

# Legal Defense Fund (LDF)

## 2022 Marshall-Motley Scholars Program

### FULL TRANSCRIPT

**Voiceover:** Legal Defense Fund (LDF). Marshall-Motley Scholars Program. Recorded January 11, 2022.

**Javier Maymi-Perez:** Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to this very informative webinar on Marshall-Motley's Scholarship Program. My name is Javier Maymi-Perez, and I am the director of communications at LSAC, and I'm going to turn it over to Jino Ray, director of the Marshall-Motley Scholars program, who will get this very important program going for you. So I hope you enjoy the show. We apologize for the delay, we had a couple of technical difficulties, but I'm sure you will enjoy the next 45 minutes. Jino?

**Jino Ray:** So, good morning, everyone. Good afternoon to those who are on the Eastern coast. We are so excited to join you. My name is Jino Ray. I am the director of the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program. I am excited to join you. Forgive us for having some technical difficulties, but we're really excited to share about the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program. And really quickly, I will just introduce a few other people who will be joining me. We have Adria Kimbrough, who is the student recruiting manager for the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program. And we also have Briana Hayes who is one of our Marshall-Motley scholars. You will hear more from her shortly. And Kendell Long, who is one of our Marshall-Motley scholars as well. So just to tell you a little bit about the program, I know many of you have received the emails and received a lot of information, you may have checked out our website, you may have already started an application.

So first, I want to just thank you for everyone who's expressed an interest. The response to this webinar in particular has been overwhelming and we're just really glad that you would take time out of your day to learn more about us. This is more than a scholarship program. The Marshall-Motley Scholars Program is a program that takes an intentional approach to developing civil rights lawyers, and an intentional approach to

placing those civil rights lawyers in the place in our country where we are needed most. And so, what we do is we recruit ten scholars every year for the next five years, and we place those students who have a unique and sincere interest in being civil rights lawyers, practicing on behalf of Black communities in the South in pursuit of racial justice. And we recruit ten scholars every year and we provide a suite of services that includes three-year tuition full tuition scholarship, we also pay for relocation fees to law school, we include books, we include technology fees so that you can have laptops and all of those things.

So, all the costs associated with attending school, your room and board, food, all of those incidentals that are associated with going to school. That's one critical part and probably one of the most appealing parts of the program. But beyond that, what we also offer are very intentional professional development opportunities that began with your summer internships in law school. So each summer of law school we have partner organizations that are national, regional, and local civil rights organizations practicing on behalf of Black communities in the South. These organizations also have offices in the South. And so our students begin to learn very early the critical skills that they'll need to not only be effective practitioners, but to be practitioners who have long careers, to have sustainable careers. So that piece, the internship piece, is a very critical part of the beginning of the development of our scholars becoming civil rights lawyers. Beyond that, once you graduate we assist with the process of passing the bar, taking and passing the bar, and then we also provide a two-year fellowship, postgraduate fellowship after law school.

In that two-year fellowship, you work with national and regional civil rights organizations as an attorney, in your first two years as a young budding attorney as a fellow at their law offices practicing law in the South. And so you'll expand that skill development set. And after that two-year postgraduate fellowship, we will support you in the development of your career for the first eight years of your career as a civil rights lawyer practicing in the South. So combined, that's three years of law school, two years of fellowship, and eight years of committed practice in the South for a total 13-year commitment. That is what you give in return for gaining admission and being accepted into the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program. And so as you see, it's a very comprehensive program. And we thought that because of the time that we're living in, it's very clear that we need a unique response to the social justice and racial justice issues that we're seeing in America, and we also need an insurance policy of sorts. And our Marshall-Motley scholars are an insurance policy to ensure that the legacy of civil rights law that began

with LDF under our founder who the program is named after, Justice Thurgood Marshall, we want to ensure that the work he began in 1940 can continue. And so, as you can imagine this program has a lot of prestige that comes with it, also that it comes with a lot of responsibility.

The program is named after Thurgood Marshall, the first Black Supreme Court Justice and the founder of LDF, and Constance Baker Motley who was a force to be reckoned with, the first Black woman to be appointed to the federal bench. And so these are two powerhouses that the program sends in their legacy, in the light of their legacy. And we are recruiting and looking for young people who have a mind, young lawyers who have a mind, and not young in age, but young in the process of developing as a lawyer. We're looking for budding lawyers who are looking to commit to a life, and not a new commitment, but an extension of a commitment that they've already demonstrated over the past years.

And so what we hope you'll gain from our talk today is a bit more insight into the application process, what you can expect, and also hear from our scholars to know more about their personal experiences so far as members of the first cohort so you can get real-time answers from people who have walked the path that you've walked before. And so with that being said, I want to turn it over to Adria Kimbrough who's our recruiting manager, and she's going to talk a little bit about the process of applying for the program, a little bit about the scholars, and give you an introduction to the scholars. And we'll give them the chance to tell you a bit about who they are, where they're from, and then we'll get to your questions and answers. Because I think that that's the most important thing for today is that you walk away feeling empowered knowing what the program is about, knowing if it resonates with you and who you are in the work that you want to do.

But just know from my perspective, if you are a budding lawyer who has a passion for racial justice, social justice in general, but racial justice, more specifically, if you have a connection and a heart and a passion for people in the South, the Southern region of the United States, and you see a particular need for lawyers who are serving intentionally the interests of Black communities in the South, then this program is certainly for you and we're glad that you're here. So without further ado, I'll pass it to Adria Kimbrough, and she will take it from here. Thank you so much.

**Adria Kimbrough:** Thank you so much, Jino. And it is a pleasure to be with you this afternoon, this morning. Jino talked to you about the mission of MMSP, and I think it's

important for you to know that this is not a new investment on behalf of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Our organization has a history of investing in the South and in the development of lawyers in the South. So many people know the name, Thurgood Marshall, of course, that is our founder, and of course the first African-American on the United States Supreme Court. However, there are other names all throughout the South. People like Julius Chambers are from North Carolina, who really are the epitome of what we're looking for in our Marshall-Motley scholars, people who are going to be on the ground in communities throughout the South working on behalf of communities for racial justice. And that's what we were looking for last year and that's what we're certainly looking for again this year.

So I'm happy to talk a little bit about the application process for this year. It is available on our website, so you can log in right away and you'll be able to see the components. They're very similar in nature to some of the things that you will need to apply to law school: your personal statement, there's an essay about your experience with racial justice on behalf of communities in the South and to be able to speak to that; we'll also be looking for resume, transcripts, and test score, either the LSAT® or the GRE score, whichever tests you do take for the purposes of applying to law school. Three letters of recommendation as well, and then, finally, the video that will allow you to have the opportunity to talk about how you're currently living the life of a Marshall-Motley scholar. And that is one of our favorite parts because it gives us an opportunity to see the fullness of the applicant.

So all of those pieces are available on the website. We also have a handy application guide available on the website as well that will be able to give you some guidance as you move through the application. The application is currently open. We're excited about, it's been open since November, and some of you may have already applied or be in the process of applying. But for those of you who are not, we invite you, as Jino said, those of you who have a heart and a commitment for racial justice, we invite you to take a look at the application and complete it and allow us to consider you as one of the next Marshall-Motley scholars. The application will be open until February 11, which is exactly one month from today. And so, you've got plenty of time, you've got plenty of time. We are looking for you, and we hope that you will give yourself an opportunity to be considered for this transformative opportunity. And with that, I want to take an opportunity to introduce the two lovely, fantastic folks that we've got joining us today, Ms. Briana Hayes and Kendell Long, both of whom are part of our inaugural cohort of Marshall-Motley scholars. And I'm actually, I think I want to give them an opportunity to

introduce themselves, tell you a little bit about where they're from, where they're currently attending law school, and then we'll invite them into the conversation.

**Briana Hayes:** Hi, everyone. My name is Briana Hayes. I grew up in Baxley, Georgia. I am currently attending the University of Georgia School of Law, where I actually also received my bachelor's. Go Dogs, we had a big win last night. But I'm so excited to be here today and to discuss the program with everyone.

**Kendell Long:** Hello, everyone. I'm excited for this turnout here on the webinar. My name is Kendell Long. I'm originally from DeSoto, Texas, right outside of Dallas. I'm a 2019 graduate of Georgetown University and I'm a 1L at NYU School of Law in New York, and look forward to discussing more with everyone.

**Adria:** All right, thank you both. And so let's talk a little bit about what, you guys were in the seat that many of the individuals here today are, a year ago, you were in this very same seat. So talk to us a little bit about what interested you in the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program, and, Kendell, we'll start with you and then hear from Briana.

**Kendell:** Sure. I think one thing that's hard to deny is the tremendous value that the financial support has for law school. Law school is of course, very expensive. And one thing for me, I knew that the money was going to be determinant for me on where I would go to law school. And so, with the Marshall-Motley scholarship, I knew if received it, it would open up more options, I'll be able to make the decision as separate from the financial costs that would have to be incurred for law school. So I think that's hard to avoid in considering the scholarship. But also I was someone who was committed to working in racial justice after I graduated undergrad, that's what led me to want to apply to law school in the first place.

I knew I wanted to do that with a law degree and I deeply valued having a cohort. It's been important for me to have this cohort because law school is undoubtedly hard as a student of color, as a student interested in working in public interest, as a student from the South and returning to the South. In some schools, each of these separately are underrepresented in the law school community, and I knew that going into law school. And so, one thing that stuck out to me about Marshall-Motley's Scholarship Program was having this cohort to traverse through law school of these like-minded individuals that shared this overlap of identities, shared these overlap of goals, investments, and a potential for the world, for Black people in the South. And so that was important for me

and something that stood out and made me want to apply for the full scholarship program.

**Briana:** Well for me, growing up in South Georgia and then rural South Georgia on top of that, I lived through a lot of injustices in the school system, in the education system, I faced it all. And I saw my peers who were also my color face so many things simply because we grew up in the South. And so living through all of those injustices I noticed them, but I didn't see a lot of people who were there to address them. And I wanted to be the person that could address those injustices. And I knew that the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program was a great program to prep me to one day go back to South Georgia if I ever had the opportunity and flip the script on the narrative that is the narrative of so many Black people in the South and especially in rural places.

So I really saw the program, again, as an opportunity to be trained to go back and change things. And that's ultimately why I applied. And then obviously, like Kendell said, it relieves such a great financial burden. And so that was also very appealing to me too. And it's made law school a lot easier to know that that financial burden isn't on me.

**Adria:** Absolutely appreciate your thoughts about the commitment and the burden, because that's really one of the things that, it's the impetus for this program. Because that financial barrier often stands in the way of students like you who want to pursue and have a genuine, authentic interest in pursuing this kind of career that may not be as financially lucrative, but certainly one that has a significant impact and purpose, in being able to remove the barrier is just a huge win for the program and for the students and for our society at large. Well, with that, I believe we have Angela Winfield here from the Law School Admission Council. I want to invite her to join us in this conversation. Angela, are you there?

**Angela Winfield:** I am here, I am here. Thank you so much, Adria, and thank you everyone for joining. I apologize I couldn't be with you earlier, but I am absolutely delighted to have this conversation because as the Law School Admission Council chief diversity officer, and with our commitment to diversity and inclusion, it is just so important to partner with and make participants like yourself aware of these wonderful programs to support you. So thanks for inviting me into the conversation. And if I may, hearing the stories from these scholars, I would just love to ask you, you talked about your commitment and interest in civil rights and pursuing a career in law, I'd love for you to talk just a little bit about how did you approach that application? I know you have a commitment, but when you saw the application come through, what were your first

thoughts, and how did you approach applying? How did you put your best foot forward? And provide some advice to some folks who might be thinking about applying and just aren't sure yet.

**Briana:** I think sometimes whenever we go to apply to something and we're writing out our resume, we feel the need to think of, "Oh my gosh, how can I make what I did here applicable to this application?" Or "How can I stretch things?" Or "How can I make it seem like I did more?" And for me, it wasn't like that because I felt like the application was made for me. So the two or three things that I did as it pertained to racial justice, I approached the application by simply telling my story. It was authentic, it wasn't forced, it wasn't scripted, it was just everything I did and why I did it. So I would say to anyone who's applying, don't worry about if you did enough or how much you did, think about what you did do and why you did do it. And I think that goes a long way in making your application stand out, and ultimately that's the approach that I took.

**Kendell:** Yeah, I wholeheartedly agree with what Briana said. I think one thing that stuck out to me when I was drafting my application materials, I was on this webinar last year and on the Marshall-Motley website the thing that stuck out was the evidence commitment. And for me, I look back, going all the way back to high school looking at old application essays, looking for undergraduate, looking at journals and things like that, touching on what Briana said about to get to the why that I did all the activities that I was involved in. And for me, it was being able to trace a connective thread from activities in high school to undergrad, to my post undergrad experiences, and being able to connect that to a similar question I think that the general law school materials ask like, why law school and why law school now? And so I think that the, not just emphasis on what Briana said talking about the why behind what she did is really important. And also what gives you all credit is, it is an intense application, I don't think we can shy away from that and we definitely felt that last year as well as the inaugural cohort. But one thing that I think that we've benefited from, there was no existing cohort, it was the first year, so you really had to bring your authentic self to the application. And so there wasn't necessarily a model applicant necessarily to match yourself against.

And so I would encourage applicants this year to, even though there is a cohort now to try to embody that same mindset of not necessarily comparing yourself to other students that have received other scholarships, not comparing yourself to the current cohort members. What Adria said about, they're looking for you, they're looking for your application, that they really need assurance. I think you should really strive to tell your authentic story about your investments, your motivations, your explanations about what

brings you to this work. And I think that that was important in just breaking that down. It took a lot of drafting and redrafting and throwing out. I was throwing out parts of my essays that it didn't sound like I was talking like myself or sounded like I was trying to paint a certain picture or whatnot. So I'd definitely encourage that same, apply that same rigor to yourself, which is difficult, or bring your authentic self using the application materials. And be honest. I think one thing that was important to the application process, it's a 13-year commitment which was a daunting commitment then, now that we're at 12-and-a-half years, for those that have started the cohort, it's still a daunting thing.

And I think that's something to be honest about in the application, because I think that is another big question that the panel, the selection panel will be seeking is, are you really invested for these three years of law school, then ten years following, and how you evidence that.

**Angela:** Wonderful, thank you so much for that. And both of you, if you could, and maybe we'll start with you, Briana, and then go to you, Kendell, for this, what is it like being a part of the first cohort of the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program? What is the impact that you're receiving now? I know you talked a little bit about the financial, but are there other benefits that you see of being part of this program?

**Briana:** The cohort, these people are my best friends. And I mean that with the most sincere heart. And I know they're my friends because whenever one of us makes a great big accomplishment, they celebrate with us. Or if we're ever in a down spot, I've got people I can call and they'll be there for me. I remember moving into my apartment not having something and one of the scholars was like, "Oh, I'll send it to you." It's just, we authentically love each other. And knowing that you have that support across the country, because we've got people here down in Georgia, we've got people at Berkeley, at Harvard, so there are so many people in so many different places, but you feel the love from afar. And it really means a lot to know that someone somewhere is going through the exact same thing that you're going through, but just in a different place. And I know it might not really make sense, but I think it takes being a part of the cohort to feel that connectedness that really kind of takes you throughout the day and gives you encouragement. So I think that has been a lot of help. And then I would also say Mr. Jino, Ms. Adria, Ms. Tiffany, everyone at LDF through the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program has been a lot of help too. Ms. Adria, I think I've had three or four conversations with her throughout my first semester talking about grades, talking about how to outline, talking about adjusting, period. And she's been there and she's given me



her advice. And so just to have that support from her has meant a lot too. I think, overall, just to kind of put a bow on everything, you are supported in ways that your classmates are not supported, and I think that goes a long way. And when I say supported, yes, financially supported, but I'm more so talking about socially supported by your peers who are going through your same experiences and then by people who are older than you, who have been there, done that, and can tell you the best route to go. So that, I think has been the most help to me.

**Angela:** That is fantastic. Thank you so much, Briana, for sharing that. Because as a person who's gone through law school myself and knowing the importance of having that community, having that support of people who are going through the same things that you're going through, as well as the experience of folks like Jino and Adria is so important on staying on the right track and following that path when you come up against obstacles and barriers. So thank you for sharing that. Kendell, how about you? What are some of the other benefits of being a part of this cohort?

**Kendell:** Yes. When we first answered the question, me and Briana both just kind of like gleamed in the face. It's such a genuine reaction. I think I'm really appreciative how dynamic our cohort is. I forgot to mention all those law schools that we are in right now, but it's similar diversity for our undergrad institutions, folks that went to HBCU that are now going to PWIs for law school or vice versa, folks that came straight through from undergrad, or folks that have worked a bit after undergrad in between law school. So I really appreciate the diversity within our cohort of identities. And I think it's important because it makes for a really rich cohort as we go through these 13 years together.

Even now, as we have discussions and thinking about what it means for us to be civil rights lawyers in a time where there's a growing disdain for voting or politician and the courts, we may disagree on what the answer to that is, but because we have these different backgrounds that we are approaching the program with and approaching law school with, I think it makes just for a rich camaraderie, and that we're building both on all of the personal elements that Briana mentioned, but also even the professional training is starting now. And about the support piece, I think that's definitely something that was hard to kind of engage at the beginning of applying for the scholarship, but I think for one, just from the two momentous figures that are the namesakes of our organizations, from being attached to LDF, that comes with so much support. I realize that there are people that have had different touchpoints with either Judge Motley or Justice Marshall, or working with LDF at different points. And so when I mention I'm a Marshall-Motley scholar through LDF, so I interned at LDF, I worked at LDF, I received

this house from LDF, I've clerked for one of the judges or justice. So that network of support that isn't even, I guess, directly connected to Marshall-Motley Scholarship Program, but they're still aware of the program and they're still willing to lend support because of what's tied to it, because of the name and the organization. I think that's something that's definitely blown me away. And I think more tangibly, in the fall we received academic coaching sessions throughout the semester. So that's something that Briana touched on as well as about getting advice on how to outline and how to exam prep. Before the semester started we had a retreat where we kind of unpacked about what it means to be a Marshall-Motley scholar in this current moment, and understood our assignment as we often call it among the scholars about our assignment of being Marshall-Motley scholars. So it's the financial support of course, but also to reiterate what Briana said, the professional, personal, social support, as well that's tremendous.

**Angela:** Absolutely. Thank you so much, Kendell, because I think you bring out a few things that are really important. And one of them is just the name and the recognition and the solidity of that support of the Marshall-Motley scholars. You know, looking at those namesakes and also looking at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund as itself as a incredible organization, and to be a part of that opens so many doors. For me, I was a Herbert Lehman scholar as an undergrad, and to see how there are so many connections that you see along the way, and all of the people that came before and that are doing the work now, and that you will be the future leading civil rights and justice in the legal industry is just so amazing to be a part of that virtuous cycle. So before we open up and get some questions from you all as attendees, hopefully you're putting in your questions to the Q and A feature and we've got some people on the back end helping sort those, and we'll get to those just momentarily. But before we do that, I want to turn back to you, Jino and you, Adria, is there anything else that you want to add about the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program? I know you went through some of the details of it and it is much more than a scholarship program, it is a wonderful opportunity. But can you please share some final thoughts on what you want students and potential applicants to know about the program? Adria, do you want to go first?

**Adria:** Sure. Happy to do that, Angela. I think we'll probably get to some of the nuts and bolts in the Q and A section. But the only thing that I would say is, don't talk yourself out of this. Don't talk yourself out of this. There will be some of you who will hear this and say, "This sounds great, but I don't know. I don't know if I'm the right person" or maybe you'll even go an additional step and look at the application itself and you'll say, "I'm not

the person that they're looking for." You'll talk yourself out of it. My challenge to you is to give yourself this opportunity, avail yourself to this opportunity. Yes, you are the one that we're looking for. Don't talk yourself out of it. I'll pass it to Jino.

**Jino:** Thank you, Adria. I think that pretty much summed it up for me. Yes you, we are looking for you. We're looking for folks just like you who have a passion to help others, who have a passion to make life better, who when they read the news and they're surfing on social media and they're seeing issues that are happening in real time to real people in real places, they say, "I want to be in those places helping those people." We're looking for you. When your heart lights up because you know that there's more that can be done and you know that there's something inside of you that's always been there saying, "This is something I must do." If that's who you are, if it's breathing for you to make life better for people, and particularly for Black communities in the South, this is for you. You don't have to be from the South, you don't have to be born in the South, you don't have to currently live in the South, you have to demonstrate that you have a passion and a commitment to be in that space and to be helping people with the types of issues that we're talking about. But just because you're out in Washington State or Oregon, or California or Hawaii or Alaska, we welcome everyone.

We welcome everyone who has those three prongs that we're looking for, a demonstrated commitment to racial justice and to practicing civil rights on behalf of Black communities in the South and who are willing to make that commitment for 13 years. And I always say this, the Marshall-Motley scholar is not someone who commits because they become a Marshall-Motley scholar, they become a Marshall-Motley scholar because they were already committed. And so, be able to show us your demonstrated commitment, if you're not new to this, but you've been true to this, then yes, you, we're looking for you and we welcome your application.

**Angela:** Fantastic. Thank you both. Javier, I'm going to turn to my colleague from LSAC. Do we have some questions coming through in the Q and A?

**Javier:** Yes. Let's see if I can start my video here. Yes, we have actually. Thank you so much for all the questions, they're incredibly interesting. But many aspirants are asking us specifically to timelines, deadlines, at what point in their law education career should they be applying? If you're in 2L, can you apply, if you're still in your undergrad, can you apply? If you could speak to those requirements I'm sure a lot of our questions will be answered over here.

**Adria:** Sure. So as Jino mentioned, we are looking for people with a demonstrated commitment to work on behalf of Black communities in the South for racial justice. That is the requirement. We're looking for people who are currently in the process of applying to law school for the fall 2022. That's really the only requirement, demonstrating commitment of course. But in terms of eligibility, that's what we're looking for.

So if you're a 2L, or if you're someone who is already in law school, unfortunately the opportunity is not, does not fit in terms of the timeline for you. Because as Briana and Kendell mentioned, we're looking for individuals who will be able to go along as a cohort throughout the entire experience. And so, if you've already started law school, unfortunately this opportunity will not be the right fit. Likewise, there may be some of you who are in your first year of college, earlier on in your career, and certainly we want to stay in touch with you, we want to be in communication with you, but in terms of the application that's open right now, we are looking for individuals who intend to start law school in the fall of 2022.

**Angela:** All right. And Adria, just to clarify, so you have to be applying and looking to attend in the fall, so does that mean that you have to be a senior in college right now or can I already have my bachelor's degree or some other degree?

**Adria:** Oh, absolutely. In fact, with the applicant pool last year, the majority of folks who applied had taken at least a year off. So this is not just for people who are seniors in college or for working professionals. It's for anyone regardless of what stage you are in your educational career. If you intend to start law school in the fall of 2022, you can submit an application to be considered for this opportunity.

**Angela:** Okay. Wonderful. And then, so if I said, "This sounds like something I want to do, I'm going to apply," when do I need to submit my application by and where do I get that application?

**Adria:** February 11 is the application deadline. So you have exactly one month to prepare and submit your application. The application is available online on our website. I think that that may have been shared in the chat before, but I'm sure if not, we'll be able to do that before we sign off here today. And the application is there online, it will walk you through it. We also have an application guide that gives them some direction on each component of the application that hopefully will assist you as you work on it and complete and submit it.

**Angela:** And then if I go ahead and I apply and I get my application in before the deadline, when will I hear something? What happens after I apply?

**Adria:** Yes. So the application, once the application closes, we will begin the review process. By March, we will have selected finalists, and by April, we will have announced and will have selected our next and second cohort of Marshall-Motley scholars. So the goal is indeed to try to have this process complete and align with the timeline that many law schools have, ask for prospective students to commit and make a decision on where they will attend. We know, I think Briana and Kendell both talked about how the benefit of the scholarship informed their decisions on school and how it just really impacted that. So our goal is to make sure that we have decisions made in time to allow that information to be able to inform the student's decision on where they will attend law school.

**Angela:** Wonderful. So what I'm hearing is that I don't need to have made a decision about where I'm going to law school, that I'll have a decision about the scholarship and whether I'm in the program before I need to commit to a school. Is that right? **Adria:** Yes, that's correct.

**Angela:** All right. Fantastic. Javier, are there any other questions in the Q and A?

**Javier:** Yes, there are some very interesting ones. There are a couple of questions regarding the commitment. But I'm going to read one particular questions which I think sums up the dozens of others. It says, "Hi, I am interested in a commitment after the fellowship. I'm committed to continue my focus on civil rights, but I'm also interested in criminal justice focused on race more specifically, and also education law that focuses on the cradle-to-prison pipeline. Can you share about the guidelines around a tenure postgrad and what is included in the civil rights law commitment?"

**Adria:** Jino, do you want to take that question since I did the last?

**Jino:** Yes. So the things that, in that particular question that were mentioned actually can fall under the scope of civil rights law practice. Many of the civil rights organizations across the country are working with those issues as well, they fall under that umbrella. What you're looking at in the practice of civil rights law is you're going to be looking at practicing. So you're going to be involved in litigation, you're going to be working for a law firm that is bringing cases on behalf of Black people in the South to intentionally erase, to undo, to ensure all things related to justice and the liberties and securing the liberties for folks in the South to ensure that all of the justice and all of the rights in our

society are extended equally to all people, particularly in the region where most Black people are still existing and where most of those ills are still kind of most present. And so when you talk about civil rights, so you're looking at national and regional, state and local civil rights organizations who practice in that area.

You're looking at solo law firms who may be doing civil rights law work but have 75% or more of their caseload is civil rights law in pursuit of racial justice. The racial justice piece is very key in the work that's being done here. And then you can work for certain government offices. There are certain government lawyers, the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, things of that sort. Very narrowed options to work within the government, a state civil rights office in the Department of Justice and in the Division of Justice there. But a broader, more separate focus of just practicing educational law and advocating for special education rights on behalf of individuals, that wouldn't necessarily qualify as the type of work that we're doing.

This type of work that we're looking at is more systemic work. We're looking for lawyers who are going to be dismantling systems. A lot of that is more larger-scale impact litigation, things of that sort. So, as you're thinking about having an interest in education, I was a former teacher, I came to the table with interest in education, educational equity and policies and things of that sort, but that found its home very squarely situated in the umbrella of civil rights. A lot of people come with the idea of wanting to pursue criminal law. If you are wanting to be a public defender, this program is not your program, if you want to be a prosecutor, this program is not your program, but if you want to work on issues of more systemic criminal justice issues, if you want to talk about ending the death penalty, if you want to talk about these broad state sentencing requirements in certain areas that are disproportionately affecting Black people and thereby limiting their ability to move forward in other ways, those are the types of things that you would be interested in doing, then this is the type of program that will allow you the space to do those things.

**Angela:** Wonderful. Thanks, Jino. That is really helpful. Javier, do we have another question from the...

**Javier:** Yes, we do. We have so many. I'm so excited. We have several questions from international students, impressive that we have students logged into the webinar from the UK, from Uganda, from Italy, and what they want to know is, they're pursuing their bachelor's degree internationally right now, but they're interested in becoming a cohort member, if they can apply, if they're eligible.

**Angela:** Jino, do you want to address that one?

**Jino:** I want to make sure I understand the question. So if they're applying, if they have a degree from an international school and they're applying to attend law school in the United States—

**Javier:** Yes.

**Jino:** And they want to know if they're eligible. Well, that could go a couple of different ways. So if someone has received a degree in another country and they live here now, and they're a permanent resident and they intend to stay and remain here and work, then they would be eligible to apply to the program if they're attending a U.S. accredited law school, a law school that's accredited by the ABA, and they intend to work in the South and live in the South and be a civil rights lawyer practicing on behalf of Black communities. That's a possibility. However, if it's someone who's coming in and getting a degree and expecting to return home, there's going to be that issue of needing to stay and be eligible to work in the United States for those eight years. So that person under those circumstances may not be eligible. However, if the applicant who is intending to remain and work and live in the United States, one thing I will say to that applicant is, you will apply, where you will spend strategically a part of your application, I think, is in helping the committee understand where the intention for you has grown to live here in America, work on these issues, and be here for that 13-year commitment in the program. So you'd have to be able to demonstrate that in your application in a way that would be compelling to the committee.

**Angela:** Very good. So there is an expectation of permanent residency that you have to demonstrate that you will be here and be practicing in the South in the U.S., right?

**Jino:** Yes. And that's because of the eight-year requirement to work. Unfortunately, our program cannot sponsor visas or anything of that sort for people who are not eligible to work in the United States. So we have to have the requirement of people having the authority to work, and then authorization to work in the country.

**Angela:** Okay. Thank you for clarifying that for us. Let's see, Javier, I think we have time for maybe one more question.

**Javier:** I'll summarize a couple of questions here regarding the review process and all the aspects of the application. Are they reviewed with equal weight? And also there's a

question, there are a couple of questions about if they're taking the LSAT in February if they shouldn't wait until next fall to apply, and if there's an age requirement to apply.

**Adria:** Sure, I can jump in there. So number one, no, there's not an age requirement. As long as you're starting law school in the fall of 2022, you can be any age at all. So no age requirement. I think the other question may have been about whether each part of the application is given equal weight. And the answer to that is yes. So the actual components of our application are not given any particular weight, but we have certain key factors that are important for the mission of our program, specifically around commitment to Black communities, commitment to the South, and commitment on working on behalf of racial justice. And so the key is how do all of those components of the application woven together demonstrate those commitments? And that's the way in which the evaluation or the application will be evaluated. Javier, I think there was a second question you threw in there that I...

**Javier:** Dates for the...

**Adria:** Oh the dates for the LSAT, yes. So unfortunately February LSAT date will not, and that's assuming, because I think the February test may be a little bit later in February after our application deadline. So unfortunately if you've not taken the LSAT prior to the application deadline, you would not be eligible for this year. However, if you took the test in January and you're waiting for scores, you could go ahead and submit your application and then include that score. But unfortunately, February test takers, if that's your first time and you don't have an LSAT score, you would not be eligible for this application cycle.

**Angela:** Very good. So essentially you have to have all the components, to have some sort of standardized test score completed by February 11. Even if you don't have a score back yet, you have to have at least taken the test?

**Adria:** Yes, that's correct.

**Angela:** Okay. Wonderful. Well, thank you all so much. Thank you, Jino, thank you, Adria, thank you, Briana and Kendell. Thank you all very much for your time and for being so honest and forthright about the program, about the commitment, about what a wonderful opportunity it is and the logistics of applying for it. Programs like this are critically important not only for you as students who are interested in practicing civil rights and coming up through, but for really making a difference in the legal system and shifting our system more towards justice. It is an absolute pleasure for LSAC to bring



you this opportunity, to make you aware of it. We hope that you explore the website, [marshallmotleyscholars.org](https://marshallmotleyscholars.org), learn more about it, and also feel free to visit LSAC.org.

There's a number of resources available. We have other programs for prelaw students. If this is not the right program for you, there are other opportunities like the Prelaw Undergraduate Scholars that will be opening soon as well. So please, just explore your opportunities. If you have further questions, again, visit those websites and reach out with those. I wish you all the best. And again, thank you for attending and good luck on your journey.