



Center for Legal Inclusiveness Pipeline Program: Journey to JD

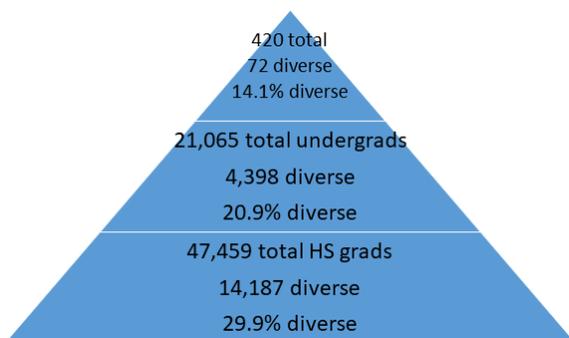
CLI and the Need for a Diverse Profession

The [Center for Legal Inclusiveness](#) (“CLI”), a 501(c)(3) Denver-based nonprofit organization, is dedicated to advancing diversity in the legal profession by actively educating and supporting private and public sector legal organizations in their own individual campaigns to create cultures of inclusion. CLI takes a unique, holistic approach by advancing diversity at all stages, including increasing the pipeline of diverse candidates, facilitating recruitment, and providing opportunities to develop skills necessary for retention and advancement of diverse attorneys.

The legal profession is ranked as one of the lowest among all professions for racial and ethnic diversity.

- For over 20 years, women have made up 50% of law students, but are only 36% of legal professionals and 21% of partners at large law firms.
- Racial and ethnic minorities were almost 27% of 2014 law school graduates, yet only 14% of them are lawyers.
- 2% of attorneys are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender but are between 3-5% of the general population.

To illustrate the impact in Colorado, let’s follow the class of 2009 HS graduates. While this doesn’t track every HS student from Colorado, it does provide us with a snapshot of just how leaky the pipeline is.



- In 2009, over 47,000 students graduated from CO high schools, with over 14,000 being diverse (29.9%).
- In four years, over 21,000 students graduated from public or private colleges and universities in CO, with over 4300 being diverse (20.9%).
- 3 years later, 420 students graduated from law schools in CO, with only 72 being diverse (14.1%).

Increasing diversity in the profession won’t happen on its own. Active intervention is needed to increase the pipeline. And CLI has created a new initiative just for that purpose: Journey to JD.

Our Pipeline Initiative: [Journey to JD](#)

As part of CLI’s pipeline initiative, we are implementing a one-week residential program, June 23-29, 2019, for up to up to twenty diverse rising high school juniors. This program will support, mentor, and encourage these students to attend college, and, ultimately, law school, to pursue legal opportunities in the region. The program will invite applications from any sophomore student in Colorado interested in the legal profession, with the intent of identifying promising students from a variety of backgrounds that are less represented in the practice of law. While residing on-campus at the University of Colorado Boulder over this one-week period, students will be given a first look at the scope and reach of the legal profession



through a multi-faceted program that will include a classroom component led by law school faculty, attorneys and students, a field-trip component to highlight the different careers and opportunities in the legal profession, and a final report-out by the students on their experience in the program. After the formal program ends, we will look to connect these students with legal mentors in their area as well as additional resources to assist with college preparation.

Why Rising High School Juniors?

Looking at the existing resources for promoting diversity in the legal profession, we believe that more opportunities should be created to increase the pipeline of diverse students who consider a legal career. In Colorado, there are various opportunities for college and law students. For high school students, there are some law-related programs, such as U.S. District Judge Christine M. Arguello's Dream Team for high school seniors, as well as mock trials and debate teams, like the Denver Urban Debate League.

We believe Journey to JD will dovetail nicely with these other opportunities, with the idea that this early discussion of the legal profession will spark excitement and provide mentorship for both college and law school. In their junior year in high school, many students start college preparation by, for example, taking the PSAT, a standardized test used for selection of National Merit Scholarship recipients. The Pipeline Program will encourage and provide resources to students interested in the law so that they can start that process and increase the likelihood of their success. One such resource we will provide is a preparatory course for the PSAT so students may gain skills that can be used with other college admissions tests like the ACT and SAT. Many underrepresented students may not have the resources to pay for this assistance, which may help to increase their scores and ultimately increase their chances of gaining acceptance and scholarships to the colleges of their choice.

Outreach

We want to share information about Journey to JD across the entire state of Colorado. Not only are we reaching out to all public and private school districts, but community groups as well, to encourage as many students to apply. But beyond those involved with the application process (the students, their parents, and even their schools), others will be involved, especially the legal community. Legal employers and law schools are actively engaged with creating the schedule and curriculum, and we have attorneys and judges from across the State who are interested in mentoring local students once the program has ended.

Thank you for helping us to promote the Journey to JD program. We believe that Journey to JD will truly make a difference by encouraging those that might otherwise believe their opportunities are limited to consider both college and careers in the law. Please watch our [video from our inaugural program](#) to see first-hand what our campers did last year. Colorado will directly feel the positive impacts of this program, and YOU can help make it happen.

Any Questions?

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