

PRESIDENT'S Message

TO THE FCBA COMMUNITY:

Happy New Year, FCBA! To underscore the importance of the launch of the FCBA Diversity Pipeline Program – **employer participants may commit through January 18 and students may apply through January 15** – and to recognize the hard work of the FCBA members who developed it, I am turning over the President's Message this month to **Celia Lewis**, co-chair of the FCBA Diversity Pipeline Program Committee. Please join me in thanking Celia, **Avonne Bell, Rudy Brioché, Alyssia Bryant, Arturo Chang, Svetlana Gans, Diane Holland, Clete Johnson, Jamile Kadre, and Barry Ohlson** for their tireless efforts in building the program and recruiting employer participants and student applicants. This program will make a real difference in the lives and careers of over 20 law students this year alone, and it will ensure the FCBA has a robust pipeline of diverse members and leaders to benefit our bar, the legal profession, and the tech, media, and telecom industry sectors in the years to come.



Natalie G. Roisman
FCBA President

A Message from Celia Lewis:

It's a New Year and we are indeed moving full speed ahead. It is my honor to announce that as of the date of this newsletter, we have nearly 20 committed employer participants and the FCBA Diversity Pipeline Program's Student Online Application is now available! Please apply (or encourage any eligible students you know to apply) at <https://webportalapp.com/sp/fcba-diversity-pipeline-program>.



Applications will be accepted from Monday, January 4 to Friday, January 15.

Not only does this moment signify almost two years of collaborative work across the FCBA, its leaders and members, but it also highlights the FCBA's commitment at all levels to embrace and increase diversity in the legal profession, especially in technology, media, and telecommunications (TMT) law and policy.

In the spring of 2019, under Lee Petro's presidency, the FCBA's Diversity Pipeline Program started as an idea that Rudy Brioché and I had to drive greater diversity in the TMT legal community and to create and expand opportunities for law students from diverse backgrounds to gain subject matter knowledge and first-hand work experience with TMT employers. In turn, these students would be prepared and more likely to enter the TMT

field and join the FCBA after graduation, and with mentoring support, develop into leaders of the tech bar.

The Executive Committee approved the proposal for the Program, and by the end of 2019, under Josh Turner's presidency, we were an ad hoc committee with ambitious plans for 2020-2021. Now it was time to get to work and ensure a pipeline for students from historically underrepresented groups in the legal profession, students who as practitioners will bring diverse perspectives, expanded creativity, and unique skill sets to succeed in TMT law and policy!

The year 2020, while challenging for the FCBA as an organization and for many members individually, became a year of accomplishments for the Diversity Pipeline Program: We officially launched the Diversity Pipeline Program and its webpage, held multiple informational sessions for employers and students, and prepared information packets in anticipation of the January launch of the application portal. And now we are here.

The Diversity Pipeline Program remains a great undertaking as we strive to develop an impactful program that resonates across the entire TMT field, and the FCBA's ongoing, steadfast support of this program is laudable. The belief that we can do more to promote diversity is widely held. The FCBA's established track record for embracing and supporting young talent will continue through this program – facilitating academic enrichment and skills development components and access to paid internship opportunities for first-year law students from historically underrepresented and disadvantaged groups. The FCBA is demonstrating that it is indeed the premier association for TMT legal and policy professionals, and it is actively forging ahead to help future generations succeed.

I remember walking into a FCBA Executive Committee meeting to propose this program and wondering if it would resonate. At that moment, I wanted all the hard work of those of us who worked on this project to simply touch the hearts and minds of everyone in the room. As a member of a historically underrepresented group, no words can express my gratitude and the joy I felt that day for being heard and supported by leaders of the tech bar.

My family immigrated to the U.S. from Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica with little education, and my mother worked extremely hard for little pay to ensure I had the tools – education and a commitment to work hard – to succeed. I am proud to be part of a community that is willing to provide diverse law students with meaningful training and employment opportunities to experience the same joy through their participation in the Diversity Pipeline Program.

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MESSAGE FROM CELIA LEWIS

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To the FCBA leadership, staff, members, Pipeline Program Committee co-chairs, law student ambassadors, prospective applicants, and potential employers, law school faculty and administrators, thank you – without this collective effort, we would not exist. With all our similarities, we have embraced our differences and built a program on a foundation that fosters access, societal equity, and fairness. With diversity, we embrace all of who we are, we encourage and welcome new strategies, better debates, creative problem solving, better outcomes, and we believe that together we can do great things. This is the strength and beauty of the world – to celebrate and recognize what can bring us together.

In 2021, the FCBA Diversity Pipeline Program is bringing to the forefront the dreams, hopes, and ambitions of those who want to feel like they belong and helping them find a path to the career of their dreams. Our corner of the legal profession is dynamic, and diversity is the key to continuing to embrace this ever-evolving world we live in. To learn more about the Diversity Pipeline Program, please visit www.fcba.org/about/diversitypipeline/. Please share this information with prospective employers and student applicants and encourage them to become part of it. This is just the beginning – there will be much more to come, so please stay #FCBAconnected.

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