NALP/Street Law
Legal Diversity Pipeline
Program

Prospectus: 2012-2013

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 nine law firms in seven cities (see box on page 4). NALP and Street Law are seeking additional firms to participate in the fifth year of the program (academic year 2012-2013).

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

The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) is a nonprofit member association dedicated to continuously improving career counseling and planning, recruitment and retention, and the professional development of law students, lawyers, and its members. Founded in 1971, NALP's membership includes every ABA-accredited law school and over 1,000 employer organizations, ranging from law firms to government agencies and public interest offices. NALP's vision is to drive innovation and collaboration in the legal profession through lifelong education and career development. NALP's mission focuses on research and education, the cultivation of fair and ethical practices, and advocating for diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

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 49 states and the District of Columbia. 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 one-day law conference held at the law firm for the students, and an enhancement activity for the most interested high school students. The program also involves 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 one-day law 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 one-day law conference. Lessons also introduce the students to legal careers and pathways to the legal profession.

Nine law firms in seven cities around the country currently participate in this program. NALP and Street Law are now seeking additional firms and cooperating law schools to participate in the 2012-13 school year.

NALP and Street Law support the program with joint staffing, including Megan Hanson, Senior Program Director at Street Law, Inc., and Courtney Dredden, the NALP/Street Law Legal Diversity Pipeline Program Fellow at NALP. 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 one-day law conference workshops
- Sample agendas for the one-day law 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; Holland & Knight, Miami; and Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, New York. After three 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 Courtney Dredden (cdredden@nalp.org or at (202) 835-1001) 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 Courtney Dredden, the NALP/Street Law Legal Diversity Pipeline Fellow, at cdredden@nalp.org or at (202) 835-1001.

Program Participants*

- Bernstein Shur, Portland, ME office; *Law School Partner*: University of Maine School of Law
- Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod LLP, Miami office; *Law School Partner:* University of Miami School of Law
- Fox Rothschild LLP, Philadelphia office
- Kirkland & Ellis LLP, San Francisco office; *Law School Partners*: Stanford Law School and the University of California, Berkeley School of Law
- Holland & Knight LLP, Miami office
- Hunton & Williams LLP, Richmond office; *Law School Partner:* William & Mary Law School
- McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP, Atlanta office
- Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, New York office; *Law School Partner:* NYU School of Law
- White & Case LLP, New York office

*As of September 1, 2012.