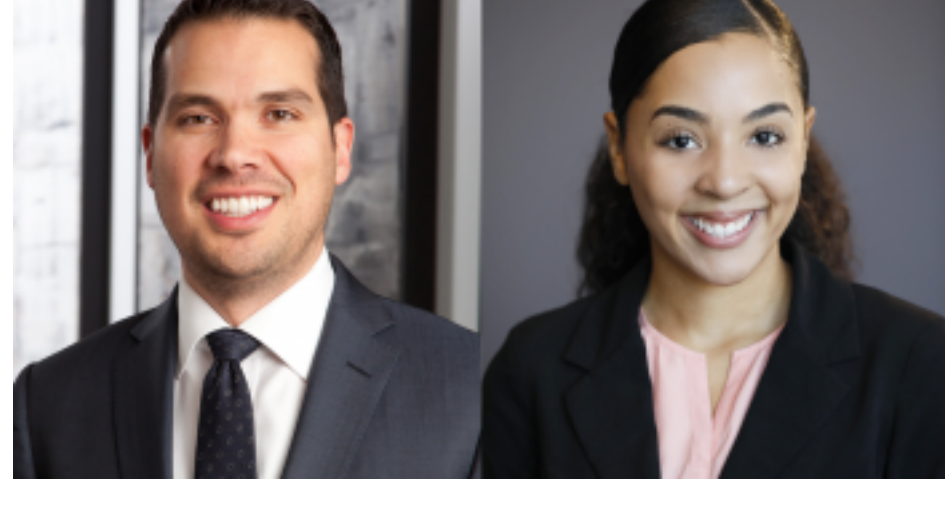


ASU, Phoenix law firm team up to improve diversity in the legal profession

December 4, 2019

For as long as there has been a legal profession, diversity has been lacking. Despite statistical improvements in recent years, it remains one of the least diverse fields in the United States. The American Bar Association reports that in 2019, 85% of active attorneys in the U.S. identify as Caucasian, and 64% are male. And the problem is even more pronounced at the highest levels, with greater disparities among equity partners at law firms and general counsels of Fortune 500 companies.

Phoenix law firm [Fennemore Craig](#) is partnering with the [Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law](#) at Arizona State University to effect meaningful change, seeking to broaden the industry's demographics by growing the pipeline of diverse candidates from ASU Law. Fennemore Craig is offering financial support in the form of a Diversity Scholarship and Fellowship, and supporting pipeline and legal preparation programs, hoping to increase diversity both at its own firm and within the greater legal sector.



James Goodnow, Fennemore Craig's president and managing partner (at left), and Diversity Scholarship and Fellowship recipient Nyla Knox, a first-year student at ASU Law.

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"Improving diversity in the legal profession is first and foremost the right thing to do," said James Goodnow, Fennemore Craig's president and managing partner. "It is also critical to the legal profession if it is to continue to represent and provide legal advice and guidance to businesses, individuals, government agencies and organizations that are themselves diverse and have customers and decision-makers who are diverse. All law firms must be able to appreciate the nature of their clients and their goals and values, which can only be accomplished when those firms understand and appreciate the views of their clients as well as any other parties involved, which are continuing to increase in diversity."

ASU Law Dean [Douglas Sylvester](#) said this first-of-its-kind partnership with Fennemore Craig is just the latest step in the school's ongoing efforts to find innovative solutions to the legal profession's diversity problem. The Law School Admission Council's Diversity Committee recognized ASU Law's efforts earlier this year, honoring the school with its [2019 Diversity Matters Award](#).

"A critical element of increasing diversity in the legal profession is increasing access to law schools, and it's exciting to work with a law firm like Fennemore Craig to help create opportunities for a broader base of students," said ASU Law Dean Douglas Sylvester. "ASU Law has been at the forefront of this issue with our innovative Pipeline Initiative program, working at the high school level to develop critical-thinking and writing skills, enhancing students' chances of getting into law school, and ensuring they are prepared for success once they arrive."

And the partnership with Fennemore Craig is designed to strengthen and extend that pipeline, Sylvester said, helping students not only gain access to law school, but then helping those students make the move from law school to a top law firm.

The initial Diversity Scholarship and Fellowship recipient is Nyla Knox, a first-year student at ASU Law, who will participate in a fellowship with Fennemore Craig this summer. She was elated to learn she is the initial recipient and said the benefits go far beyond the financial aspect.

"It was a sigh of relief to get the financial help, but also to know that going into law school I would have mentors at Fennemore Craig who I could reach out to for advice and to help me with the process," she said, noting that the firm has been in frequent communication with her since April, checking in, offering guidance and ensuring she has everything she needs to succeed.

Knox, who majored in justice studies as an undergrad at ASU, has known since high school that she wanted to become an attorney. But she was venturing into an unknown world, unsure of how to navigate the road ahead.

"I was going in blind when applying for law school as I don't know any lawyers and I don't have any lawyers in my family. I was figuring everything out on my own as I went," she said. "Receiving this scholarship and fellowship, establishing a relationship with Fennemore Craig and having experienced people who are willing to assist me has been a huge help."

Like ASU Law, Fennemore Craig is involved in multiple diversity projects across various levels of education.

"The firm recognizes that in order to improve the diversity of the legal profession, it's vital to improve the opportunities and generate interest with all students, including diverse students, to pursue a law school education," Goodnow said. "Consequently, Fennemore Craig works with high schools, colleges and law schools to ensure that diverse students appreciate the legal profession as a career and help ensure increased opportunities for those students who choose to pursue a law school education."

It is truly a top priority. Visitors to Fennemore Craig's website will find that their commitment to diversity is the first thing that comes up on the ["About Us" section](#).

"That is by design," Goodnow said. "Most, if not all, businesses hold firm to the proposition that their most valuable asset is their people. Fennemore Craig also holds strongly to that belief and we want everyone who is thinking about working with us to understand our values. By putting our emphasis on diversity up front, our goal is to ensure that everyone knows that we take our people and the diversity of our people seriously. It is who we are."

And that, he says, is better for both the firm and its clients.

"Fennemore Craig has and always will put the client first," he said. "We are able to do that because we value the diversity of thought that is crucial to a full-service law firm which provides representation that reflects the dynamic and diverse nature of our region and the myriad of challenges facing our business clients. When we have diversity around the table, we are able to find innovative solutions because of the experiences and different perspectives of our team. That equals better results for clients. The creation of the Scholarship and Fellowship thus allows us to do the right thing socially and deliver better results for our clients."

A Phoenix native, Knox says she wants to give back to the community she grew up in and plans to practice in the Valley. She is undecided about a specific legal career, but thinks spending the summer with Fennemore Craig will help narrow her focus.

"I really appreciate what ASU Law and Fennemore Craig are doing in reaching out to people like myself who may not come from a background where you have everything that you need to succeed in law school," she said. "As someone who has worked hard to get where I am, I really appreciate not only being able to take some of the financial burden off, but also knowing that I have people in my corner."

Arizona Impact Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Law Graduate student Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law



Nicole Almond Anderson

Director of Communications, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law

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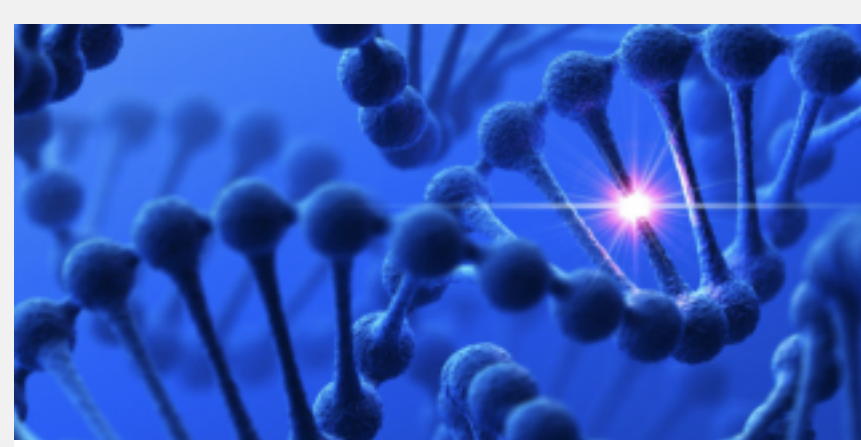
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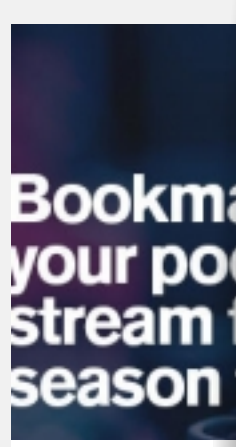
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Fennemore Craig continues 135-year legacy of innovation and growth

Law firm drives cutting-edge solutions for clients, rewarding career opportunities for staff



September 16, 2020

With a long legacy of top-ranking attorneys delivering solutions to leading companies and entrepreneurs, [Fennemore Craig](#) continues to expand its practice and locations to offer innovative career growth opportunities to graduates of the [Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law](#) at Arizona State University.

ASU Law recently spoke with CEO and Managing Partner [James Goodnow](#) of Fennemore Craig, ranked among the 250 largest law firms in the United States by the National Law Journal. Goodnow, who started as a clerk at the firm at age 18, grew to become the youngest known chief executive of a large law firm by age 36. He talks about what differentiates Fennemore Craig from other firms and how it is looking forward to further expanding its leadership in the western U.S. through a [merger](#) with California firm Dowling Aaron. Learn more from the conversation in the video below.

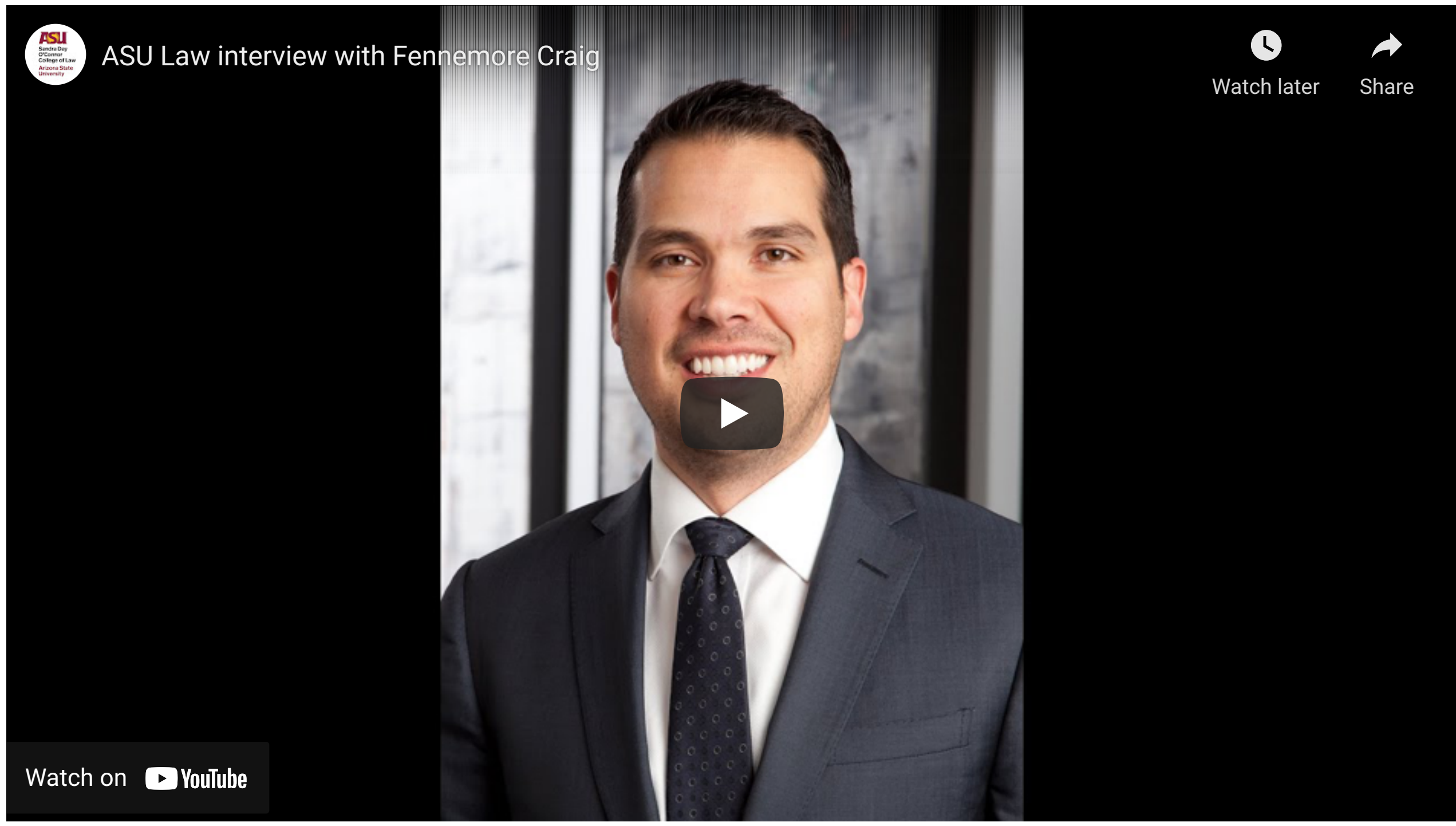


Law firm Fennemore Craig's Phoenix office.

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[Susan Wissink](#), who is director of business and finance for Fennemore Craig, a member of the firm's management committee and an ASU Law 1995 JD grad, said that working for Fennemore Craig gives her the opportunity to work with attorneys in most practice areas of the firm and at all levels of experience.

"I particularly enjoy working with and training younger attorneys," Wissink said. "I immediately began working as an associate here when I graduated from ASU Law, and I especially value sharing my wisdom and experience to help others, especially women, to help build a path to a rewarding and fulfilling career."



Video by ASU Law



Susan Wissink, Fennemore Craig director of business and finance and management committee member, and an ASU Law 1995 JD grad.

Diversity is a top initiative for Fennemore Craig, with Goodnow and ASU Law joining together last year to establish the [Diversity Scholarship and Fellowship](#). The program was created to effect meaningful change and broaden the industry's demographics by growing the pipeline of diverse candidates from ASU Law. Hoping to increase diversity both at its own firm and within the greater legal sector, Fennemore Craig has announced Spencer Shockness, an ASU Law first-year student, as the next fellow.

"I am very excited to be this year's Fennemore Craig ASU Law Diversity Fellow," Shockness said. "This opportunity has been incredible for me so far because not only has it set me up for financial success during my first year of law school, but the mentorship I have received from the attorneys at Fennemore Craig has been invaluable. Fennemore Craig has gone over and above what I expected when communicating with me regarding advice, helpful tips and mentoring."

Shockness, who completed his undergraduate degree at ASU with a double major in management and business law, said he is currently interested in pursuing a career in corporate litigation. While his future career goals may change, "after meeting the diverse group of attorneys at Fennemore Craig, I have been exposed to what many areas of the law look like in practice," he said. "I am more excited now about my opportunity to explore any of these paths postgraduation."

Goodnow, who holds his JD from Harvard Law School and dual business management certificates from MIT, is currently attending the Cambridge University Judge Business School in the United Kingdom, where he's working toward a master's degree in entrepreneurship. He is the co-author of "[Motivating Millennials](#)," which hit No. 1 on Amazon in the business management new release category. As a practitioner, he and his colleagues created and run a tech-based [plaintiffs' practice](#) and business model.



Spencer Shockness, ASU Law first-year student, is the next Fennemore Craig Diversity Fellow.

Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Law Career development Graduate student Alumni



Julie Tenney

Director of Communications, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law

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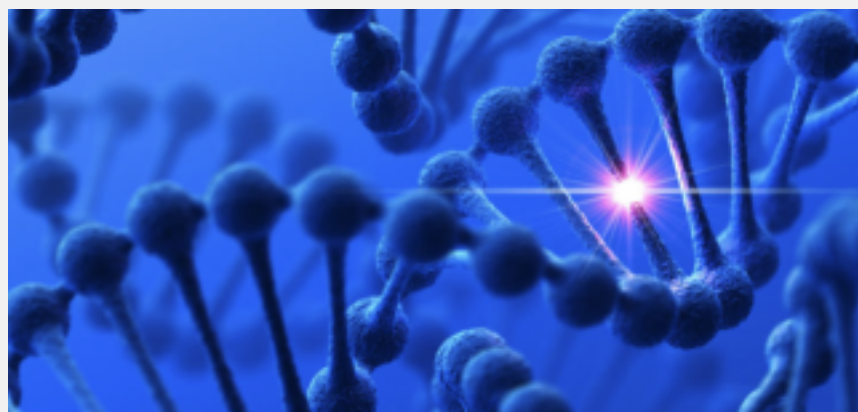
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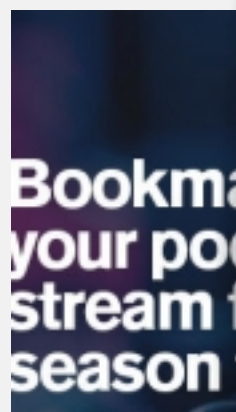
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Phoenix law firm extends ASU Law scholarship, fellowship program to improve diversity in legal field

June 2, 2021

When Nyla Knox, a JD student at the [Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law](#) at Arizona State University, was selected as the inaugural [Fennemore Craig](#) ASU Law Diversity Fellow, she said it was not only a relief to have the financial help, but to also know she had immediate mentors and support in ensuring her success in law school and beyond.

"I was going in blind when applying for law school as I don't know any lawyers, and I don't have any lawyers in my family," said Knox at the time she was awarded the scholarship in 2019 as a first-year ASU Law student. "I was figuring everything out on my own as I went. Receiving this scholarship and fellowship, establishing a relationship with Fennemore Craig and having experienced people who are willing to assist me has been a huge help."



Fennemore Craig is extending its ASU Law Diversity Scholarship and Fellowship program for two more years.

[Download Full Image](#)

What initially began as a partnership of Fennemore Craig and ASU Law to drive meaningful change by growing the pipeline of diverse candidates from the law school has been renewed by the firm for an additional two years so that more students like Knox get the support they need.

The continuation of the Fennemore Craig ASU Law Diversity Scholarship and Fellowship will offer financial support to future ASU Law students, backing pipeline and legal preparation programs, and aims to increase diversity both at its own firm and within the greater legal sector.



ASU Law student Nyla Knox

"In effect, we doubled down," said [Bob Kramer](#), the firm's chief talent officer. "Fennemore Craig is committed to ASU Law and its important work in our community. As diversity and inclusion is at the heart of our culture, we're also committed to attracting and retaining the best possible candidates to our firm, helping to ensure that a diversity of thoughts and voices are ready to make an impact on our fellow colleagues, our clients and the communities we serve."

ASU Law student Spencer Shockness, who completed his undergraduate degree at ASU with a double major in management and business law and is currently interested in pursuing a career in corporate litigation, was selected as the 2020–21 fellow.

"This opportunity has been incredible for me so far because not only has it set me up for financial success during my first year of law school, but the mentorship I have received from the attorneys at Fennemore Craig has been invaluable," Shockness said at the time he was selected. "Fennemore Craig has gone over and above what I expected when communicating with me regarding advice, helpful tips and mentoring."

For Fennemore Craig CEO [James Goodnow](#), improving diversity in the legal profession is first and foremost the right thing to do.

"It is also critical to the legal profession if it is to continue to represent and provide legal advice and guidance to businesses, individuals, government agencies and organizations, which are themselves diverse and have customers and decision-makers who are diverse," Goodnow said. "All law firms must be able to appreciate the nature of their clients and their goals and values, which can only be accomplished when those firms understand and appreciate the views of their clients, as well as any other parties involved, which are continuing to increase in diversity."

Goodnow added that the firm recognizes that to improve the diversity of the legal profession, it is vital to improve the opportunities for and generate interest from a diverse group of students to pursue a law school education. Consequently, Fennemore Craig works with high schools, colleges and law schools to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds appreciate the legal profession as a career, and help ensure increased opportunities for those students who choose to pursue a law school education.



Fennemore Craig CEO James Goodnow

"Our diversity scholarship and fellowship is one of our efforts in this regard and is intended to provide assistance and ongoing mentoring for a first-year law student to maximize their potential," he said.

While his future career goals may change, Shockness said that meeting the diverse group of attorneys at Fennemore Craig has exposed him to what many areas of the law look like in practice. "I am more excited now about my opportunity to explore any of these paths postgraduation," he said.

The firm is working to select its 2021–22 fellow and will be conducting interviews soon.

For more information on the program or to support ASU Law's diversity programs, contact kelli.rael@asu.edu.



ASU Law student Spencer Shockness

Arizona Impact Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Law Diversity Graduate student



Julie Tenney

Director of Communications, Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law

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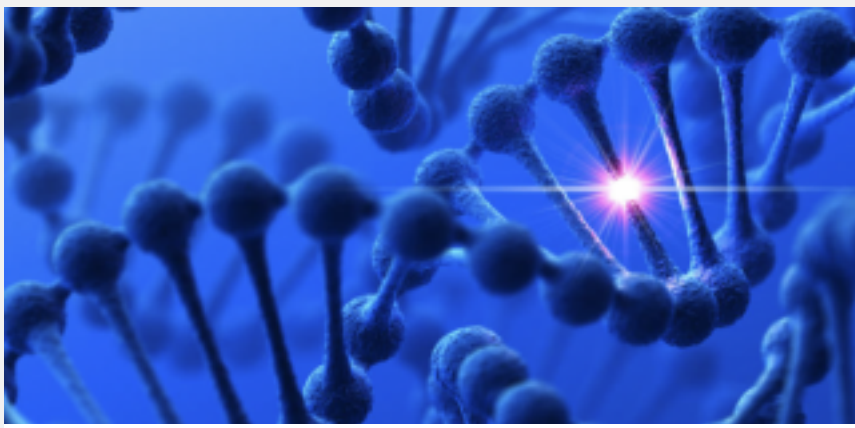
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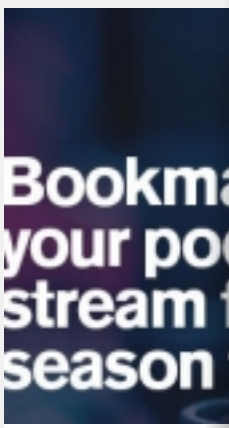
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GREGOIRE FELLOWS PROGRAM



SCHOOL OF LAW | UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Gregoire Fellows Program began in 2015 with the goal of bringing greater diversity to the legal profession, particularly in the state of Washington, and to the law student population at the University of Washington School of Law.

The Gregoire Fellows Program recognizes students for their academic and professional achievements, unique perspectives and experiences, and leadership potential to diversify the legal profession in Washington. The program is named in honor of former Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire.

Fellows spend the summer following their first year clerking at both a major corporate law firm and either a Seattle-based corporation or government agency.

In addition to summer employment, Gregoire Fellows receive:

- UW School of Law scholarship
- \$20,000 first-year summer stipend
- Mentorship from former Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire and members of the Seattle legal community
- \$5,000 bar exam study stipend

NUMBER OF FELLOWS SINCE 2015

66

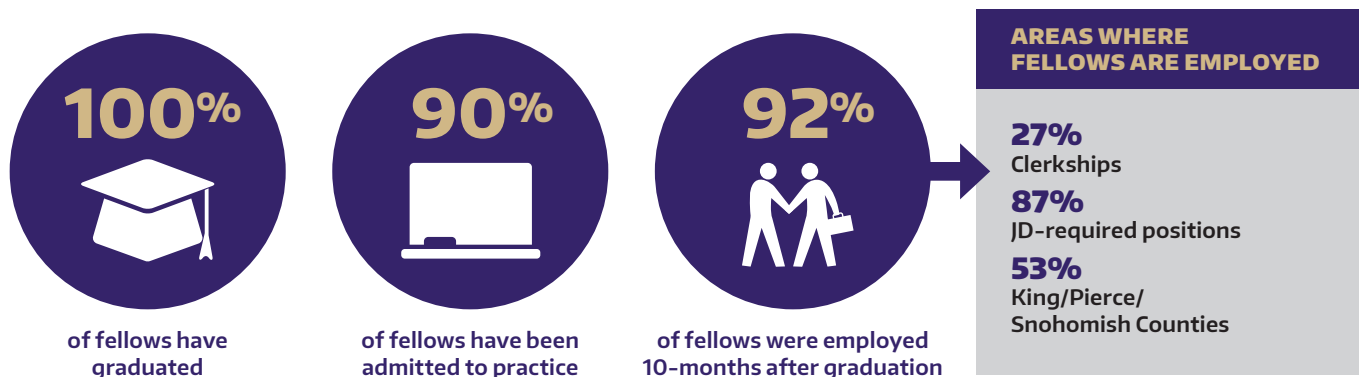


20

NUMBER OF SPONSORS SINCE 2015

FELLOWS LEVERAGE THEIR EXPERIENCE INTO EMPLOYMENT

With the graduation of the Class of 2021, four cohorts of fellows have completed the program and entered the workforce. Data shows that the Gregoire fellows graduate, are admitted to practice, and are employed at higher rates than their non-fellow peers. Importantly, the fellows have also secured employment more quickly than their non-fellow peers.



In addition to higher post-graduate employment rates, fellows secure 2L summer employment and generally accept summer offers early in the academic year. All fellows who completed their 2L year worked during 2L summer, and for the Class of 2023, 88% of fellows accepted 2L summer positions by Fall Quarter.

IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

The program provides fellows with community-building, networking, and foundational industry knowledge. This includes fellow mentoring groups comprised of one fellow from each class year (i.e., 1L, 2L, 3L) matched based on practice areas of interest and background. First-year fellows receive additional training about the legal industry and interviewing best practices with a mock interview program. Speed networking events also facilitate in-depth engagement between sponsors and fellows.

THE FELLOWSHIP IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN SCHOOL SELECTION

Now in its seventh year, the Gregoire Fellows Program is an important tool to increase diversity in the legal community at UW Law and in the state of Washington. Prospective students value the program, with 75% of surveyed fellows indicating that the Gregoire Fellows Program was a major or influential factor in their decision to attend UW Law.

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Education

The Seattle Times

Minority law students to get leg up at UW, with help from ex-Gov. Gregoire

Originally published April 15, 2015 at 6:00 am | Updated April 15, 2015 at 10:19 am
| Corrected

A new program offered by the University of Washington's School of Law will help more minority students finish their law degrees and study for the bar exam.



By [Katherine Long](#) 

Seattle Times higher education reporter

When she was Washington's attorney general and wanted to diversify her office, Chris Gregoire struggled to find minority lawyers to hire. Later, as governor, she faced the same problem when trying to appoint minorities to vacant judicial seats.

That's because law is one of the least diverse professions in the country.

Only about 7.5 percent of the nation's lawyers are African-American or Hispanic/Latino, according to a recent study. Minorities are better represented in medicine, computer science and engineering — even though all those fields have been criticized for not being more diverse.

Gregoire Fellows

Who: A new program that will support nine minority law students each year

What: Guarantees students summer fellowships at local law firms, a mentoring relationship with Chris Gregoire and help studying for the bar exam. They'll also receive UW scholarships

When: Begins this fall

Why: Aims to increase diversity in the judicial system

To help change that, the UW is establishing the Gregoire Fellows, a new program to support nine minority law students each year, guaranteeing them summer fellowships at local law firms, and giving them a mentoring relationship with Gregoire and help studying for the bar exam. They'll also receive UW scholarships to help defray tuition costs.

The program, which starts this fall, is a novel way to tackle the diversity problem. "There's no program I'm aware of that connects these pieces," said Brad Smith, Microsoft's general counsel and executive vice president of the company's legal and corporate affairs. Smith and UW School of Law Dean Kellye Testy designed the program.

"We're excited about doing something that has not been done," Smith said.

The UW law school routinely admits many minority students who don't enroll, Testy said. Some change their minds about going into law, while others are snatched away by top schools like Stanford or Harvard. The Gregoire Fellows, she said, will help make the UW law program more appealing.

The law school is prohibited, under a voter-approved initiative, I-200, from using race or gender to grant preferential treatment. And Testy said that has hampered the UW's efforts to attract minority candidates — in part, she said, because it sends a message that Washington does not welcome diversity.

The UW's law school is the only public law school in Washington and has an enrollment of about 750, including students in graduate programs and specialized areas of law. About 28 percent of those students are minorities. But most of those minority students are Asian, Testy said, and there's a dearth of African-American, Latino and American Indian students.

Minorities made up only 12 percent of the Washington State Bar Association's membership in 2012.

The diversity gap in the legal profession has worsened in recent years, according to a [study](#) commissioned by Microsoft. And that's an issue because "lawyers have a unique role in democracy — to make sure people's rights are protected," Smith said.

Smith, who is white, is the chair of the [Leadership Council on Legal Diversity](#), an organization of 220 of the nation's corporate chief legal officers and law-firm partners.

Gregoire said the small numbers of minority lawyers not only made it difficult to appoint minority judges but affects society in other ways, too.

"You don't have to be a lawyer to be a governor — but, boy, it came in handy," Gregoire said. "It's one of those kinds of degrees that can be used in a wide range of professions."

Gregoire taught a class this past fall while serving as a fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and enjoyed the work. When Smith and Testy asked her to be a mentor, she thought it would be a perfect fit and said she's "unbelievably humbled" that the fellowship program was named after her.

Smith noted that earning a license to practice law can be tough because the bar exam requires months of concentrated study; most successful applicants take a bar-preparation course, which runs about \$5,000, an expense the Gregoire Fellows program will pay for. And the summer fellowships will help students make connections with local legal firms, as well as earn good pay.

The program is supported by a who's who of Seattle companies and law firms: contributors include Microsoft, Amazon, Nintendo, Starbucks, Vulcan, Weyerhaeuser and Seattle Genetics, and the law firms Davis Wright Tremaine, Foster Pepper, K & L Gates and Perkins Coie, among others.

In recent years, some studies have questioned whether it's a good idea to even go to law school. It's an expensive career path, and many newly graduated students have had trouble finding jobs.

“You can always debate whether the country needs more lawyers,” Smith acknowledged, but added, “The country always needs more great lawyers, and the country definitely needs more diverse lawyers. Hopefully this program will help us educate great, diverse lawyers who will serve the country and profession well.”

Corrections:

Information in this article, originally published April 15, 2015, was corrected April 15, 2015. A previous version of this story incorrectly stated that the Gregoire fellows program was open only to black and Latino students. It is open to all unrepresented minorities.

Katherine Long: 206-464-2219 or klong@seattletimes.com. On Twitter [@katherinelong](https://twitter.com/katherinelong).

PROFILES IN THE LAW

MBA Fellows Program Increases Diversity in the Bar

Investing in the Future

By Brooke Strickland



Inaugural University of Oregon MBA Bar Fellows in 2018 included (from left) Divine Zheng, Juliana Hairston and Rachelle Collins.

The Multnomah Bar Association (MBA) Fellows Program is changing the lives of aspiring attorneys in Oregon, one class at a time. In an effort to diversify the legal profession in Oregon, the program provides uniquely qualified law students an innovative opportunity to gain real-life work experience while still in law school. As the law profession comes to more closely represent the diversity of the state, access to justice is expected to improve for all Oregonians.

About the Program

The MBA Fellows Program provides a first-summer paid internship, in addition to judicial mentorship, substantial scholarships throughout law school and a variety of networking opportunities. The University of Oregon School of Law and Lewis & Clark Law School participate through a three-year, \$20,000-per-year scholarship for each fellow. The first class of fellows, who entered law school in 2018, recently graduated and have entered the workforce. That class includes: Ana Ching, Rachelle Collins, CJ Fuenzalida, Diego Gutiérrez,

Juliana Hairston and Divine Zheng. Now with its fourth class selected, the program has accepted a total of 30 fellows to date.

The program is modeled after the Greigore Fellows Program at the University of Washington School of Law, in which students spend 10 weeks during the summer of their first year of law school serving at a major corporate firm, in addition to a local corporation or government agency. When Jollee Faber Patterson, a partner at Miller Nash, and Emily Teplin Fox of the Oregon Law Center learned about this program, an idea began to take shape. Could they create a similar program in Oregon?

They received great support from the inaugural sponsors and law schools that they contacted, but it still took several years for them to establish partnerships, secure financial commitments from sponsors (law firms and other legal employers, such as larger corporations) and solidify the other details needed to launch their own program.

"It has been wonderful to see what a success the program has been — due primarily

to the fact that our fellows are such outstanding law students and terrific people — and how it has grown since those early days," says Patterson.

Criteria and Selection Process

Acceptance into the program depends on a variety of criteria. First, applicants must demonstrate outstanding potential for success in the legal profession and show a strong commitment to or interest in practicing law in Oregon. While the goal is to have students practice here after they graduate, it is not a requirement of the program to remain in Oregon.

"We know that there are other factors that may take graduates outside of Oregon," explains Patterson. "At the same time ... our hope is that fellows will continue to mentor and support upcoming fellows and continue to be a strong support for each other throughout their careers."

Another important part of the selection process is the candidate's ability to contribute to the diversity of the Oregon State Bar. "Diversity" is broadly defined, and the law schools look closely at the unique ways that the applicants can help develop the existing bar.

The law schools vet the candidates, make their selections and then notify the MBA Bar Fellows Program Task Force. The number of fellows is determined by the number of summer sponsors for that year. Once the candidates are notified, the task force works with the fellows to match them with internships, judicial mentors and other support.

In addition to Patterson and Fox, the task force currently consists of three other legal professionals: Adele Ridenour (Ball Janik), Cristela Delgado-Daniel (Oregon Court of Appeals) and Felipe Alonso III (University of Oregon School of Law). Task force members receive support from Kathy Modie, director of events and programs at the Multnomah Bar Association.



Inaugural Lewis & Clark MBA Bar Fellows are pictured with participating judges. From left to right: Ana Ching, Judge Marilyn Litzenberger, Judge Chris Marshall, CJ Fuenzalida, Diego Gutiérrez and Judge Marco Hernandez.

This team oversees all administrative details of the program, including identifying and soliciting sponsors as well as assigning fellows to a specific sponsor and ensuring they have a positive summer internship experience. The task force also organizes networking events during the summer and hosts an event in January to introduce first-year students to sponsors during short, speed-networking-like interviews. The team also matches second-year fellows to first-year students in a peer-mentorship program.



Ana Ching

Patterson says, "Serving on the task force is a substantial commitment, and members regularly put in many hours a year toward making this a successful program. And, as another sign of the program's success and the willingness of our fellows to support the program, two of the members of the inaugural class who just graduated — Ana Ching and Diego Gutiérrez — are joining the task force and will help support the success of the program. This is so meaningful to us!"

Right now, the task force is working on developing the Summer Associate Supporter program, which will identify firms and other legal employers interested in hiring a fellow after the second year. By making a commitment to the program, potential employers show their support for a more diverse and inclusive bar while at the same time gaining access to some of Oregon's finest emerging lawyers.

Benefits of the Program

In addition to the three years' \$20,000-per-year tuition scholarship, fellows also receive a paid summer internship (\$10,000) at an Oregon law office or in-house legal department valued at \$10,000.

"This is especially valuable, because it can be challenging to get a paid position during the first summer (of law school), and a good first-summer position can really launch a fellow into future success," explains Patterson.

Collins is currently with Stoel Rives. She says her experience working for Legal Aid Services of Oregon during her fellowship ignited a passion that is still with her today. "I enjoyed having the opportunity to work for Legal Aid Services of Oregon and serve low-income and marginalized communities. Working there exposed me to the incredible need for access to legal services and the impact that non-profits and pro bono work can have on these communities," Collins says.

A long list of sponsors play an essential role in the program's success. They currently include Nike, Dunn Carney, Miller Nash, Ball Janik, Legal Aid Society of Oregon (funded by the Oregon Women Lawyers Foundation), the Professional Liability Fund, Richardson Wright, Markowitz Herbold, Lane Powell and Umpqua Bank. In the summer of 2022, the program will welcome Stoel Rives as a new sponsor, as well as a summer internship funded by the Federal Bar Association and split between the Federal Defenders Office and Levi Merrithew Horst. (The University of Oregon recently launched the Lane County Fellows Program, which is modeled on the MBA Bar Fellows Program with Lane County Sponsors.)

The relationships and long-term connections the fellows establish during their time in the program can significantly influence the trajectory of their whole career. Especially important are the connections the program provides to passionate, experienced judicial mentors. At present, Judge Youlee You, Judge Melvin Oden-Orr, Judge Angela Lucero and Judge Katharine von Ter Stegge serve as mentors.



Diego Gutiérrez

Gutiérrez is now an associate at Lane Powell. He says his time in the program was life changing. "Being an MBA fellow was a great experience because it introduced me to Portland's legal community, and I was able to develop a strong bond with other fellows," he shares. "It also provided me with the opportunity to work at Lane Powell during my first summer. My first-year summer experience was so positive that I went back to Lane Powell as a second-year summer associate, and then I was offered an associate position upon graduation — something that probably would have not happened without this fellowship."

Hairston moved to the East Coast after graduating as an MBA fellow and currently works in Washington, D.C., for the Department of Labor. She says, "I really enjoyed my internship at Nike during my bar fellowship. It was a lot of fun. I got to learn so much and meet so many cool people who I still talk to today."

Ching explains, "I recently started work as an associate attorney at Dunn Carney, which was one of two law firms I worked at during my summer as an MBA fellow. What I appreciate most about the MBA Fellows Program is that it allowed me to connect with a broad network of people in the Portland legal community, including judges, attorneys and law students. The program also created the opportunity for me to experience legal work in a variety of practice areas, many of which I would not have considered otherwise." ■

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New bar program looks to diversify Oregon’s legal field



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The University of Oregon School of Law is taking part in a new program instituted by the Lane County Bar Association designed to diversify Oregon legal practice by recruiting and supporting diverse law students.

“We are very excited about this program,” said Marcilynn A. Burke, dean of the law school and Dave Frohnmayer Chair in Leadership and Law. “It is a concrete demonstration of how committed the legal field in Oregon is about supporting diversity, equity and inclusion.”

The highly selective program for students with a strong commitment to practice law in Oregon provides a paid internship for recipients’ first summer in law school and substantial scholarships throughout their time at the UO School of Law. It also provides multiple networking opportunities, judicial mentorship and other resources designed to support the bar fellows’ success in law school and in their Oregon legal careers.

As part of the effort, the LCBA Bar Fellows Program will collaborate with the Multnomah Bar Association Fellows Program.

Felipe Alonso III, associate director for career planning and professional development at the School of Law, led the effort to launch the initiative. In his role as chair of the county bar association’s diversity, equity and inclusion committee, he gathered support for the program and commitments to participate from local firms.

“I am excited about this program because it is designed not only to attract diverse law students to our community but also provides an inclusive and supportive environment so that those same students will stay and thrive in Oregon,” Alonso said.

Five Eugene law groups have committed to the program. Participants include the law firms of Hutchinson Cox; Hershner Hunter; Johnson Johnson Lucas & Middleton; and the Local Government Law Group as well as Public Defender Services of Lane County. Each of the organizations will provide a paid internship for a bar fellow for the summer following the first year of law school.

Three UO law students will take part in the program during the 2021-22 academic year. The first summer internships will start the summer of 2022 for law students starting school this fall.

“Hershner Hunter is excited and honored to take part in this project to recruit and support a more diverse and inclusive Oregon bar,” said Mario Conte, a partner at Hershner Hunter. “It is a great opportunity to have a meaningful and direct impact on these important issues.”

Organizations interested in the program should contact Alonso at falonso@uoregon.edu or 541-346-3809.

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