Overview of the Program

The NALP/Street Law Legal Diversity Pipeline Program is an initiative designed to provide information about the law and the legal profession to high school students and to encourage them to pursue legal careers. During the academic year 2008-2009, the program was piloted at five NALP member law firms and cooperating NALP member law schools. Since that time, the program has grown to include ten law firms and the Navy JAG Corps in seven cities with twelve offices participating in total (see box on page 4). NALP and Street Law are seeking additional firms to participate in the ninth year of the program (academic year 2016-2017).

Participating firms are paired with local high schools to teach diverse students about the law and legal careers and to host a one-day law conference for them. Partnering firms are asked to make a financial contribution to Street Law, Inc., to offset the costs of the program. (See Funding and Costs on page 3.) Participating firms also make a commitment to staff at least two visits to each participating classroom, host an on-site one-day law conference for students at the firm, and offer some enhancement activity for a smaller number of students. Street Law and NALP offer complete support for participating law firms including matching with an appropriate high school, training, a written manual and curriculum guide, and support and assistance with logistics throughout the program.

NALP and Street Law

NALP is an association of over 2,500 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. What brings NALP members together is a common belief in three fundamental things. First, all law students and lawyers should benefit from a fair and ethical hiring process. Second, law students and lawyers are more successful when supported by professional development and legal career professionals. Third, a diverse and inclusive legal profession best serves clients and our communities. That's why NALP members work together every day to collect and publish accurate legal employment data and information, and champion education and standards for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than forty years, NALP has played an essential role in the success of our members and the lawyers and law students they serve.

Street Law, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that has been educating the public about law and democracy for more than 40 years. Street Law writes the best-selling high school law text, Street
Law: A Course in Practical Law, and has created a variety of programs that utilize the organization's expertise in curriculum writing, professional development, customized technical support, and interactive educational methods. Street Law also engages in the development of diversity pipeline initiatives for the legal industry, serving corporate legal departments, professional associations, law firms, and law schools. In cooperation with the Supreme Court Historical Society, Street Law has also conducted professional development programs for more than 1,000 high school teachers from across the country. These programs have helped teachers expand and improve instruction about the Supreme Court. More than half of the current justices on the Court have participated directly in this program.

Program Overview

The NALP/Street Law Legal Diversity Pipeline program addresses the unique challenges and opportunities for pipeline programming available at law firms. The core activities include a training session for law firm volunteers and participating teachers, classroom visits to a diverse high school class, a Legal Careers Conference held at the law firm for the students, and an enhancement activity for the most interested high school students. The program can also involve law schools through legal career pathway lessons delivered by professionals from local law school career services offices, a field trip to a law school, and/or law school participation in the one-day event at the law firm.

The Legal Careers Conference hosted at each law firm includes several interactive workshops for the students (such as a mock trial, an arbitration or contract negotiation exercise, or a simulated deposition), a tour of the firm, and a career activity to explore different practice areas or jobs in the profession. The classroom visits that precede the conference cover legal topics that pertain to the workshops at the conference. Lessons also introduce the students to legal careers and pathways to the legal profession.

NALP and Street Law support the program with staff members Megan Hanson, Senior Program Director, and Joy Dingle, Program Director, at Street Law. Program staff will find up to three partner high school classes for each law firm, based on the number of volunteers each firm has. Each firm will need to provide at least eight to ten volunteers, and the group can include paralegals and administrative staff as well as lawyers. Program staff will train the volunteers in program implementation, teaching strategies, and lesson use at the start of each school year. Program support will be available through phone and email communication as the programs get underway. In addition, Street Law will provide each participating law firm with a program guide that includes:

- Clear description of program components
- Research-based best practices
- A selection of ready-to-use classroom lessons
- A selection of ready-to-use Legal Careers Conference workshops
- Sample agendas for the Legal Careers Conference
- Templates for all documents the law firm might use related to the program

Evidence Based Programming

Research in career choice and counseling psychology have shown that career pathway education, providing career role-models, and an opportunity to experience and enjoy career-related activities are among the most efficacious ways of successfully encouraging young people to pursue a particular career. After the third year of the program, NALP and Street Law implemented an outcomes-based program evaluation to measure
progress toward several research-grounded short-term program goals\(^1\). These goals include increasing student interest in legal careers, expanding student knowledge about legal careers and pathways to the legal profession, and providing social support and professional role models. Students responded to pre- and post-surveys designed to gather information about these outcomes.

The results showed important progress in students’ interest levels and high marks for the social support provided by volunteers—two thirds of the students said they were more interested in legal careers after the program, and they found the volunteers highly inspiring and encouraging. Results for students’ knowledge about legal careers and pathways were mixed—students reported learning a lot about the law and legal careers, but their responses to specific questions show room for improvement, particularly with regard to what they can do now to prepare for college and law school.

The progress toward stated outcomes is likely due to the engaging, interactive nature of the program. Research shows that involving students in authentic simulations, like the activities in this program, can boost student interest in the subject matter and build important skills common to the legal profession. The program also builds in the vital components of exposing students to a variety of law-related professions and practice areas, generating opportunities for them to meet and interact with people from different career tracks.

While this evaluation represents only one method of measuring success, the program is built upon the premises that it is important to employ evidence-based strategies and activities and to continue to reflect on successes and areas for improvement. NALP and Street Law will continue to work towards achieving program goals and utilizing the evaluation results to continue and shape the direction of the program.

**Funding and Costs**

Participating firms make a financial contribution to Street Law, Inc., to offset the costs of the program. Because of the process involved in matching each law firm office with an appropriate high school class or classes, costs are greatest in the first year of participation, during which firms pay $12,500. The annual commitment to off-set program costs thereafter is $10,000. For firms that are able to make a two-year commitment from the start, the first-year contribution is reduced to $10,000. Firms also have the opportunity to support this project at the $20,000 Sustainer Level, which provides added benefits and visibility.

Current Sustainer Level supporters include Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod LLP, Miami, Kirkland & Ellis LLP, San Francisco; and Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, New York. After consecutive years of participation in the program at the same office, a firm may elect to receive reduced program support and pay only an annual licensing fee of $5,000 for access to program materials. Firms considering this option should contact Joy Dingle, jdingle@streetlaw.org or 240.821.1323 for more information.

Street Law, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

---

\(^1\) The full evaluation report can be found on the NALP website.
Inquiries

Questions about the program, inquiries, or letters of interest should be directed to Joy Dingle, Program Director, at jdingle@streetlaw.org or at 240.821.1323.

Program Participants*

- Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod LLP, Miami office; *Law School Partner: University of Miami School of Law*
- Fox Rothschild LLP, Philadelphia office
- Holland & Knight LLP, Miami office
- Holland & Knight LLP, Washington DC office
- Hunton & Williams LLP, New York office
- Kirkland & Ellis LLP, San Francisco office; *Law School Partners: the University of California, Berkeley School of Law, and the University of California, Hastings School of Law*
- Navy JAG Corps, Washington District
- Paul Weiss, New York office
- Schiff Hardin, Chicago office
- Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, New York office; *Law School Partner: NYU School of Law*
- White & Case LLP, New York office
- Wiley Rein LLP, Washington DC office

*As of August 1, 2016.*