

The NALP Foundation and NALP Release Joint Study of U.S. Law School Alumni Employment and Satisfaction for the Class of 2018

Boston, Massachusetts and Washington, DC – June 27, 2022 – The NALP Foundation and NALP today released their ninth joint study, *Law School Alumni Employment and Satisfaction*, for the Class of 2018. The new data shows intriguing shifts within graduates three years after graduation, including:

Mobility: Overall alumni professional mobility remained consistent with 2017 levels, with over two thirds of alumni reporting having already held two or more sequential positions since graduating; however, alumni of color reported both changing positions and intending to do so at higher rates than their majority peers.

Educational Debt: Alumni reported high levels of outstanding total educational debt, with the vast majority of this debt – 83% – attributable to law school alone. Overall educational debt levels for alumni of color at \$123,336 were significantly higher than for their white peers (\$85,397).

Work Location and Satisfaction: In a reversal from last year’s results for the Class of 2017, graduates working solely from home reported lower overall job satisfaction than those working either full-time in the office or in a hybrid schedule.

Law School Engagement: Alumni articulated distinct preferences about post-graduate engagement with their law schools, ranking networking events and mentoring programs as their top choices, while service in alumni associations and financial donations were of least interest.

Mental Health: Female alumni reported that the pandemic and economic crisis impacted their mental health at much higher rates than did their male counterparts – 46% vs. 31%.

“While the good news is that employment satisfaction remains high overall for these recent law school graduates, the ongoing impact of the pandemic and the differentiated experiences of graduates of color and women both in law school and as they launch their careers merit specific attention as the legal ecosystem grapples with the future of work and the profession’s diversity,” noted NALP Foundation President & CEO, Fiona Trevelyan Hornblower.

NALP's Executive Director James Leipold noted that "the differential in debt levels between graduates of color and their white peers is particularly troubling, and ought to give all of us pause. Nevertheless it is encouraging to see overall career satisfaction ratings remaining so high despite the additional challenges faced during the pandemic era."

This year's study is based on data provided by 1,477 Class of 2018 alumni from 30 U.S. law schools between September 2021 and December 2021. All ABA-accredited law schools were invited to participate. In addition to the topics noted above, the report also contains detailed information, segmented by gender identity, race/ethnicity, and law school rank, on:

- Employment Status
- Compensation
- Career Trajectory
- Efficacy of Law School Preparation
- Experiential Education
- Key Skills for Practice

The full PDF report for U.S. law schools is available for purchase from the NALP Foundation at www.nalpfoundation.org/bookstore. The comparable report for Canadian law school alumni will be released shortly.

About the NALP Foundation

The NALP Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; our mission is to improve the quality and delivery of legal services by advancing excellence in strategic and practical organizational leadership, effective management of legal personnel, professional development of lawyers, access to and diversity within the profession and ethical practices and professionalism. For over 25 years, The NALP Foundation has conducted unique benchmark research, and delivered exceptional educational programming and publications based on this research. To learn more about The NALP Foundation, visit www.nalpfoundation.org.

About NALP

NALP is an association of over 2,500 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. What brings NALP members together is a common belief in three fundamental things. First, all law students and lawyers should benefit from a fair and ethical hiring process. Second, law students and lawyers are more successful when supported by professional development and legal career professionals. Third, a diverse and inclusive legal profession best serves clients and our communities. That's why NALP members work together every day to collect and publish accurate legal employment data and information, and champion education and standards for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than 50 years, NALP has played an essential role in the success of our members and the lawyers and law students they serve. To learn more about NALP, visit www.nalp.org.

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