

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF**  
**Minutes of The Board of Directors of**  
**MetroLALSA, Inc. (“Metro”)**  
**Held via Zoom Conference Call**  
**On the 4<sup>th</sup> Day of June 2023 at 5:00 PM EST**

**Members Present:**

Claudia Campos Martinez	Board Member, VP of Financial Affairs
Ariana Rodriguez- Hernandez	Board Member, VP of Internal Affairs
Darius Santana	Board Member, VP of Pipeline Membership
Odalmy Ruiz	Board Member, VP of Fundraising
Blanca Gates	Board Member, VP of Social Action
Ileana Gomez- Albuquerque	Board Member, VP of Alumni Relations
Isabella Loarte-Ciudad	Board Member, VP of Public Relations
Genesis Canela	Board Member, Vice President
Bernadette Menendez	Board Member, President
Atenedoro Gonzalez	Board Member, Alumni Director
Jordan Montoya	Board Member, Alumni Director

**Constitution of Meeting**

**IT WAS NOTED** that notice of this meeting had been given to all of the members of The Board (the “Board”) and that a quorum of the Directors was present.

1. **Welcome**

Ms. Menendez welcomed everyone, and each member introduced themselves. Ms. Menendez then gave an overview of the meeting agenda. After providing the agenda overview, Ms. Menendez commenced the meeting.

2. **Matters on the Agenda**

***Events***

Ms. Menendez discussed the annual Central Park picnic potluck. She discussed ensuring that the event be held after the July bar exam to ensure recently graduated 3Ls may attend. Ms. Menendez proposed the weekend of August 19th and 20th for the event and the executive board

members present at the meeting agreed with that weekend. Ms. Menendez then focussed on events that would help bring in new 1L members. She mentioned having a happy hour around the first or second week of school starting. The happy hour event would introduce new 1Ls to MetroLALSA, who we are, and what we can offer them. The tentative date proposed by Ms. Menendez is the weekend of September 8th and 9th, with the majority of the members indicating Saturday evening as a good date. Ms. Menendez then instructed Ms. Loarte- Ciudad to create flyers for the event.

Ms. Menendez then asked the board members if there were any ideas regarding possible academic events that MetroLALSA could host or sponsor. Ms. Menendez asked that the board come up with ideas for the next meeting. She asked that the board come up with places and panelists and keep an eye out for more New York city based academic events. Mr. Gonzalez asked what panels we would be interested in and suggested that we partner with other already existing panels. Mr. Santana responded that he is interested in a panel regarding switching careers or alternative careers as a lawyer. He will reach out to the Dominican Bar Association to see if they would like to partner on panel like this. Ms. Gates stated that she is interested in a panel discussion on defense oriented public interest and judicial panels. Ms. Gates stated that many people do not understand the value of judicial internships and the difficulty of obtaining one. Ms. Menendez stated that she is interested in a panel on zoning and land use. She mentioned the Newark housing justice project whose initiative is to take condemned or abandoned land and work with contractors that are willing to create affordable housing, or to gut old houses to sell at for little to nothing to those from the community.

Ms. Gates mentioned the Cafecito Network which sends out a newsletter every Tuesday which is geared towards latina lawyers. She stated that they offer panels and networking events and that MetroLALSA should reach out to them to partner. Ms. Menendez stated that MetroLALSA should partner with a firm for better networking opportunities and host a cafecito with the firm. Ms. Gates seconds Ms. Menendez's idea and mentioned that the board should all subscribe to the Cafecito newsletter. MetroLALSA will reach out to the Cafecito Network via the form on their website and Ms. Menendez will send out an email. Ms. Canela stated we should aim to host this even in the fall since the Pa'Lante Conference is in the spring.

The Board discussed the Pa'Lante conference and it was stated that Cardozo Law will be putting in a bid and Fordham is interested. Ms. Loarte-Ciudad will follow up regarding Fordham's interest. Mr. Santana stated that Pace Law is also interested and he will keep the Board updated.

Mr. Montoya mentioned the idea of a MetroLALSA history event for the school within the region. He stated that this would be a way of informing schools about MetroLALSA and our Pa'Lante conference. Mr. Montoya stated alumni could come and share their experience with our organization. The Board discussed this event should be a general body meeting or an Executive

Board meeting event. Mr. Montoya thinks this event will help reinvigorate interest into MetroLALSA posted Covid pandemic. He stated that the event should occur in the fall in a Board meeting but not close to the Pa'Lante conference.

Mr. Montoya brought up the fact that Square Space has event spaces for MetroLALSA to host from. He also stated that Salesforce has free spaces in most of their buildings meant for nonprofits to use but they need to be booked 6 months in advance and there are limitations as to the type of event. Mr. Montoya also state there is a space in downtown Brooklyn with elevated meeting rooms that is used by the mayor, Steven A. Smith and more.

Mr. Gonzalez wants to bring back the MetroLALSA graduation party, where graduating students get together and receive MetroLALSA stoles. Mr. Gonzalez said that alumni usually organize this event and present at the event.

### ***Membership***

Ms. Menendez told the Board that Toro Law is the only school to reply with the delegates from their schools. Ms. Rodriguez- Hernandez informed the Board that the Pace Law delegates for MetroLALSA are Ms. Gomez-Albuquerque, Ms. Samantha Portillo ([sportillo@law.pace.edu](mailto:sportillo@law.pace.edu) , 856-630-840), and herself. Ms. Menendez asked all Board members to update the list of delegates and to keep them involved.

Ms. Gomez-Albuquerque has to update the alumni chat once she is added to it. She will also make sure recently graduated 3Ls are added to the alumni chat. The Board and past members are to notify Ms. Gomez-Albuquerque about interest in participating in a summer time instagram takeover. Ms. Menendez stated that it should incorporate takeover by alumni and current students.

### ***Pipeline***

Ms. Menendez while speak to Mr. Santana stated that she received a message from Kim Catsro at John Jay which indicated that the Dominican Bar Association was interested in teaming up with our pipeline of membership program. The Dominican Bar Association would like to mentor MetroLALSA students. Mr. Gonzalez asked if other bar groups have mentorship programs. Ms. Menendez asked if MetroLALSA should reach out. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Montoya stated that MetroLALSA should reach out to as many bar associations as possible. Ms. Menendez and Mr. Santana will reach out to MBBA, HNBA, PRB, LJ. Mr. Gonzalez emphasized that the board should be looking into mentorship programs that already exist so that MetroLALSA can just join. Ms. Gates stated that she will reach out to the Cafecito network to see if they have a mentorship program. Mr. Montoya said that the board should reach out to MetroLALSA alumni

for mentors. He stated that we need to think outside the box and listed ideas such as: pre-law mixers and panels, focussing outreach in paralegals and undergraduate schools. Mr. Gonzalez mentioned that our organization can host these events at New York Law School. Ms. Menendez stated that she would put feelers out for a mentor mixer and instructed Ms. Loarte-Ciudad to create a google form to then be shared.

Mr. Santana then asked if there were any past events he should be aware of to continue or build off of. Ms. Loarte-Ciudad stated that there was not. Mr. Satana then asked that the board members keep him informed about any high school or colleges looking for law students to speak on their experience.

### ***Miscellaneous***

Ms. Menendez instructed Ms. Loarte-Ciudad to create a social media post for the graduating 3Ls to post on social media to congratulate them. She asked that Ms. Loarte-Ciudad to request pictures from the graduates' graduations. Ms. Menendez told Ms. Loarte-Ciudad that if she does not hear back in 3-4 days she can just pictures we have.

Ms. Gates mentioned she was a representative of the National Latina/o Law Students Association (NLLSA) and would like ideas for events that NLLSA can possibly collaborate with MetroLALSA .

Mr. Montoya brought up the selling of MetroLALSA merchandise to fundraise money. Ms. Menendez stated that this is Ms. Gates' assignment. Mr. Montoya offered to put the Board in contact with a design and fashion team to help create the logo/design for the merchandise. The Board discussed selling the following items: dad hats, tote bags, t-shirts, crewnecks, lapel pins, bucket hats, and coffee mugs. Mr. Montoya said that the design should incorporate both the old MetroLALSA logo and a new creative design and said he has a Dominican stylist in mind that has worked with celebrities and may be able to help design something for free.

Ms. Menendez stated that there is an available grant for \$2,500 for the Pa'Lante conference. Ms. Campos- Martines said that MetroLALSA needs to find funding. She will send the grant information to Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Montoya for review of legal compliance. Ms. Menendez will forward an email from FCNY to Mr. Montoya, Mr. Gonzalez, and Ms. Campos- Martinez.

### **3. Action Items**

After she completed all the agenda items, Ms. Menendez outlined the action items:

1. The annual central park potluck picnic will be the weekend of August 19th and the Ms. Loarte-Ciudad needs to create the flyers.
2. MetroLALSA will host a happy hour event between September 8th and 9th to welcome 1Ls.
3. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Montoya will add Ms. Menendez and Ms. Gomez Albuquerque to the alumni group chat.
4. Mr. Santana and Ms. Menendez will reach out to bar associations for existing mentorship programs MetroLALSA could partner with.
5. Ms. Rodriguez- Hernandez will update the website using squarespace by adding the pictures from Pa'Lante which can be found in the Google Drive.
6. Ms. Campos- Martinez will send grant information to Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Montoya for review of legal compliance. She will cc Ms. Menendez.
7. Ms. Menendez will send an email she received from FCNY to Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Montoya, and Ms. Campos- Martinez.
8. The next Board meeting is in July.

4. **Adjourning**

As there were no other comments, Ms. Menendez thanked the Directors for their time and service on The Board and the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

5. **Minutes Approval**

These minutes were approved by The Board on **July 31, 2023**.