

Law School Diversity Pipeline Program Evaluation Summary



The purpose of the Law School Diversity Pipeline Program is to enhance existing public legal education programs at participating law schools so that they contain elements that encourage young people to pursue legal careers. This program (an initiative of Street Law, Inc. and the Law School Admission Council) provided funding and technical support to ten law-school based Street Law programs in order to add activities that focus explicitly on career choice and pique student interest in legal careers. Added activities included field trips, law camps, clubs, and career-oriented lessons.

An evaluation was conducted in 2008 to explore the following outcomes:

1. Do the students have more knowledge of careers in the legal profession?
2. Do students perceive positive support or persuasion from the law students to pursue a legal career?
3. Do students have a better sense that they can succeed at law-related tasks after participation?
4. Are students more interested in the legal profession after participation?

Key Findings

Substantial numbers of participating high school students reported:

- increased interest in legal careers
- that they felt encouraged and inspired by the law students
- that they knew more about the legal profession
- that they increased the frequency with which they engaged in career-related activities.

The added career choice activities implemented as part of this program are a **worthwhile addition to existing Street Law programs**. Students who attended a pipeline activity at one of the sites were more interested in legal careers, felt more inspired by the law students, felt more encouraged to pursue legal careers, and said that they learned more about the legal profession than students who did not attend.

The evaluated programs **can improve on the students' knowledge about legal careers**. While high school students reported that they had learned about legal careers and increased their knowledge about them, their results on tests of legal career knowledge did not improve.

The two evaluated sites demonstrate that the program can have positive effects on **two very different high school student populations** – students in a year-long program that works mostly with law courses, and students in a semester-long program that focuses on non-law courses. Other evidence shows that the program activities also have promise for impacting younger, middle-school age students.

To obtain a complete report of the evaluation results, please contact Megan Hanson at mhanson@streetlaw.org.