



Why Apply for an NCBP Diversity Scholarship?

Q&A: In Their Own Words

In the Q&A below, one of the 2021 - 2022 Diversity Scholars, Jodi Cleesattle, shares her experience with the program, and encourages others to [apply for an NCBP Diversity Scholarship](#).



Jodi Cleesattle

First Vice President, California Women Lawyers

Jodi Cleesattle is a Supervising Deputy Attorney General in the Employment and Administrative Mandate Section of the California Department of Justice in its San Diego office. She oversees a team of litigators and manages her own caseload of employment litigation and investigations. She previously was a partner with a Washington, D.C.-based national law firm and, prior to her legal career, was a newspaper reporter and magazine editor.

Jodi is active in various bar associations as well as in community service. She currently serves as First Vice President of California Women Lawyers and on the board of the Tom Homann LGBTQ+ Law Association. She is a past board member of the San Diego County Bar Association and of Lawyers Club of San Diego, a bar association dedicated to the advancement of the status of women. She is also a past chair of the California State Bar's Public Law Section and past co-chair of the Council of State Bar Sections. She volunteers with and serves as president of Juvenile Court Book Club, a nonprofit that provides tutoring and book clubs for teens incarcerated in San Diego County, and she is a longtime volunteer for Rachel's House Women's Center. Jodi received her B.A. in Communications from American University in Washington, D.C., and her J.D. from American University's Washington College of Law.

1. What have you learned about yourself through participation in the Diversity Scholars program?

I have enjoyed the opportunity to connect with other leaders and members of diverse bar associations. I have learned from them how our specialty bar associations interact with and serve our members differently than metro, regional and state bar associations. I have also enjoyed collaborating with bar leaders nationwide on programming to help all types of bar associations best serve their members.

2. What would you say to encourage others to participate in the Diversity Scholars program?

NCBP provides a unique network of bar leaders across the country and introduces you to big-picture issues that affect attorneys and bar associations nationwide. Connecting with these leaders leads to a great exchange of ideas, learning new perspectives, and collaboration on issues of common interest. Diversity Scholars also bring to NCBP important viewpoints that all bar associations should consider, especially in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion.

3. Why is DEI important to you and why should it be important to bar leaders?

Diversity, equity and inclusion is important because everyone benefits by having a community in which diverse voices are heard and respected. Our world is made up of all different kinds of people with different viewpoints, beliefs and cultures, and it is richer because of that. Our legal communities must reflect that diversity in order to best represent our communities and ensure equal access to justice. When we incorporate DEI awareness in our everyday bar association activities, we help build stronger bar associations.

About the NCBP Diversity Scholars Program

Annually, the National Conference of Bar Presidents (NCBP) awards Diversity Scholarships to bar leaders from diverse backgrounds. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of NCBP works closely with the scholars throughout the year providing networking opportunities and facilitates providing committee-based experience through NCBP. The NCBP DEI Committee invites you to encourage bar leaders to apply. The application process for the 2022-2023 Diversity Scholarship program is now open through April 25, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Central Time. To find out more about benefits and eligibility, visit the [NCBP Diversity Scholarship Page](#). Scholarship winners will receive complimentary registration to the NCBP 2022 Annual Meeting and 2023 Midyear Meeting (including travel reimbursement up to \$500 for in person meetings), an invitation to join NCBP member committees, and a complimentary NCBP membership if they or their bars are not already NCBP members. Diversity Scholarship winners are expected to attend both NCBP meetings and participate actively in at least one committee.

Celebrating the 2021 – 2022 NCBP Diversity Scholars

NCBP recognizes and celebrates the 2021-2022 NCBP Diversity Scholars cohort for their efforts throughout the year and for making this program a continued success: Kenyatta S. Beverly: Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc.

- Jodi Cleesattle: Tom Homann LGBTQ Law Association
- Janice Dantes: Filipino American Lawyers Association of Chicago
- James Hyer: Westchester County Bar Association
- LaToya Jeter: Magnolia Bar Association
- Ivy Lee: Chinese American Bar Association of Greater Chicago
- Renee Mims: Greater Washington Area Chapter, Women Lawyers Division of the National Bar Association
- Frances Nicotra: Italian American Lawyers Association of Los Angeles
- Mariana Noli: John M. Langston Bar Association