

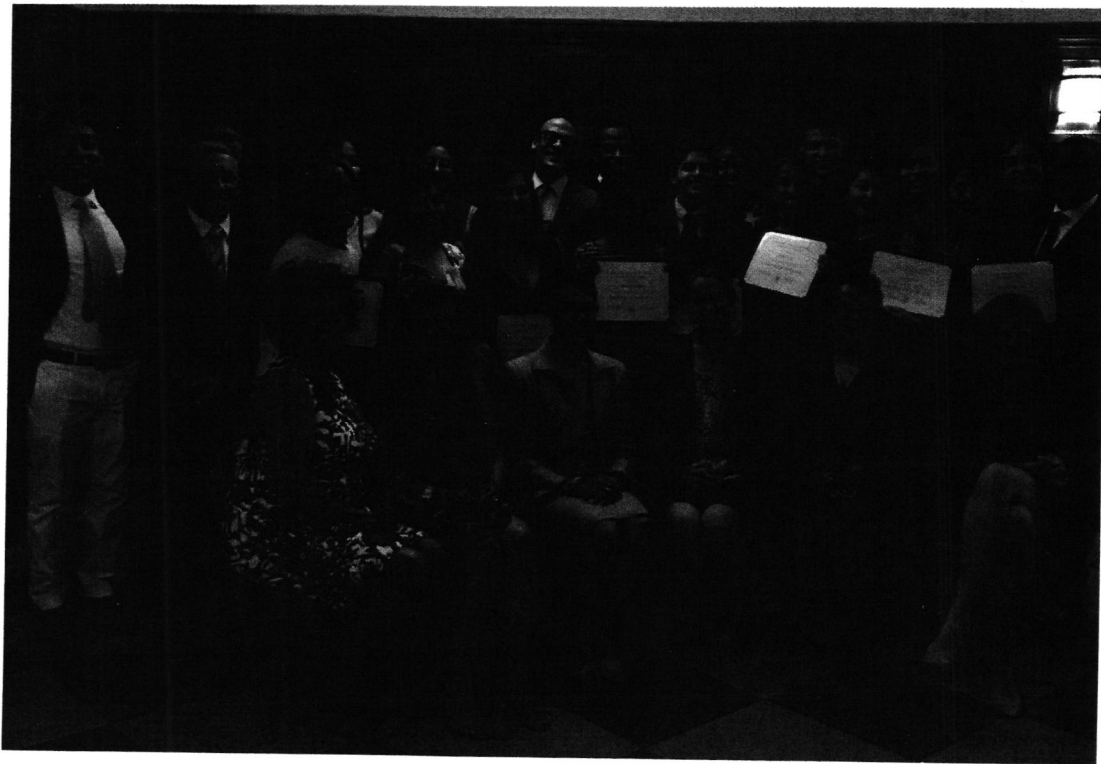


**NEW YORK STATE
JUDICIAL INSTITUTE**



**NEW YORK LEGAL EDUCATION
OPPORTUNITY**

2018 New York Legal Education Opportunity Program



**Final Report
July 25, 2018**

New York Legal Education Opportunity Program (NY LEO 2018)

Summary and Final Report

July 25, 2018

I. Introduction

The New York Legal Education Opportunity Program (NY LEO) was first offered in 2007. Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye established and promoted NY LEO to help ensure a diverse legal community by promoting academic success for individuals historically underrepresented in the legal profession. Under the auspices of Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, the NY LEO Program continued to support the goals established for this program from 2007 through 2009 after which extensive budget cuts in the aftermath of the Great Recession forced the program's suspension.

As a result of the proactive leadership and advocacy of Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner, a NY LEO alumna from the class of 2009, NY LEO funding was restored and the program revived in 2016. The program was run successfully during the summers of 2016 and 2017

NY LEO introduces the Fellows not only to essential legal topics and skills needed to start law school, but also to the culture and standards of the legal profession

To be eligible for NY LEO, applicants must: 1) be a minority, economically or educationally disadvantaged, 2) be a college graduate by June of the summer in which the NY LEO Fellows Program is to be held, and have applied and plan to attend law school in New York State in the fall of the NY LEO Fellows Program year. To publicize the program, each Spring in the year prior to the program, the Chief Administrative Judge sends a letter to the deans of all New York State law schools. The letter describes the program and solicits the deans' assistance in identifying eligible students. The New York State Judicial Institute (JI) follows up with a letter to the admissions deans and directors in December with a reminder letter in February. Generally, an application deadline of April is set, however, depending on response applications may continue to be accepted and reviewed after that date, based on changes in New York law school application deadlines and rolling admissions schedules. Because acceptances are limited to eligible students who are admitted to or waitlisted at New York law schools, the review process includes and emphasis on students' personal statements rather than solely on transcripts and LSAT scores.

The NY LEO Program verifies with the LEO candidates who have applied to law schools their admission status. Offers continue to be made to students as LEO administrators learn about applicants' law school admission status during the month of May. The fluidity of the law school admission process may extend the NY LEO admissions process as reviewers await confirmation of the admission of students whose law school applications are still pending in April and May. In late May, letters are sent to students on wait lists at New York law schools. Admission to NY LEO is conditioned on an admitted or waitlisted status at a New York law school.

In addition to fluidity in the admissions process, quirks in the budget approval process for NY LEO affected the ability to get all program components in place in advance of the 2016 and 2017 program start dates. The JI has worked hard with DCJS and OCA to streamline and regularize the budget process so that program planning may occur with greater lead time in upcoming years. Responsibility for the budget was placed with OCA. Based on the experience with the 2017 program, most plans were put in place early to provide for faculty, facilities, and food service. This permitted the program administrator to get faculty and staff contracts signed earlier in the summer and to have the NY LEO fellows complete the paperwork necessary for their stipends on their first day with the program. Nevertheless, the program encountered processing delays in having payment of the stipends and contracts issued on time. The NY LEO and JI staff will continue to work to streamline and expedite the processing of all NY LEO program components to ensure timely contracting, procurement, and payment to support all program components.

Preparation for the 2018 NY LEO class proceeded smoothly. The number of applications to the NY LEO program was lower for the 2018 cycle than for the 2017 cycle. NY LEO administrators may wish to take another look at the application process, with an emphasis on outreach and recruitment efforts. Through the work of the program administrator and Executive Director, essential program components, such as the hiring of faculty, teaching assistants, and interns, and the preparation for housing in the dorms and related startup tasks were put in place well before the start of the program. Teaching assistant hiring remains challenging given competition for law related jobs and the costs of travel to White Plains relative to the stipends received. The Executive Director and JI leadership may consider re-structuring the pay scale for law school teaching assistants and college office assistants to ensure that the teaching assistant position is competitive with other law student opportunities and that the college office assistant stipends are consistent with the tasks, time commitment, and experience required and make sense as compared with law student teaching assistant stipends.

II. The 2018 NY LEO Class

By design, NY LEO Fellows are a diverse group. Many were the first generation of their families to attend college, and most were the first in their families to attend any type of professional school. The children of immigrants or immigrants themselves, many NY LEO students have overcome significant hardships in their relatively young lives and their interest in pursuing law often had a direct bearing on their own experiences. Not surprisingly, several wanted to pursue immigration law; almost all expressed a real desire to advocate for those who, by reason of poverty, language, culture or background, face formidable odds and injustices. Several have seen entry into the legal profession as an important opportunity for upward mobility for themselves, their families, and their communities. Several NY LEO fellows seek to pursue careers in big law and in leadership positions in business and government.

The 2018 NY LEO class consisted of a diverse class of 20 fellows: nine males and eleven females. The Fellows are from African American, Latinx, South Asian, East Asian, White,

Native American and mixed backgrounds. The Fellows hail from all over New York State, including New York City (the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens), Long Island, Westchester, and Buffalo, New York.

Despite varied backgrounds, NY LEO Fellows over the years have tended to form an almost immediate bond. The 2018 NY LEO fellows formed connections that strengthened and grew during the course of the program as the fellows took classes, studied, and relaxed together and provided both academic and moral support to one another. Several of the fellows have developed friendships and are committed to remaining in touch with each other and with the program as they begin their law school careers.

III. Orientation

Two weeks before the start of the program, the program director sent orientation materials to accepted students. The materials included copies of the first day's readings for doctrinal classes, a daily schedule, dormitory rules, directions to the JI and the Pace Law School campus, and a map of the campus.

The Fellows check into their dormitory (Dannat Hall, at Pace Law School) on the Sunday just prior to the beginning of the six-week program. At check in, the students sign in, NY LEO hosts an informal late afternoon pizza party, inviting the Fellows, the TAs and those faculty members able to attend. This provides an excellent ice-breaker and a chance for everyone to introduce themselves.

Orientation took place on June 6, 2018. It began with breakfast and a morning session where the fellows met each other and were introduced to faculty, teaching assistants, interns and the staff of the JI. The Honorable Juanita Bing Newton, Dean of the JI gave greetings, as did Horace Anderson, Interim Dean of the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. The 2018 Orientation program included presentations from law school faculty, administrators, and deans. Dr. Angela M. Joseph, Director of Financial Aid at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law gave a presentation entitled "Thinking Ahead – Financing Your Legal Education" which provided key information about financing legal education, the implications of law school debt, and tips for saving money and keeping debt burdens manageable. Nitza Escalera, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Assistant Dean of Diversity Initiatives at Fordham University School of Law then addressed the fellows about "Navigating the Law School Experience" providing tips for students of color and those who are first in their families to attend law school about how to prepare for the overall law school experience, where to obtain resources and support, and how to support common pitfalls. The morning program ended with a presentation by NY LEO alumna Thaddecia J. Smith, who welcomed the fellows, provided tips and pointers for the LEO program, for law school, and for what the fellows might expect as they enter the legal profession.

During the afternoon of the Orientation day, the fellows were given a tour of the Pace Law Library, and attended workshop about legal research basics. They then completed the form for internet access and received course materials, books and supplies from the program's three teaching assistants (TAs). The fellows then attended their first class, Lawyering (Legal Writing)

with Professor Michelle Simon of Pace Law School. The inclusion of this class was designed to provide students with an early introduction to the basics of close case reading and briefing a case in preparation for their first doctrinal classes.

IV. Academic Curriculum and Class Schedule

The NY LEO academic program is rigorous and demanding. It consists of four courses: Legal Skills, Analysis and Writing (Lawyering Process); Torts; Contracts; and Civil Procedure, designed to provide the Fellows with a sample of the first year law school experience, while preparing them to succeed and excel by explaining and de-mystifying the process. For the 2018 program, we added a robust Academic Skills component directed by Professor Laura Mott of the CUNY School of Law. The Academic Skills team led by Professor Mott, provided structured academic skills support for all of the doctrinal courses. Professor Mott coordinated with the program faculty and teaching assistants to provide consistent, sustained academic support to all of the fellows.

Legal Skills, Analysis and Writing is designed to teach students the basics of close reading and analysis of cases and statutes, rule identification, explanation, and synthesis, the paradigm of legal analysis, and fundamentals of legal writing. Professor Michelle Simon focused the course of rule synthesis and a draft of the discussion section of a law office memorandum. Feedback from the NY LEO fellows indicated that many would have preferred a more robust writing assignment and closer connection with legal research and with issues addressed in the doctrinal courses.

The Torts class focused on the basic concepts in torts, with an emphasis on the rules for assault and battery and discussion of each of the elements of a tort and role of causation. The course is designed to present material that Fellows will be seeing in their first year Torts classes and to introduce them to the degree of rigor expected, while at the same time explaining and de-mystifying the process of learning to think like a lawyer. Professor Garfield Tenzer approaches the course by incorporating both traditional doctrinal teaching methods and academic skills components.

In Contracts, the fellows covered a range of issues, from the basics of contract formation (offer, acceptance, consideration), breach of contract, damages to more nuanced questions including the determination of expectation damages, mutual assent, manner of acceptance, the impact of delay, among others. Professor Horace Anderson approaches the course from a traditional doctrinal approach, using a combination of lecture and the Socratic method.

Civil Procedure provided an introduction to a lawsuit and included in-depth consideration of personal jurisdiction, subject matter jurisdiction, venue, pleadings, motion practice, and discovery, among other matters. Judge Jenny Rivera used a combination of lecture, discussion, and problem methods in teaching the course. Judge Rivera made sure to take extra time to meet with the students to discuss any questions they have about Civil Procedure and also to answer

any questions they have about law school, law practice, or journey to becoming a Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals.

Law students are often uneasy during their first semester because they receive little feedback as to how they are faring in class until the final exam. The NY LEO program aims to replicate that to an extent (to prepare students for the type of teaching they will experience). The program also gives the Fellows the experience of law school exams, which, like law school teaching styles, differ from their undergraduate experiences. NY LEO differs from the experience at many law schools in that the academic skills support, feedback, and instruction on the structure and history of U.S. help to de-mystify and clarify expectations for law school and the practice of law. For example, the fellows receive written feedback on their exams. The professors also review the exams in class, highlighting model good and bad answers to give students a better understanding of what will be expected of them. The academic skills program assists students with developing key skills such as close reading, the paradigm of legal analysis, case briefing, note-taking, outlining. Academic skills also supports student writing and understanding substantive doctrinal issues.

Students receive grades on an A through F grading scale (with +/- steps in between). Although every student participates in an exit interview with faculty and is given a grade and feedback, there is no "grade point average," ranking or report card given for the Fellows. Instead, the focus is on whether each Fellow has satisfactorily completed the program, by putting in the necessary work and engaging in a way that truly enhances her/his readiness for law school. In 2018, the faculty unanimously agreed that each Fellow satisfactorily completed the program. While degrees of preparation to succeed in law school varied among the fellows, each fellow worked diligently and made progress in the program. Some of the fellows were on their way to top-ranked law schools like Harvard and Cornell, while others were waitlisted at their first choice schools. Based on performance in the program, each Fellow received a Certificate of Completion signed by the Dean of the Judicial Institute and the Executive Director of NY LEO at the end of the program.

V. Faculty / Teaching Assistants / Staff

A. Faculty

A diverse and experienced group of four law school professors and a Court of Appeals Judge served as faculty in the 2017 NY LEO Fellows Programs. Professor Horace Anderson, Interim Dean and Professor of Law at Pace Law School, taught Contracts class. Professor Leslie Garfield Tenzer and Professor Michelle Simon tenured law faculty at Pace Law School, taught classes in Torts and Lawyering respectively. The Honorable Jenny Rivera, Senior Associate Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals taught Civil Procedure. Professor Laura Mott of the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law taught Academic Skills, Analysis and Writing.

B. Teaching Assistants

NY LEO also engaged three teaching assistants (TAs), Ashley Unangst, and Nisha Desai, rising 2L at Pace Law School, and Abigail Downs, a recent graduate and Pro Bono Scholar at

CUNY School of Law. The TAs working closely with Professor Laura Mott to develop skills support for the NY LEO fellows. The TAs attended classes, accompanied the Fellows on field trips, taught the study groups and were available to the Fellows outside the study group classes as well. One of the TAs, Abigail Downs also served as a Resident Assistant to the NY LEO program. Ms. Downs lived in the dorms with the Fellows and was available in the evenings for Fellows who needed assistance. The TAs were dedicated and hard-working and provided helpful input about the progress of individual Fellows. They are a key part of the program. Ms. Downs, in particular, did outstanding work with the NY LEO fellows.

C. Staff

The NY State Judicial Institute hosted the NY LEO Program. The JI's location on Pace Law School's campus and good relationship with the law school helps make the program a success. A Pace Law School dormitory (Dannat Hall) immediately adjoining the JI was used for housing the NY LEO Fellows. The Fellows also are given access to the Pace Law Library where they can use the library's computer lab.

Classes are held in the breakout rooms at the JI. Natalie Gomez-Velez, Professor of Law at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law directed the 2018 program. Other JI Staff working on the program include Jill Shukin (administrative support and supervision of interns), and Sam Ross, a college intern, who assisted with a full range of administrative tasks associated with the program.

VI. Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities

NY LEO is designed to bring traditionally underrepresented groups into the legal profession by preparing them to succeed in law school. Academic preparation is a major component to success in law school, but it is not the only component. Since the Fellows were, for the most part, first generation law school students, the extracurricular and co-curricular aspect of the program focused on introducing Fellows to the profession and to the culture of law school.

A. Court Visits

In addition to academic classes, the NY LEO Program includes field trips to courts in New York State. The fellows visited the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York on Friday June 22, 2018.

Second Circuit Executive Karen Milton organized the visit and introduced the program. The Honorable Victor Marrero, Southern District Judge and Second Circuit Clerk Catherine O'Hagan Wolfe then greeted the fellows. Judge Marrero emphasized the importance of the rule of law and of engaging the wider community in civics education and the United States' project of self-government and fidelity to law. Ms. O'Hagan Wolfe provided historical background and noted the important roles played by the Southern District court (the "mother court") and the Second Circuit in the broader legal landscape.

The fellows then had the pleasure of observing oral argument in the *Classic Laundry* case before Judges Livingston, Winter, and Calabresi followed by a discussion and de-brief with the attorneys on both sides of the case. This was followed by a trip over to the Southern District court for a courtroom tour, observation of a very moving naturalization ceremony, and a visit and discussion with Clerk of Court Ruby Krajick and members of her senior staff. Ms. Krajick and her team were extraordinarily generous with their time and provided key tips and pointers to the fellows about law school, the practice of law, and successful practice before the federal courts.

The visit culminated in a lunch discussion led by Second Circuit Judge Dennis Jacobs and Southern District Magistrate Judge Robert Lehrburger. The NY LEO fellows engaged in a lively and candid discussion and question-and-answer session during which they learned about law school tips, legal career pathways, strategies for success and the importance of hard work, developing an excellent reputation, and being true to oneself.

The Fellows also visited the Bronx Criminal Court where they spent time in the arraignment part and had an informal lunch with several of the judges. The Fellows met with staff of the Bronx District Attorney's office and with Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner. Judge Juanita Bing Newton and Executive Director Natalie Gomez-Velez facilitated the organization of the trips with assistance of Second Circuit Executive Karen Milton, who coordinated all aspects of the federal court visit and with the assistance of NYS Criminal Court Judge George Grasso and his office, who helped arrange the trip to the Bronx courts. At each site, judges, court staff, and attorneys were wonderfully accommodating and accessible to the Fellows, and the Fellows were very well received. The NY LEO fellows were especially honored to meet with Assemblywoman Joyner because she is an alumna of the program, a truly successful lawyer and elected official, and a key supporter of the program.

B. Presentations

Part of the NY LEO Program includes a series of presentations designed to educate the Fellows about law school and the legal profession. In addition to the presentations at Orientation, the Fellows engaged in two presentations. The first, on "Balance, Meditation, and Stress Management" by Professor Victor Goode of CUNY School of Law, emphasized the importance to all lawyers, especially social justice lawyers, of balance, self-care and stress management. Prof. Goode began the session by describing his background as a civil rights lawyer and a law professor and his work in support of mindfulness and balance among lawyers as a method of stress management and successful practice. Prof. Goode then led the fellows in a short mediation exercise. The second presentation, "Alternative Career Paths" by Judge Nelson Roman of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, described his unique career path from a NYC police officer, to an Assistant District Attorney to a State Court and then a federal court judge. He highlighted for the fellows the importance of hard work, preparation, networking, and most of all, not being afraid to succeed. Judge Roman's presentation was extremely well-received by the fellows, many noting that it crystallized for them the possibility of reaching the heights of the legal profession.

C. Mentoring

The Mentor component of the NY LEO program is designed to pick up where the six-week academic program ends. This year, Executive Director Natalie Gomez-Velez reached out to the Franklin Williams Commission, the Latino Judges Association, Bar Association leaders, NY LEO alumni and others to locate mentors for the NY LEO fellows. Judge Newton also identified and reached out to judges and attorneys to serve as mentors. We matched virtually every 2018 NY LEO fellow with a mentor.

We intend to find a law school or bar association sponsor to host another Mentor/Fellow reception during the mid-winter law school break. It is hoped that such a gathering will jumpstart the Fellows' planning for summer employment which is key to assisting their entry into the profession. It also will provide a mentor/mentee activity designed to strengthen the bond the NY LEO Fellows have already established and will enable them to stay in touch with and evaluate the Fellows mid-year.

D. Closing Dinner Celebration

The 2018 NY LEO Program concluded with a farewell dinner held on July 12, 2018 at the Tudor Room at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. In addition to all the Fellows, most of the faculty, all of the TAs, the intern, Dean Newton and several of the JI Staff attended. The evening began with a networking reception attended by the Honorable Nelson Roman, U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York, the Honorable Joanne Quinones, President of the Latino Judges Association, the Honorable George Grasso, Supervising Judge, Criminal Court of the City of New York, Bronx County, among others. A few of the NY LEO mentors also attended the closing dinner. The NY LEO faculty presented each fellow a Certificate of Completion, and warm, heartfelt remarks were made by Dean Newton, Executive Director Gomez-Velez, faculty, and teaching assistants. At the end of the evening a lovely group photo was taken with our honored guests. It was a truly memorable evening and a fitting capstone to the summer's hard work (and fun).

VII. Program Assessment and Recommendations

The 2018 NY LEO program received very positive feedback from the Fellows according to a survey issued at the program's end. The feedback from the Fellows included the following responses to the question "What in your own words, are some of the benefits of the program?"

The program allowed me to see that I could not only be successful in law school, but that I was in control of the quality of my studying, work and grades.

This program gives you an edge and gives you the confidence to challenge yourself in many ways as it pertains to life and the academia.

Experiencing a test-run of a law school schedule was extremely beneficial.

I had no idea what I was getting myself into for law school, but now I have an idea of what I am getting myself into: a lot of analysis, and writing. I love that this program is investing in the future of underrepresented people in the legal field. I felt like a scholar,

and never have felt that way. While at one point I did cry because I felt like the intellect required was a lot, I made it through the program, and I know if I cry in the future throughout law school that I can make it.

Thank you for making me more resilient through this program, and for the friendships I've made.

Some benefits of the program I found are study strategies that work best for me, how much time I accurately need to complete outlines and briefs, and proper case reading.

I learned crucial skills, including how to outline, how to brief a case, & how to prepare & take an exam. It has been invaluable & I am so grateful for this experience. Thank you, NY LEO!

The confidence you gain before law school starts that it is possible and enjoyable; the ability to read, understand, and brief cases before class; how to take detailed and concise notes in class without getting lost or distracted; how to study properly and practice close reading; learning the benefits of practicing mindfulness and practicing healthy study breaks; the immeasurable benefits of visiting courts, speaking with judges and other legal professionals, networking, and gaining critical advice from professionals who were once in your shoes.

This program is phenomenal. Everyone did a stellar job at helping the fellows.

A clear majority of the Fellows found the program to be challenging and stated that they learned a great deal during the program. All students felt confident about what they learned and all thought the course work, skills support and Teaching Assistants were helpful.

Indeed, the NY LEO director and staff were honored to receive a thank you card with following messages from the fellows:

Thank you so much. I am so blessed to be a part of LEO. You all have changed me and my life for the better! I am forever indebted to you all. XOXO God Bless – Ciera Scriber (Future Judge)

Thank you from the moon and back. Thank you for believing in me and my vision of my ideal career path for the future. The constant support from everyone at NY LEO is beyond inspiring! The guidance that I have received will travel with me everywhere I go and for that reason I am very grateful. May positivity and happiness travel with you all until the sands of the hour glass fall. – Glory E.A.

One of the greatest values of mentors is the ability to see ahead what others cannot see and to help them navigate a course to their destination. – That Is exactly what you have done for all of us in this LEO cohort. I'm very thankful for your hard work, understanding, dedication, guidance and positive presence in this program. I wish you all the best of luck in your futures. – Rina Maria Hernandez

Thank you so much for investing the time and effort to make this program possible. I've learned so much! I couldn't think of a better way to spend the summer before 1L. I look forward to keeping in touch! – Carla Luna

To everyone at Leo, thank you so very much for your help, guidance, support and wisdom! I feel confident going into my 1L and it is all thank to all of you. I will keep all of your advice and tips close to my heart, and I will make sure to stay in touch! – Khalil Williams

It is rare that there are so many people dedicated to the success of others. Everyone in this program has been so kind and really caring about each and every one of us and our success. Thank you! Without this, I don't believe I could go to law school with confidence I have gained so much from friends to life-long memories. Thank you! With Love – Brandi Doyal

Dear LEO Staff, Thank You for this opportunity. This program has been extremely helpful. I am proud to be a part of this group and happy to start my legal career in this fashion. Thank you for taking your precious time to teach us about the law. Your advice has been invaluable. – Jelani Watson

Dear LEO Staff, Thank you so much for all the work you have done for making this program possible. What I have gained from this program is invaluable and I am so grateful for it. Gracias – Karla Diaz

Dear LEO Staff, Thank you for this opportunity! The confidence I've gained during this program will aid me immensely in law school! – Khalid O. Vrede

I can't express in words how grateful I am! Thank you guys so much for everything that you have done for us! I hope to keep in touch with everyone! – Halima

Thank you for all you've done to make me feel accomplished and welcomed. I am forever grateful and appreciative for this experience. May God continue to bless each staff and faculty member individually – Shoshana W.

Dear LEO Staff, Thank you for all your help. I was always impressed by everyone's sincere and genuine help and support. MY law school experience has been forever changed thanks to NY LEO and for the better! Thank you! – Andre Perez

Dear LEO Staff, I cannot thank you enough. Thank you for your guidance, assistance, and patience. I could not do it without you. I am immensely grateful. – Ashely Gonzalez

Dear Leo Staff, thank you for all your support and for being the wind beneath our wings. Thank you for your commitment to diversifying the Legal Profession. – Lourdes

This program has given me the confidence to aim higher and aspire for more. Thank you! Extremely grateful, Zach Z

Thank you so much for the wonderful experience I had here. Although I'm still anxious about starting law school in a few weeks, I'm extremely grateful I had an opportunity to

experience it beforehand. Thank you for guiding us, answering our many questions, and teaching us not only what it means to be a great law student, but also what it takes to become a great lawyer. Forever grateful, Anna Chuen.

This program was everything I needed and more. It wouldn't have been possible without all of your help and hard work. Thank You! – Armando Marin

Needless to say, we were very pleased with the fellows' statements in the thank you card. We also surveyed the fellows and reviewed the program to identify constructive recommendations to continue to improve the program.

Recommendations

In response to a survey, the fellows provided specific recommendations regarding teaching assistant hours and the relative effectiveness of various academic skills approaches. We plan to incorporate these recommendations. Overall, the fellows were very pleased with the coursework. One area in which the fellows recommended changes was in the Lawyering class – the fellows would have liked a more interactive class, more feedback and re-writing, and a more robust opportunity to engage in legal analysis and writing.

Based on observations of the program and feedback from the fellows, the executive director recommends:

1. Returning the Lawyering Process class to the format used during the 2017 summer, which included greater opportunities for feedback and re-writing and culminated in the drafting of a full law office memorandum (rather than just a synthesized rule and discussion section).
2. Retaining the Academic Skills faculty position with supervision and coordination of the work of the teaching assistants and planning for more one-on-one meetings with fellows in addition to office hours and review sessions.
3. Continuing efforts to hire teaching assistants early and reconsider the stipend amounts to ensure the strongest possible applicants and a full complement of at least three teaching assistants and to build in time for the teaching assistants to plan with faculty and administrators before the program begins
4. Continue to ensure that one or more teaching assistants resides at the dorms and budgeting for additional compensation for the teaching assistant(s) who live at the dorm
5. Evaluating the program's administrative needs and tailoring the job description to ensure the most effective support and that there is consistency and fairness in job tasks and stipend amounts among law student teaching assistants and office college assistants.
6. Continue to work to diversify the NY LEO faculty with respect to faculty background and NY law schools represented

7. Explore other venues at which to host the NY LEO program, possibly including venues in New York City to facilitate greater engagement with law offices, law schools, courts, and the broader legal community.

It is our understanding that funding for the 2019 NY LEO program has been secured and that there may be an increase in the funding allocation based on the success of the program and advocacy by the JI. If that is the case, it should be possible to implement many of the above recommendations.

While it is still too early to determine the longer term success of the NY LEO Program in terms of fulfilling its goal of bringing more underrepresented groups to the legal profession, the evidence thus far is promising. That the program has already had a positive impact on the Fellows is clear from their expressions of gratitude at the program's end.

We plan to remain in contact with the Fellows through regular updating of our contact lists. This summer, the program created a newsletter about the program to share with alumni, mentors, and supporters. We have also established a LinkedIn page to facilitate continued connection and networking among this year's Fellows, alumni of the program, mentors, and other participants and supporters of NY LEO.

Conclusion

NY LEO has had a substantial impact on each of the participating Fellows. We look forward to remaining in touch with the Fellows as they progress through law school to identify specific areas for improvement and to ensure future success of the NY LEO program and its Fellows.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie Gomez-Velez

Natalie Gomez-Velez
2018 NY LEO Executive Director



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New York Legal Education Opportunity Program (NY LEO)

Introduction

The **New York Legal Education Opportunity Program** (NY LEO) is designed to ensure a diverse legal community by promoting academic success in law school for individuals historically under represented in the legal profession.

Through an intense six-week summer program, the NY LEO Program assists minority, low income and economically or educationally disadvantaged college graduates in acquiring the fundamental and practical skills necessary to succeed in law school. The program is available to qualified candidates who will attend law school in New York.

The NY LEO Program is administered by the Honorable Juanita Bing Newton, Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute. The Program takes place at the Judicial Institute which is located on the campus of the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. Students live on campus and participate in the program full-time. Experienced law professors provide instruction in first-year law school core courses as well as in legal research, writing and analysis. As part of the program, students have the opportunity to visit courts in session and meet with members of the judiciary and other legal professionals.

Interview with Dean Newton: [Podcast](#) | [Transcript](#)

*Application are now being accepted. ~~Application Deadline - March 22nd, 2019.~~
ROLLING ADMISSIONS*

2019 Brochure

