Division members. Division leadership includes elected officers, constitutional representatives, and approximately 200 appointed leaders. We also celebrate a sprawling member network with over 300 affiliated groups. Current Division membership numbers are: 33,743 young and new lawyers, 42,821 law students, and 875 affiliated professionals (as of August 1, 2024). Further, current membership data indicates a 53% renewal rate (compared to the broader ABA renewal rate of 51-52%).

In recent years, like most bar associations, the Division has faced several challenges with member reduction, retention, and disengagement. To better understand and address these challenges, Division leadership began to explore how it could best serve its members and leaders, identify their wants and needs, and identify how the Division could best adapt to serve the evolving profession. As such, the Division launched a comprehensive membership survey at the end of the 2023-2024 bar year.

SURVEY METHOD

During the 2023-2024 bar year, Division leadership designed a Division-wide membership survey which launched in July 2023. The survey was both quantitative and qualitative in nature, seeking to collect comprehensive data on member demographics, engagement, and member concerns and preferences. In the interests of gathering directional results from a diverse group of law students and young and new lawyers, the survey was promoted broadly across multiple channels including email and social media. Responses were gathered between July 18th and August 26th, 2024. In total, 347 recorded responses were received. Ultimately, the survey garnered sufficient responses to provide valuable insights into Division membership.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience was Division members, which includes law students and young and

new lawyers who are under the age of thirty-six or within the first ten years of practice. See [Division Bylaws](#).

SUMMARY OVERVIEW

The 2024 Membership Survey provides several critical highlights. In summary:

- Engagement with the Division varies widely, 20% reported a great deal or a lot of engagement; 32% reported little engagement; and 24% reported no engagement at all. Most respondents reported being open to increasing their engagement.
- Several critical issues impact young and new lawyers. Among these concerns are:
 - Finding opportunities to participate in bar association leadership: 30% reported being extremely concerned and 34% reported being somewhat concerned.
 - Career development: 26% reported being extremely concerned, 13% reported being moderately concerned, and 26% reported being somewhat concerned.
 - Networking and getting advice from experienced lawyers: 47% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about networking and 47% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about receiving advice.
 - Paying back student debt: 73% reported being extremely, moderately, or somewhat concerned with paying back student debt.
 - Managing stress: 69% reported being extremely, moderately, or somewhat concerned with dealing with stress and 72% reported being extremely, moderately, or somewhat concerned with balancing work/school/life.
- Respondents prefer in-person events (42% of respondents report they prefer to get CLE credits in-person as opposed to online/on-demand and 35% report to prefer events that require travel). However, respondents identify several barriers to attending in-person events, including: the cost of travel (46% concerned), unclear membership benefits (39% concerned), and lack of employer support (36% concerned).
- Respondents prefer communication from the Division via email (76% prefer email communication). This is preferred over other mediums, including social media (26% prefer social media).
- Most respondents (51%) report that their Division membership has had some useful impact in their career development and professional growth at some positive level.

- Most respondents report utilizing moderate to significant use of the Division website (52%), conferences (54%), emails (63%), CLE/programs (39%), and social media (39%). However, there remains underutilized Division resources, for example the Young Lawyer Rising Podcast and non-CLE webinars (live and on-demand).
- Young and new lawyers overwhelmingly desire networking opportunities (69% say networking at events has impacted their career with 31% indicating it has not, but who they network with matters. Among the most desired groups are potential clients (79%), experienced lawyers (94%), members of the judiciary (89%), and peers (92%).
- Young and new lawyers desire content around career development and skills-based material.
- Personal communication and “sticky” touches matter and may increase engagement with the Division (53% reported they would be more likely to increase their engagement with the Division or attend events if personally contacted by a Division leader; 28% reported it would not matter; and 19% reported they are unsure). Respondents also noted reasons that do *not* impact involvement, for example: the Division’s political stances (50% reported that the Division being too progressive has no impact on their involvement and 57% reported that the Division being too conservative has no impact on their involvement); personal issues to the respondents (35% reported that the lack of advancement on issues relevant to them has no impact on their involvement); opportunity specificity (34% reported that the Division lacking practice-specific areas for involvement (being too broad) has no impact on their involvement); or navigating a vast Division (33% reported that navigating the Division (Division being impersonal) has no impact on their involvement).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

To best address the concerns of young and new lawyers and enhance member engagement with the Division, we make several recommendations for the Division (and Association). They include:

- The aggregate of the survey data leads to the conclusion that we must work to make the Division more accessible. This includes:
 - Financial Accessibility: 46% of respondents reported cost as a major obstacle to their attendance of in-person events. We must explore how to

eliminate financial barriers to increase access to events and travel. This could involve offering scholarships or reducing fees to make Division activities affordable for all members.

- Informational Accessibility: 39% of respondents reported unclear value/benefits of the Division as a significant concern to them. We should work to generate clear and concise information about Division membership and its benefits, Division value, and leadership opportunities.
- Engagement Accessibility: 56% of respondents identified their present engagement level at none or a little and 56% reported they would definitely or probably like to get more engaged with the Division. We must maximize this unmet interest (engagement gap). Importantly, we should leverage this Report to address the diversity of our membership's needs and wants while also balancing their work and familial obligations (for example, offering a flexible mix of in-person and virtual meetings/events). This flexibility would maximize the ability for more members to participate regardless of their circumstance.
- Relational Accessibility: 53% of respondents reported they would be more likely to engage if personally contacted by a leader of the Division and 59% reported the importance of networking generally. We must prioritize and improve building personal connections within the Division through targeted outreach and networking opportunities. This approach can make the Division feel more welcoming and accessible to all members.
- Focus on enhancing the perceived value of membership by developing more targeted content addressing key member concerns, particularly in areas of career development, work-life balance, and financial management.
- Enhance the perceived value of membership by developing more targeted content addressing key member concerns, particularly in areas of career development, work-life balance, and financial management.
- Improve communication strategies, with a focus on email as the preferred channel (76% preference) to promote Division benefits and opportunities.
- Align content and programming with members' expressed interests, which include career development and networking (56%), litigation and trial skills (44%), legal technology/innovation (44%), and legal writing/drafting (43%).
- Address financial barriers to in-person attendance through creating/providing scholarships or reduced fees for events that could increase participation of young and new lawyers.
- Prioritize quality networking opportunities (in-person and virtual) while focusing

on young and new lawyers' desired network groups (potential clients, advanced attorneys, members of the judiciary, and their peers).

- Explore the potential for designing and implementing a robust mentorship program, which could address both the desire for career guidance and networking opportunities and cultivate a “forever home” pathway with the sections, divisions, and forums (SDFs).
- Address message inconsistency within the SDFs and Association and prioritize clear, consistent, and accurate messaging on the wants and needs of young and new lawyers (supported by Division leadership, data from Division membership, and other sources).

Additionally, we recommend the following operational next steps:

- Prioritize presentation of this Report's (and future reports) findings by presenting findings to ABA leadership and staff, the Standing Committee on Membership (SCOM), the Section Officer Conference (SOC), and Division leadership.
- Incorporate this Report and its findings into the forthcoming five year strategic plan (to be written in 2026), each chair-elect's annual plan, and each chair's impact report by identifying key areas of concern, growth opportunities, necessary developments and expansions of the Division, and necessary programs or projects to sunset. See [2021-2026 Division Strategic Plan](#).
- Conduct a follow-up assessment in Quarter Two of the 2025-2026 bar year to measure the impact of any implemented changes.
- Periodically conduct follow-up surveys and assessments (suggested annually) to track progress and identify emerging trends. This is crucial to track the effectiveness of these initiatives and to stay responsive to the evolving needs of young and new lawyers.
- Identify future opportunities for ABA staff support to facilitate the necessity and benefit for survey efforts.
- Identify future opportunities to preserve the Division's budget and identify resources for Division growth.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Tamara P. Nash
ABA Young Lawyers Division
Chair (2023-2024)
Tamarapnash1@gmail.com

/s/ Cali Franks-Field
ABA Young Lawyers Division
Membership & Marketing Director (2023-2024)
cali.marie623@gmail.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[EXECUTIVE SUMMARY](#)

[SURVEY METHOD](#)

[TARGET AUDIENCE](#)

[SUMMARY OVERVIEW](#)

[RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS](#)

[SURVEY RESPONDENTS](#)

[1A: Law Student/Attorney](#)

[1B: Bar Admission](#)

[1C: Graduation Year](#)

[1D: Age](#)

[1E: Practice Setting](#)

[1F: Gender](#)

[1G: Gender Identity \(Transgender\)](#)

[1H: Sexual Orientation](#)

[1I: Race and Ethnicity](#)

[1J: First-Generation Status and Working Parent Status](#)

[2: Respondent Membership Status](#)

[3: Membership Payment \(Who Pays their Membership Dues\)](#)

[4: Past Conferences/Meetings Attended](#)

[RESPONDENT CONCERNS](#)

[DIVISION ENGAGEMENT LEVEL](#)

[5: Division Engagement](#)

[6: Division Leadership Experience](#)

[7: Potential for Increased Engagement](#)

[MEMBERSHIP'S CAREER IMPACT](#)

[8: Career Development Impact of Membership](#)

[BARRIERS TO DIVISION ENGAGEMENT](#)

[DIVISION BENEFITS/RESOURCES](#)

[ATTENDING IN PERSON EVENTS](#)

[NETWORKING](#)

[COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES](#)

[AUXILIARY DATA \(QUALITATIVE RESEARCH\)](#)

[INTRODUCTION](#)

[METHOD](#)

[TARGET AUDIENCE](#)

[KEY POINTS](#)

[CENTRAL THEMES](#)

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

In total, we received 347 recorded responses. Below are details on survey respondents' demographics.

Table 1A	Law Student/Attorney
1%	Identified as none of the above
3%	Identified as law student graduates not licensed to practice law
7%	Identified as law students
90%	Identified as attorneys licensed to practice law

Table 1B	Bar Admission
	Respondents identified a fairly even distribution from 2014-2024, with slight peaks in 2022 (11%) and 2020 (10%)

Table 1C	Graduation Year
	The majority of respondents graduated between 2014-2023, with peak years being 2014 (10%); 2019 (9%); and 2020 (8%)

Table 1D	Age
	The majority of respondents were between 27-35 years old, with peaks at age 34 (8%) and 35 (8%)

Table 1E	Practice Setting
8%	Employed in legal services
9%	Employed in government or government agency
12%	Employed in corporate counsel/in-house counsel
44%	Employed in private practice

Table 1F	Gender
1%	Identified as Nonbinary/gender fluid/gender queer
43%	Identified as Male/man
54%	Identified as Female/woman
2%	Preferred not to respond

Table 1G	Gender Identity (Transgender)
6%	Identified Yes
92%	Identified No
2%	Preferred not to respond

Table 1H	Sexual Orientation
1%	Identified as Other
6%	Identified as Gay/Lesbian/Homosexual
6%	Identified as Bisexual
78%	Identified as Heterosexual
9%	Preferred not to respond

Table 1I	Race and Ethnicity
1%	Identified as Other
2%	Identified as Native American/First Nations/Indigenous Peoples
2%	Identified as North African/Middle Eastern
6%	Identified as Asian or Pacific Islander
8%	Identified as Black or African American
12%	Identified as Hispanic or Latinx
75%	Identified as White or Caucasian
4%	Preferred not to respond

Table 1J	First-Generation Status and Working Parent Status
31%	Identified as a first-generation college graduate
20%	Identified as a working parent
76%	Identified as a first-generation lawyer

Additionally, the survey asked about the respondents membership status with the ABA and other groups. The responses suggest strong engagement with the ABA and its affiliated groups, with room for growth in specialty legal associations.

Table 2	Respondent Membership Status
72%	Identified as current dues-paying members of the American Bar Association (ABA) <i>Note: 15% were current non-paying members and 10% identified past membership</i>
50%	Identified as current dues-paying members of ABA Specialty Groups <i>Note: 14% were current non-paying members 9% identified past membership</i>

26%	Identified as current dues-paying members of specialty legal associations <i>Note: 10% were current non-paying members 10% identified past membership Additionally, 45% reported never have been a member</i>
55%	Identified as current dues-paying members of local bar associations <i>Note: 8% were current non-paying members 16% identified past membership</i>
57%	Identified as current dues-paying members of voluntary state bar associations <i>Note: 7% were current non-paying members 11% identified past membership</i>

Table 3	ABA Membership Payment (Who Pays their Membership Dues)
2%	Other
11%	Bar Association
41%	Self
59%	Firm/Employer

Table 4	Past Conferences/Meetings Attended
12%	Attended other ABA Conference/Meeting <i>Note: The majority of responses were previous ABA Midyear and Annual meetings and meetings of various SDFs</i>
18%	Attended 2024 Joint Spring Conference (Omaha, NE)
30%	Attended 2023 Annual Meeting (Denver, CO)
34%	Attended 2024 ABA Midyear Meeting (Louisville, KY)
39%	Never attended an ABA/Division Conference/Meeting

RESPONDENT CONCERNS

Respondents were asked to measure their level of concern with select topics based on their current stage of career. Analysis reveals that the primary concerns of young and new lawyers include:

- **Dealing with Stress:** 52% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about dealing with stress.
- **Work-Life Balance:** 48% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about balancing law school/work and life.
- **Networking:** 47% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about networking
- **Receiving Advice:** 47% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about getting advice from more experienced lawyers.
- **Career Advancement:** 43% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about advancing in their current career path.
- **Advancing Good:** 42% reported being extremely or moderately concerned using their legal skills to do good.
- **Financial Concerns:** 39% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about paying back student debt.
- **Bar Association Leadership:** 37% reported being extremely or moderately concerned about finding opportunities to participate in bar association leadership.
- **Volunteer/Pro Bono Opportunities:** 31% reported being extremely or moderately concerned with finding volunteer or *pro bono* opportunities.

DIVISION ENGAGEMENT LEVEL

Respondents were asked specifically about their Division engagement. Analysis reveals:

Table 5	Division Engagement
9%	Reported a great deal of engagement
11%	Reported a lot of engagement
22%	Reported a moderate amount of engagement
24%	Reported no engagement at all
32%	Reported a little engagement

Table 6	Division Leadership Experience
25%	Held an appointed/elected position
27%	Served on Council
29%	Served as a Scholar/Leadership Academy
51%	Served as a District Representative

With inquiry into the potential for increased engagement with the Division, respondents reported:

Table 7	Potential for Increased Engagement
3%	Reported they would definitely not be more engaged
16%	Reported they probably would not be more engaged
18%	Reported they would definitely yes be more engaged
26%	Reported they might or might not be more engaged

38%	Reported they would probably be more engaged
-----	--

MEMBERSHIP'S CAREER IMPACT

The survey asked respondents to what extent their Division membership has been useful in their career development and professional growth. The results provide:

Table 8	Career Development Impact of Membership
8%	Reported membership is extremely useful
20%	Reported membership is moderately useful
23%	Reported membership is not at all useful
25%	Reported membership is slightly useful
23%	Reported membership very useful

BARRIERS TO DIVISION ENGAGEMENT

The survey also sought to gauge the possibility for future or increased engagement and asked respondents to measure their experiences and hurdles to engagement. They reported:

- **Cost of Travel (Affordability):** 46% reported travel affordability as having caused a great deal or a lot of concern.
- **Unclear Value/Benefits of Membership:** 39% reported lack of clarity around the value/benefits of membership as having caused a great deal or a lot of concern.
- **Lack of Employer Reimbursement:** 36% reported lack of employer pay or reimbursement as having caused a great deal or a lot of concern.
- **Activity in Other Bar/Legal Association:** 35% reported activity in other bar or legal associations as having caused a great deal or a lot of concern.
- **Unclear Division's Values/Mission:** 33% reported that uncertainty around the Division's values and mission as having caused a great deal or a lot of concern.

Interestingly, factors that did not seem to impact respondents' engagement were also identified. They included:

- **Politics:** 50% reported that the Division being too progressive had no impact on their involvement. Equally, 57% reported that the Division being too conservative had no impact on their involvement.
- **Issue Advancement:** 35% reported that the lack of advancement on issues relevant to them had no impact on their involvement.
- **Opportunity Specificity:** 34% reported that the Division lacking practice-specific areas for involvement (being too broad) had no impact on their involvement.
- **Navigating the Division:** 33% reported that their ability to navigate the Division had no impact on their involvement.

DIVISION BENEFITS AND RESOURCES

The survey inquired into the most utilized Division benefits. We found respondents engagement as follows:

- **Email:** 63% reported having reviewed Division email and utilized this resource a moderate amount to a great deal
- **Conference/Event:** 54% reported having attended a conference or in-person event a moderate amount to a great deal.
- **Website:** 52% reported having visited the website and utilizing this resource a moderate to a great deal.
- **Public Service Project:** 39% reported having assisted with a public service project a moderate amount to a great deal.
- **Social Media:** 39% reported having engaged with Division social media a moderate amount to a great deal.
- **CLE/Program:** 39% reported having watched programming or CLE material a moderate amount to a great deal.

We also asked respondents to report the frequency of how they accessed Division content. We found:

- **On-Demand CLE Webinars:** 42% reported having accessed on-demand CLE webinars a great deal to a moderate amount.
- **Live CLE Webinars:** 42% reported having accessed live CLE webinars a great deal to a moderate amount.

- **TYL or After the Bar:** 40% reported having accessed *TYL* or the After the Bar publication a great deal to a moderate amount.

The results also identified some underutilized Division resources. Specifically, we found that the below Division resources can be further promoted and advanced.

- **Young Lawyer Rising Podcast:** 66% reported they do not access this at all.
- **Live Non-CLE Webinars:** 45% reported they do not access this at all.
- **On Demand Non-CLE Webinars:** 41% reported they do not access this at all.

The survey also asked respondents to identify their preferred topics for future content/programming from the Division. They reported the following top preferences:

- Career Development and Networking (56%)
- Litigation and Trial Skills (44%)
- Legal Technology/Innovation (44%)
- Legal Writing/Drafting (43%)
- Ethics and Professional Responsibility (41%)
- Work-Life Balance (39%)
- Negotiation Skills (38%)
- Client Relationship Management (36%)
- Business Development/Marketing (36%)
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (32%)

ATTENDING IN PERSON EVENTS

We asked respondents about attendance at in-person events, including their preferences for attending, reasons to attend, and barriers to attend. Notably, 42% of respondents reported a preference for CLE credits in-person (as opposed to online/on-demand) and 35% of respondents reported a preference for events that require travel. We also identified several other preferences including:

- **Repeat Events:** 63% reported generally attending the same yearly events.
- **Local/Regional Events:** 57% reported a preference for local or regional events that require minimal travel.

Overall, respondents reported an intent to travel and attend in-person events this year. Specifically, 18% plan to attend one event, 24% plan to attend two events, 36% plan to attend three to five events, and 9% plan to attend five to ten in-person events this year.

When asked about their reasons to attend in-person events, respondents reported the below reasons in support of in-person travel/attendance:

- **Interesting Subject Matter:** 86% reported an interesting subject matter as extremely or very important.
- **Subject Matter Applicability:** 66% reported the subject matter's application to their work as extremely or very important.
- **Networking Opportunities:** 63% reported the opportunity to network as extremely or very important.
- **Cost:** 62% reported low or no cost rate as extremely or very important.
- **CLE Convenience:** 55% reported the opportunity to accumulate multiple CLE credits in one physical location as extremely or very important.
- **Convenience:** 53% reported that the event's convenience factor was extremely or very important.

Surprisingly, some pre-assumed reasons for members attending in-person events were found to be inconsistent with the data. Specifically:

- **Family Vacation Opportunity:** 20% reported the opportunity to combine a family vacation (with the event) was slightly important, 17% reported it was not important at all.
- **Pro Bono Opportunities:** 20% reported the opportunity to engage in *pro bono* opportunities (at the event) was slightly important, 35% reported it was not important at all.
- **Service Opportunities:** 18% reported that the opportunity to engage in volunteer or service opportunities (at the event) was slightly important, 34% reported it was not important at all.
- **Leisure:** 19% reported that opportunities to engage in leisure (outside the event) were only slightly important, 10% reported it was not important at all.
- **Speaker Notoriety:** 17% reported that recognizable speakers and panelists were only slightly important, 9% reported it was not important at all.
- **Leadership Obligations:** 15% reported that their leadership obligations were slightly important, 22% reported it was not important at all.

When asked about the barriers to attending in-person events, respondents reported the below barriers to attending in-person events:

- **Financial:** 53% reported their expenses, financial concerns, or lack of funding as

a cause of a great deal or a lot of concern.

- **Work Obligations:** 50% reported work obligations causing a great deal or a lot of concern.
- **Familial Obligations:** 28% reported family/family obligations as a cause of a great deal or a lot of concern.
- **School Obligations:** 12% reported school/school obligations as a cause of a great deal or a lot of concern.

NETWORKING

The survey sought to gauge respondent's interests around networking. In total, 69% reported that networking has positively impacted their career (with 31% reporting it had not). We also inquired into respondents' networking preferences. We found that respondents were the most interested in networking opportunities with the following groups:

- **Experienced Lawyers:** 94% reported some level of interest in networking with more experienced lawyers.
- **Peers:** 92% reported some level of interest in networking with young and new lawyers.
- **Judiciary:** 89% reported some level of interest in networking with members of the judiciary.
- **Potential Clients:** 79% reported being some level of interest in networking with potential clients.

Conversely, respondents were least interested in networking opportunities with:

- **Vendors/Sponsors:** 52% reported moderate or slight interest, 23% reported they are not interested at all in networking with vendors and sponsors.
- **Law Students:** 50% reported moderate or slight interest, 19% reported they are not interested at all in networking with law students.

COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

The survey asked respondents about their preferences for receiving communication from the Division. Overwhelmingly, email was preferred, 76% of respondents reported a preference for email communication; 26% reported a preference for social media; 19% reported a preference for text message; and 11% reported a preference for the Division website.

Notably, respondents also reported that personal contact/communication from a Division leader matters, 53% reported that they would be more likely to increase their engagement with the Division or attend events if they were personally contacted by a Division leader (28% reported it would not and 19% reported they are unsure).

AUXILIARY DATA (QUALITATIVE RESEARCH)

INTRODUCTION

During the 2023-2024 bar year, Division leadership set the explicit goal of collecting ongoing qualitative data from Division leadership to further advance Division engagement and retention. As such, during each formal meeting of the Division's Council, the Division formed informal focus groups that collected detailed qualitative information on select topics. These meetings focused on understanding members' perspectives on the value of the organization and the Division, the impact of social media, ideas for improving member benefits, engagement and retention, and strategies for attracting new members and enhancing the Division's value proposition. This auxiliary data is an additional resource, while collected separately from the survey, it is intended to be presented with the survey's Report. Further, the auxiliary data provides meaningful insight into some of the differences and similarities that exist between Division leadership and membership.

METHOD

The auxiliary data for this research was collected through brainstorming sessions conducted during formal Council meetings of the Division. This approach can be categorized as a qualitative, focus group-style method within a formal organizational setting. The sessions took place during the Fall Cabinet (September 2023) and four Division Council meetings (October 2023, January 2024, May 2024, and July 2024). During these meetings, participants engaged in open-ended discussions; participation was voluntary, with attendees contributing their insights and perspectives on various topics. These topics included member perspectives on organizational value, social media influence, benefits awareness, retention issues, and strategies for growth. Data was collected through note-taking by a designated scribe or meeting secretary.

While this method allows for rich, contextual insights from highly engaged members, it does come with certain limitations. The perspectives gathered were limited to those present at the meetings, which may not represent the entire Division membership. There's also potential for groupthink or undue influence from more vocal participants. The lack of anonymity in this setting might also influence the candor of responses. Additionally, this qualitative approach lacks the support of directly connected quantitative data to reinforce its insights.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience was intentionally skewed towards senior leadership within the Division. Participants were primarily Council members (approximately 70 people) and others in leadership roles within the Division. As such, they were likely to be more experienced members of the Division, representatives of state/local affiliate leaders, and/or potentially closer to the upper age/practice limit of the Division. The Council represents a highly engaged segment of our vast membership, as individuals having taken on significant responsibilities within the Division. This audience brings a comprehensive understanding of the Division's operations and challenges to the discussion. However, their perspectives may not fully represent the diversity of the entire Division membership, particularly newer or less engaged members. There also exists potential bias toward maintaining existing structures or programs, and the insights gathered might miss challenges faced by early-career lawyers or those from underrepresented groups. The limitations of this target audience suggest that the findings may not capture the full spectrum of Division member experiences. The perspectives of newer members, those who have chosen not to pursue advanced leadership roles, and individuals who have recently left the division are likely underrepresented. This could result in blind spots regarding the challenges and needs of a significant portion of the Division membership.

KEY POINTS

- Social media's influence on membership decisions varies, with generational differences noted.
- Awareness and usage of organizational benefits differ among members, with accessibility and cost-effectiveness issues being highlighted.
- Members find value in community, professional development, networking, mentorship, and diversity.
- Retention challenges include lack of anchoring experiences and community.
- Mixed responses were provided on whether there was a direct monetary value received from membership.
- The Division is valued for professional validation, connections, and being a welcoming environment.
- Suggestions for attracting new members include marketing opportunities, law firm incubators, and tech partnerships.

- Reasons for leaving the Division include cost, stronger ties to local/state bars, and lack of community, or value awareness.

CENTRAL THEMES

1. **Need for Clear Engagement Pathways:** Members struggle with understanding how to get involved in ABA and its various SDFs. There is a need for a more clear path to navigate the ABA structure and better communication about leadership opportunities.
2. **Value of Networking and Mentorship:** Networking was consistently highlighted as an important draw for membership, and crucial for retention and professional growth.
3. **Importance of Accessibility and Cost-Effectiveness:** Virtual engagement opportunities and addressing cost barriers are essential for increasing participation and retention.
4. **Focus on Practical Skills and Business Development:** Young and new lawyers seek practical training and support for business development, especially for solo and small firm practitioners.
5. **Balancing Social Media Presence:** While social media may influence membership decisions, there is a need for quality over quantity in social media content and personal touches in engagement.
6. **Emphasis on Unique Offerings:** The ABA should focus on providing value that state and local bars cannot, such as specialized programs or national networking opportunities.
7. **Importance of Community and Personal Connections:** Building a sense of belonging and fostering one-on-one relationships are critical for member retention and engagement.
8. **Need for Targeted Support:** Programs supporting specific groups, such as solo and small firm practitioners, could provide significant value and attract new members.
9. **Challenges in SDF Involvement:** Division members report facing various barriers in actively participating in other SDFs, including time constraints, unclear pathways, and difficulty integrating into established groups.
10. **Desire for Practical Benefits:** Members are looking for tangible benefits that directly impact their professional lives, such as business referrals, practice skills certification, and tech partnerships for discounts.