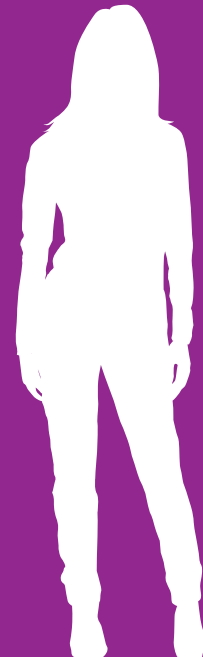


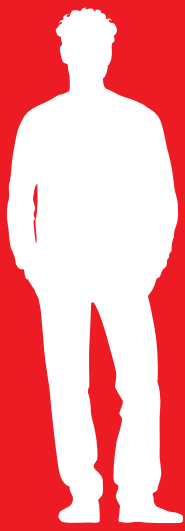
SAN DIEGO COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION®

ACC AMERICA
Association of Corporate Counsel
San Diego Chapter

DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW FOR LAW STUDENTS





EMBRACING DIVERSITY & CLOSING THE GAP IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

INTRODUCTION

The San Diego County Bar Association (SDCBA) & The Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Diversity Fellowship Program (Program) is designed for law students that are:

1. First year OR part-time second year;
2. Diverse;¹
3. Enrolled in an American Bar Association (ABA)-accredited law school;² and
4. In good academic standing.

The Program provides an opportunity for diverse, first year and part-time second year law students to learn and develop skills that are necessary to be successful in law firms, corporate legal departments, and public sector agencies and exposes such employers to qualified individuals who might not otherwise have come to their attention. The Program is modeled after similar programs in Sacramento, Puget Sound/Seattle, Cleveland, St. Louis, Columbus, Atlanta, and the Bay Area. The Program is not a recruitment tool, but an educational tool.

OUR GOALS ARE TO:

- I. Increase the number of diverse attorneys practicing in San Diego County law firms, corporate legal departments, and public sector agencies by providing first year and part-time second year law students with an opportunity to develop skills and make professional contacts through fellowship opportunities with such employers.
- II. Assist San Diego County law firms, corporate legal departments, and public sector agencies in their efforts to recruit competent diverse attorneys by introducing them to qualified, diverse law students who may not have been selected for employment through traditional summer programs. In addition, employment of these students affords a diversity of ideas which enhances the quality of legal services that participating employers may provide their clients.

¹Diverse means all underrepresented classes including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, physical disability, Veteran service or relationship, family and socioeconomic background, and sexual orientation.

²Preference shall be given to students from San Diego County law schools.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Participants in the Program are first year or part-time second year, diverse law students from ABA-accredited law school, with preference given to those from San Diego County law schools. Applications for the Program are submitted online via SDCBA Diversity Fellowship Program. Selected applicants are interviewed by the Interview Committee and notified if they have been chosen to participate in the Program. The Selected Candidates³ are then required to return a letter of acceptance by the deadline indicated in the fellowship offer letter. The duration of the program is eight (8) to ten (10) weeks or consistent with the employer's summer program. The details of the program are described herein and may be subject to change as deemed appropriate by the SDCBA.

APPLICATION PROCESS

In order to participate in the Program, each student must submit the following documents:⁴

1. Application;
2. Resume;
3. Writing Sample based on a fact pattern provided by SDCBA;
4. Personal Statement;
5. Confirmation of Good Academic Standing by the Career Services Department of the law school attended (please see the minimum standard requirement under "Grades" of this document); and
6. Two letters of recommendation⁵

GRADES

Applications must be submitted online as instructed. A committee⁶ will review, evaluate, and score the applications and, based on the foregoing the DFP Director, will determine which applicants will be invited to appear for interviews.

The review committee evaluates the student applications based upon a number of factors, including, but not limited to, the strength of the writing sample, and personal statement, rather than grades alone. This is based on the idea that after completing one semester of law school, the applicant's grades are not available and not the best indicator of the individual's potential for success. However, candidates should be prepared to answer questions regarding their overall academic success during their interview.

³ "Candidate" is an applicant who has been selected for the program following an interview.

⁴ Visit SDCBA's Diversity Fellowship Program's website at www.sdcba.org/diversityfellowship for more details.

⁵ Visit our website (www.sdcba.org/diversityfellowship) for instructions on how to submit. There should be no reference to the name of the law school you attend anywhere in the documents submitted with your application.



The Diversity Fellowship Program means so much to our firm. We are proud to be a diverse firm and believe it is important to provide learning opportunities to students from all backgrounds. The program has also benefited us tremendously in that we have enjoyed the pleasure of working with dynamic, positive, and inspiring students.

Jonathan Andrews

Managing Partner & Founding Member, ANDREWS • LAGASSE • BRANCH & BELL LLP

Minimum standard requirement: even though grades are not a required factor in choosing candidates for this Program, the students must maintain good academic standing; the purpose of this requirement is to show that the student applicant will be enrolled in law school for the fall semester and is not on academic probation and/or in danger of being removed from law school. Employers in the Program and SDCBA need to be assured that student participants will be law students and future attorneys for reason of investment of time and resources in furthering diversity in the legal community.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

An interview committee conducts all interviews of the candidates.⁷ Interviews will be conducted by a panel of two or three interviewers from the SDCBA and the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CDI).

All interviews are conducted in compliance with state and federal employment laws and best practices. All interviewers are required to ask candidates a minimum of 5 primary questions selected from standardized question list that is provided to all members of the interviewing panels. Beyond these primary questions, panelists are permitted to ask additional follow up questions based on the responses provided by the candidates.

BASIS FOR SELECTION OF FELLOWS

Following interviews, the interviewers discuss and select top candidates based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, (1) overall application strength, (2) interview skills, (3) criteria given to the committee by the employers, and (4) the impressions the candidates make at the interview.

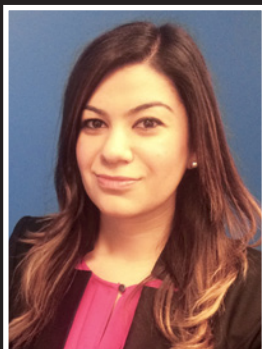
At the conclusion of deliberations, the committee will create a final list of candidates and alternate candidates.

THE MEET AND GREET RECEPTION

Candidates and participating employers are invited to a reception after the fellows have been selected for the Program. After the reception, the participating employers have an opportunity to give their input on the candidates to the SDCBA. Attendance at the reception is mandatory for all candidates. Refer to the DFP Timeline for when the Meet and Greet will be held by visiting our website (www.sdcba.org/diversityfellowship).

⁶ Committee members from law schools will not participate in the selection process.

⁷ Committee members from law schools will not participate in the selection process. All committee members who participate in the interview process participate in an Interview Training & Orientation Program to ensure that interviews are conducted in a fair and equitable manner.



The DFP program gave me an amazing hands-on opportunity to work with some of the best business litigation attorneys in San Diego. I gained invaluable experience and professional relationships that will last me throughout my career!

Anna Dzhabaryan
Thomas Jefferson School of Law

Candidates are expected to present themselves in a professional manner, as employer feedback based on interactions with the candidates at the reception may be considered during final placement deliberations. After the reception, the SDCBA will notify by email each candidate of their placement and employer contact.

ALTERNATE CANDIDATES

Should a candidate cease to be eligible, is unable to accept a fellowship offer, or an additional fellowship placement becomes available, alternate candidates will be assigned fellowships in the following manner:

- The employer will be given the opportunity to review only the resumes of the alternate candidates and provide feedback
- The SDCBA will consider the employers feedback and extend the fellowship offer accordingly

DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM OVERSIGHT STRUCTURE

The Program Committee ("Committee") is comprised of representatives from the SDCBA and/or representatives from the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) who are responsible for reviewing applications, interviewing applicants, and participating in other Program activities.

The DFP Director will serve as the point person for the Program and will coordinate with the Chair of the CDI.

CONFLICTS POLICY

The SDCBA is charged with mediating any unresolved conflicts between the fellows and law firms/corporate legal departments/public sector agencies that cannot be handled internally. **You may contact the DFP Director at bw@bhashinilaw.com or (619)352-0519.**

STUDENT CONCERNS

During the application, interview and placement process, student concerns should be brought to their assigned law school career services liaison, which will bring the concerns to the attention of the SDCBA DFP Director to be addressed.

Conflicts Policy for Law School Staff

Law School Liaisons should bring any concerns to the attention of the DFP Director to be addressed by emailing Bhashini Weerasinghe at bw@bhashinilaw.com or by phone at (619) 352-0519.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT FELLOWS

Time Commitment

The Diversity Fellowship Program is intensive and requires the full-time commitment of the Fellows. Upon acceptance of a fellowship position, Fellows shall neither solicit nor accept employment of any kind for the fellowship period. Upon acceptance of a fellowship, participants agree to complete the Program in its entirety, including all mandatory events.

Professionalism & Integrity

Upon acceptance of a fellowship position, Fellows agree to conduct themselves in the highest level of professionalism, honesty, and integrity. Fellows are required to act ethically and uphold the reputation of the Program and profession. Fellows should take pride in their work and strive for excellence in fulfilling the employer's provided roles and responsibilities in line with the employer's values and core competencies.

Attendance at Program Events

The Program includes events intended to enhance the fellowship experience for all participants. Those events may include some or all of the following: reception/mixer at the commencement and conclusion of the Program; educational seminars covering a variety of topics such as legal writing, time management, professionalism in the workplace, networking, creating mentoring relationships and/or other topics relevant to professional development and advancement. Attendance at these events is mandatory; failure to attend a mandatory event without the Director's permission can result in the removal of the fellow from the Program.

Employer Specific Requirements

Some participating employers may require Fellows to submit to and pass a background check, drug test or conflicts of interest check, or minimum GPA requirement prior to accepting the Fellow's employment.

Communications

Fellows are expected to timely communicate with DFP Director, SDCBA staff, employers, and law school career service office about DFP matters, which includes but not limited to, responding to emails and keeping appropriate parties apprised of anything that may interfere with your obligations to the Program.



Year after year, we have had absolutely terrific diversity fellows. Without exception, they have come well vetted and prepared, with a great attitude, and have added not only well-received cultural richness and diversity, but truly beneficial, high quality legal work.

Thomas Turner

Managing Partner - Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP

Employer Training Programs

Fellows are expected to participate in the same manner and to the same extent as first year summer clerks (or second year summer clerks if no first year program exists) in any training program conducted by the participating employer. In addition, participating employers are encouraged to ask their attorneys to provide supplemental support and mentoring to their fellows; it is anticipated that this process will be informal. Success of the Program will depend, in large part, on the extent to which the Fellow is completely submerged in the law firm, corporate legal department, or public sector agency, this includes, his/her work involvement and participation in social activities of the participating employers are expected to be identical to that of any other summer clerk.



I gained a great mentor out of the program. My mentor treated me as an equal and allowed me to have a voice. She gave me opportunities to work on my writing through research and to better my analytical skills by seeking out my thoughts about case strategy for an ongoing case. I even had the opportunity to attend a trial in L.A.! I gained invaluable legal skills from this program, which are extremely rewarding for my professional career and personal growth.

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Thomas Jefferson School of Law