

MINORITY STUDENT PROGRAM at
RUTGERS SCHOOL of LAW-NEWARK





The Minority Student Program is a post-admissions program that provides mentoring, internships, and academic support to students who, regardless of race or ethnic origin, can demonstrate disadvantage through a history of socio-economic, educational, cultural, or other disadvantage.

A key hallmark of Rutgers School of Law-Newark is a long-standing commitment to diversity and equal opportunity in law school and the legal profession.

Rutgers-Newark consistently ranks among the very top national law schools in the diversity of its student body. Such a proud achievement would not have been possible without our pioneering Minority Student Program (MSP). Created in response to some of urban America's darkest days for race relations, the MSP is today a nationally recognized model for educating and preparing minorities and disadvantaged students of all races for a law career. Since its inception in 1968, more than 1,900 students have participated in the Minority Student Program and have graduated from the law school. MSP alums can be found on the bench, in the United States Congress, in private practice, government agencies, major corporations, legislative bodies, public interest organizations, and academic institutions across the country. The accomplishments of our MSP graduates stand as an emphatic affirmation of the value of diversity in the classroom and in the legal community.

We take great pride in our Minority Student Program and its continuing role in increasing representation in the legal profession of all segments of society.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Stuart L. Deutsch'.

Stuart L. Deutsch
Dean and Professor of Law

Overview of the MSP



The Minority Student Program was established in 1968 when the faculty, following the urban unrest in Newark and other major U.S. cities, voted to pursue an aggressive policy of equal opportunity for those who historically had been under-represented in law schools and in the legal profession. While the original focus was on increasing the number of Black/African-American students, it has expanded over the years to include Asian Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and disadvantaged applicants of all races.

Admission to the Minority Student Program is separate from and subsequent to admission to the law

school. Every applicant is invited to indicate his/her interest in the MSP on the admission application. All matriculated students, regardless of race or ethnic origin, are eligible for consideration for the MSP. This includes students of color and disadvantaged students, regardless of race or ethnic origin, who grew up as members of low-income families with a history of poverty, or who can demonstrate that for other reasons they are educationally, culturally or socio-economically disadvantaged.

MSP students benefit from all of the elements that make Rutgers-Newark an outstanding center for legal education: a nationally recognized faculty; an innovative curriculum rich in variety and depth of experience; one of the most

Ken Padilla, Assistant Dean for the Minority Student Program and Externships and 1995 alum, draws on his experience in the program as well as his background in public and private legal practice in guiding MSP students.

extensive clinical programs in the country; a community of diverse backgrounds and perspectives; the opportunity for interdisciplinary study; and, for those unable to attend full-time, a part-time evening program.

MSP students have served as editors of all of our journals, and as president of the Student Bar Association and the Moot Court Board. Many have graduated with high and highest honors, and have secured prestigious judicial clerkships with the New Jersey Supreme Court, U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeals, and other federal courts.

The Accomplishments of MSP Graduates

Rutgers Law School graduates who participated in the MSP represent every spectrum of the profession.

MSP graduates have been and are judges, members of the U.S. Congress and the New Jersey Legislature, presidential and gubernatorial appointees, law professors and administrators, mayors of towns and cities, agency commissioners, and prominent members of the bar in public and private practice.

Alumnae/i regularly participate in MSP events and activities, and continue to support the law school community to ensure that Rutgers remains an extraordinary environment for producing lawyers dedicated to social justice and excellence in the profession.

In reflecting on their careers, many prominent graduates readily credit the MSP for their professional achievements.

“By looking beyond traditional indicators of potential success, the MSP gave me the opportunity to study law under leading scholars who were also committed to social justice. I am indebted to this visionary group of faculty members and administrators who had the courage and conviction to make this program a reality.”

HON. JOSE L. FUENTES '82
Appellate Division
New Jersey Superior Court



“By opening the door for me to the legal profession, the MSP gave me the opportunity to help bring others closer to achieving the American dream. The success of MSP graduates makes clear that it is in our country’s best interest to offer opportunities for those at a disadvantage and to provide a means to overcome many of the educational barriers that still exist in America.”

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ '79
U.S. Congressman
13th District, New Jersey

“Law school was a life-changing experience. It meant everything to me. The supportive environment of the MSP gave me the confidence and the skills to make a difference. I am forever grateful to the MSP and to the faculty who created it.”

ZULIMA FARBER '74
Partner
Lowenstein Sandler PC





“I will always be indebted to MSP. Without it, I might never have succeeded in a law school of the caliber of Rutgers-Newark. The tutorials, the camaraderie and the support of the program helped me to become a top student and make law review, leading to a job at Debevoise & Plimpton and my current position at CBS/King World Productions.”

KATHLEEN CONKEY '91
Assistant General Counsel
CBS/King World Productions



“The Minority Student Program was a great experiment in diversity which provided students of color and students from disadvantaged and/or low-income backgrounds with the opportunity and support essential to flourish and succeed in the legal profession. Because of MSP, the study and practice of law today are more representative of all segments of society. I am proud to be an MSP graduate and thank the program for the opportunity to demonstrate my talents.”

WADE HENDERSON '73
Executive Director
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

“The MSP taught me that one learns the law from the collective breadth of experience that fellow students, as well as professors, bring to the classroom, and thus that diversity is not only beneficial to legal education, it is essential.”

RONALD K. CHEN '83
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Rutgers School of Law-Newark



“There is no doubt that but for the MSP, I would not have had the professional opportunities of a lifetime. The program provided guidance and support throughout my law school journey. The wonderful network of MSP professionals has contributed greatly to my success. I will be forever indebted to MSP and remain committed to broaden the path for others to follow.”

YVONNE SMITH SEGARS '84
New Jersey Public Defender



Support Services for MSP Students



Rutgers School of Law-Newark believes that it has an obligation to help all students succeed in law school. For MSP students, there are various academic and professional programs designed to enhance the law school experience, employment and internship opportunities, and relationships with alumnae/i. These include:

The Summer Orientation Program is a two-week program in August that is designed to provide entering MSP students with a foundation for the study of law. Students are exposed to fundamental lawyering skills, such as the Socratic method of teaching (case analysis), briefing cases, and legal research and writing. Upper-class students and alumnae/i participate during the orientation program in workshops and discussion groups on how to prepare successfully for the first year of law school.

“The MSP summer orientation

Law students appreciate the friendly and encouraging environment at Rutgers.

program laid a solid foundation for my law school experience. The program provided me with an insight into law school classes and afforded me the opportunity to make a strong connection with other MSP students. This allowed me to begin my first year with an understanding of the curricular demands and the necessary ‘support network’ to meet these demands.” **Vanessa Brown ’04**

Legal Skills Study Groups help first-year MSP students to develop their analytical and exam-writing skills. An upper-class student is assigned as a facilitator to each first-year course section. Facilitators work under the supervision of the faculty. Participation by first-year MSP students is mandatory.

“Besides providing study guidance, the MSP study groups provided me with a comfortable environment where I could ask the ‘silly’ questions

that I was too afraid to ask in a large classroom. I was an out-of-state student, and the MSP study groups acquainted me with a number of students who really helped speed up my transition to living here in New Jersey.” **Duc Dang ’04**

The Summer Internship Program exposes first-year students in the MSP to the real world of advocacy through jobs with legal employers. Students learn first-hand about the practice of law and are paid stipends commensurate with what most first-year law students can earn in summer legal positions.

Participating employers include major New Jersey law firms, government agencies, and public interest organizations. Often, summer internship positions lead to school-year, summer and permanent jobs. Student participants are selected based on the strength of their applications, transcripts, references, writing samples, personal interviews, and employer review.

“The MSP summer internship program was an integral part of my success as a law student. As a first-generation immigrant and the first person in my family to attend college, I found it difficult to establish networks within the legal profession. Without the MSP internship program, I would not have had the opportunity after my first year of law school to work in one of the top law firms in New Jersey. Overall, the internship program enhanced my professional experiences and opened the doors to possibilities that once seemed out of my reach.” **Jose R. Almonte ’04**

Student Activities at Rutgers Law School

MSP students are actively involved in all aspects of student life. The variety of student-run

organizations at Rutgers Law School reflects the diverse professional, political, social, and community interests of the student body. Among the organizations are the: Association of Black Law Students, Association of Latin-American Law Students, Asian/Pacific-American Law Students Association, Student Bar Association, Federalist Society, International Law Society, Intellectual Property Law Society, Lesbian and Gay Caucus, Pro Bono Service Program, Public Interest Law Foundation, and Student Lawyers Guild.

Student publications such as the *Rutgers Law Review*, *Rutgers Computer and Technology Law Journal*, *Women's Rights Law Reporter*, *Rutgers Race and the Law Review*, and *Rutgers Law Record* publish critical analysis and opinion on important legal issues relevant to the legal community and to society at large.

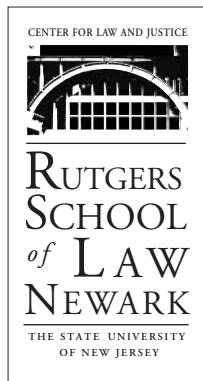


Law school faculty created the MSP in 1968 and remain strongly committed to its goals. Professors Charles Jones and Suzanne Goldberg serve on the MSP Committee and as advisers to student-run publications.

About the Law School

Rutgers School of Law-Newark is located in the Center for Law and Justice on the Rutgers-Newark campus, the most diverse national university in the United States. Our academic mission is to train students to become highly skilled, ethical lawyers who will assume leadership roles in the legal profession and related disciplines. Our internationally recognized faculty regularly make significant contributions to the development of legal theory and produce scholarship that addresses emerging social issues from interdisciplinary perspectives. Through our clinics and pro bono activities, Rutgers Law School faculty and students are at the forefront of resolving the complex legal issues facing a global society, and serve the public by giving the honored principles of justice and equality under the law a practical significance.

For more information on the Minority Student Program, contact:
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