First-Generation Graduate Student Success

Alejandra Casillas, David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA

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Kristin Theis-Alvarez, Berkeley Law (UC Berkeley)
First Generation Support Services

Carol S. Takao, PhD
Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Life
The most successful UCSF students not only pay careful attention to their studies, but also take time to engage with their communities, build relationships, and have fun. They have healthy habits like eating right and getting exercise, and they seek advice when they need help. Even in the early stages of their degree programs, they plan for their futures beyond UCSF, exploring career options and preparing to enter the workforce.

This website is meant to help you navigate the wide range of resources and services at UCSF that will help YOU succeed. Explore the site, and please let us know if you think something is missing here! You can also see a Student Success PowerPoint presentation or a simple list of links to resources mentioned on this site.
First Generation Support Services

We strive to create a campus environment in which the dreams of our academic pioneers and the collective vision for equal educational opportunity can be realized, regardless of socioeconomic class.

Fostering supportive community for students who are of the first generation in their family to graduate from college.
UCSF First Gen Support Services
Past Events: 2017-2018

- Diversity Graduation
- FG2C Panda & Paint Night
- First Generation Story Circle
- First Generation & LGBT Ice Cream Social
- Annual First Generation to College Community Reception
- How to Find Your Mentor at a Mixer
- FG2C RCO: First Generation to College Fall Gathering
- Thriving as a First-Generation College Student
- First Gen Welcome (Back) Event - 2017
Outreach to First Gen (Prospective) Students

WE ADMIT PEOPLE, NOT NUMBERS.

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Specific, Thoughtful Outreach to Prospective FGC/FGP Students - Why Does it Matter?

- Signaling & Naming
- Problem: Varying Availability and Quality of Pre-Law Advising
- Tailored Counseling (Strength versus Shortcoming Mentality)
- Cultivating Belonging
- **Avoiding a Deficit Model -- Strengths, and Diverse Voices**

- Barrier Reduction
- “Insider” Knowledge & the Application Process
  - Access to Resources
  - Access to (Accurate) Information
  - Access to Strategies
  - Access to Programs
  - Access to Networks
What Practices Need to Change to Enhance Outreach?

• Generally
  • Awareness
  • Assumptions
  • Prioritization - Centering

• Practically
  • Messaging and Communication Strategy (print, web, social media, etc.)
  • Events
  • Application
  • Data Collection/Systems
  • Programs and Other Resources
College generation status of spring 2002 high school sophomores with subsequent postsecondary enrollment, by race/ethnicity, native language, and household income: 2012

Race/ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-generation college students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation college students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

Student native language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-generation college students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation college students</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Asian/Southeast Asian language</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other language</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household income in 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-generation college students</th>
<th>Continuing-generation college students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 or less</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,001 to $50,000</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,001 to $75,000</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>$75,001 to $100,000</td>
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<td>$100,001 to $200,000</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>$200,001 or more</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outreach - Everywhere, All the Time

We look for the kind of people you’ll want to spend the next three years around—engaged, driven, curious, and collegial. Classmates who will inspire you to do better. Independent thinkers who will challenge and expand your worldview. Students

Here are just a few things that set Berkeley Law apart:

Our 29 one-of-a-kind student-run clinics—from the Anti-Trafficking Project to the Startup Law Initiative—let you dig into legal work in your first year. Our pioneering First Generation Professionals student group offers community, alumni mentorship, social events, and support from faculty who are first-gen themselves.

Our business and technology law programs exploit our proximity to Silicon Valley, and our business law faculty is growing at a breakneck pace. Yet these programs resist silos, as evidenced by the new Access to Entrepreneurship Initiative and our work in corporate social responsibility.
Website - Entering Class Profile
https://www.law.berkeley.edu/admissions.jd/entering-class-profile/

Each year the admissions office recruits and admits some of the country's most promising, diverse, and dynamic students to the Berkeley Law student body.

Although we are one of the most selective law schools in the country, our admission philosophy reflects a commitment to admitting human beings and not simply numbers. We hope that the following profile provides some sense of the excellence and diversity that define us. Berkeley Law students are astoundingly accomplished and come from a wide range of backgrounds, interests, life experiences, and perspectives.

**PROFILE FOR CLASS OF '20**

- Number of Applicants: 5,457
- Class Size: 304
- Median LSAT: 167 (168 – 75th percentile, 164 – 25th percentile)
- Median GPA: 3.79 (3.88 = 75th percentile, 3.66 = 25th percentile)
- Mean age: 24
- 6% age 30 or older
- 65% women
- 42% people of color
- 9% are the first in their family to receive a college degree
Website - Diversity at Berkeley Law
https://www.law.berkeley.edu/admissions/jd/diversity-at-berkeley-law/

Faculty Spotlight

Visit Berkeley Law

Being the First

Alumni

Student Organizations

Sexual Orientation
Gender Identity

Apply Now
A groundbreaking student group helps budding first-generation professionals bridge the gap between disadvantaged backgrounds and a future in law

By Andrew Cohen

Growing up in a rough part of Stockton—dirt-poor, surrounded by drug-war violence, educated at low-performing and often dangerous schools—Antonio Herrera Cuevas ’12 overcame more dire obstacles than most Berkeley Law students could even fathom.

While his classmates—to be chose what to wear each morning, Herrera Cuevas carefully decided what colors not to wear based on the prevailing gang activity. He heard gunfire almost daily, witnessed gruesome fights regularly, and had no choice but to grow up fast.

As a preteen, Herrera Cuevas was translating and explaining complex medical reports and credit card documents to his parents, Mexican immigrants who spoke limited English. His family lived on a household income of $25,000 to $30,000 a year—before his father, a laborer, suffered a back injury that pushed the family deep into debt.

Bright, determined, and ravenous for a better life, Herrera Cuevas earned top grades despite working throughout high school. He came domestically, graduating in four years. How stressful could law school be for someone who had already overcome so much?

“I came really close to leaving early in my second year,” Herrera Cuevas says. “The classes weren’t a problem, but I felt alienated and depressed because it seemed like I didn’t belong. During the first week of on-campus job interviewing, I had no idea how to behave. I wasn’t just that I didn’t have money—I didn’t have the cultural background to decode the language required to navigate those waters.”

Rationally, Herrera Cuevas knew he couldn’t be alone in feeling alone. Surely, other Berkeley Law students endured hardships en route to becoming the first in their families to attend college. But finding them was no easy task.

Among the dizzying number of student organizations he encountered at Berkeley Law, Herrera Cuevas noticed a missing niche in the diversity mix. “There were no more ethnically and racially identified groups, but no socioculturally identified organizations,” he recalls. “It seemed like a glaring void.”

Every to fill it, he poured his energy into forming a haven for first-generation law school students. He found an ally in his first-year module, classmate Rory McHale, and enlisted McHale’s help to form First Generation Professionals (FGP).
“I did some research and found that the top law schools collectively have a very low percentage of students from the bottom economic quintile,” Herreraictured says. “That creates an immediate disconnect for people from backgrounds such as mine. I remember talking with other students and thinking, ‘How come no one else knows what government choices?’”

FGP started humbly, with seven students attending the first meeting. Today, it provides mentorship, career advising, networking events, and social activities for more than 50 first-generation students. That stunning growth in membership and programming is a testament to student drive, faculty inspiration, administrative commitment, and alumni collaboration.

CULTURAL CURRENCY
Many graduate schools are quick to tout the diversity of their student bodies. Flip through their promotional materials and you’ll often find language stressing a commitment to admitting low-income students. Far too often, however, the commitment stops there. The national dropout rate for low-income students is much higher than that of their richer counterparts.

“We want to be the most accessible law school in the country, and that involves making sure every qualified applicant can come here regardless of background,” says Berkeley Law Dean Sujit Choudhry. “An ethnically diverse piece is ensuring that all of our students have the resources and mentoring they need, not just to graduate but to thrive while they’re here. That’s particularly vital with our first-generation students.”

As Herrera pictured broached his student group idea with faculty members and minor staff, it became clear they wanted to help. But he and McHale know that FGP would also need a strong internal community—with shared goals and a supportive social network—to gain a sturdy foothold. “We’re needed to fund for ourselves,” McHale says of FGP students. “Innate, FGP is a group about our background, and students don’t want to reveal to peers or employers that they haven’t been exposed to golf, travel, and expensive restaurants. To maximize our education, we need to quickly build a community of other students, potential employers, and professors.”

Before launching the group, Herrera pictured and McHale happily learned that professors Bertrall Ross and Jennifer Urban had also been first-generation law students. They agreed to serve as faculty advisors, and have provided continuous support and motivation. Jesus Mosquera, who led FGP with classmate Amanda Rogers during the 2012–13 school year, saw some students “get a little tizzy” when Ross and Urban spoke of their own uncertain paths through law school.

“Their circumstances were a lot like ours, and now look at their success,” Rogers says. “I always felt as if professors came from another planet. But hearing their stories and learning how invested they were in us was really powerful. It made our own law school and career aspirations seem feasible.”

Ross described how the tour guide for his orientation at YLS Law described strategies for securing a district court clerkship. “I didn’t know what a clerkship was,” Ross recalls. “Right away it felt like I had a lack of capital, that most people were speaking a language I’d never learned. That insecurity can lead to fears of speaking in class, engaging with classmates, and getting to know professors. I could have really benefited from a group like FGP.”

For Ross, adding value to FGP means working to make law school a comfortable space by building programs to help students get their footing in their new turf.

“FGP students have the smarts, they just don’t always have exposure to necessities like professional etiquette, law firm culture, and networking skills,” he explains. “Many other students already have these buildups to success in place through family connections or parents who are lawyers.”

MENTORING MISSION
Determined to correct that, Herrera pictured worked with Eric Stern, director of operations for Berkeley Law’s Career Development Office (CDO) to create a mentorship program that pairs first-generation students with first-generation lawyers. Matches were made based on both geography and practice areas preferred.

“There were some kinks early on, as most people who found the mentorships helpful were already pretty extraverted,” says Rogers, FGP’s former co-leader. “But we worked hard to smooth out the wrinkles, and the organization of our current leaders have done an amazing job presenting events and programs that help students develop concrete tools for achieving success.”

Stern often hears from FGP alumni who say they could have benefited from this type of group during law school, and are enthusiastic about contributing their mentoring skills. He has successfully added new mentors by reaching out to LinkedIn groups and through Berkeley Law’s News bulletin.

The mentoring program now boasts nearly 50 alumni members who have hosted FGP events at their law firms. The CDO also sponsors first-generation tailored training in resume writing, job interviews, networking, and financial aid management.

In addition to sharing insights on these subjects, mentors also tackle topics such as what “business casual” means and what kind of drink or food to order at a work-sponsored happy hour or dinner event.

“One of our mentors, someone at a law firm, talks to an FGP summer associate about eating, sitting, private boarding schools, or another topic to which they have had little to no exposure,” Stern says. “Our mentors do a great job explaining how to

From Uncertainty to Editor-in-Chief

FGP student Lora Krulich ’16 overcomes her initial doubts to lead the California Law Review

While reading her acceptance letter to Berkeley Law, Lora Krulich ’16 knew she had a golden opportunity at a Top 10 school. Her faith in capitalizing on it, however, was far less certain.

“I thought that to be a successful law student you needed to be introverted, aggressive, and self-promoting,” she says. “That wasn’t me.”

Now a leader of Berkeley Law’s First Generation Professionals (FGP), Krulich credits the student group for making a warming sense of belonging. In January, she was elected editor-in-chief of the California Law Review (CLR)—the school’s premier legal publication. Among her predecessors: California Supreme Court Justice Kathryn Werdegar ’62, former Chief Justice Roger Traynor ’52, and former U.S. Ambassador to Australia Jeffrey Bleich ’79.

“When you know your school truly values first-generation students, you don’t have to change who you are in order to contribute,” Krulich says. “Berkeley Law’s leadership actually wants what we bring to the table.”

Raised by parents who didn’t finish high school and emigrated from India in the 1970s, Krulich graduated from Golden College before serving as a mentor policy advisor for Newark Mayor Cory Booker, now a U.S. senator. While focusing on public administration at NYU’s Wagner School of Public Service, Krulich engaged with her vision for CLR.

“CLR, we work on cutting-edge scholarship from diverse and talented authors,” says Krulich, noting a recent article on community monitoring of police. “People talk about law being very binary—yes/no; legal/illegal. But there’s so much nuance, and we provide a voice that pushes the whole field forward.”

Despite her lofty position, Krulich remains tethered to financial realities. To help save money, she lives in San Bruno with her “relentlessly supportive” parents.

“I came home and said ‘I’m running for editor-in-chief of the Law Review!’” Krulich recounts. “My mom said, ‘We have no idea what a law review is, but we’re happy for you. Will you be cutting down on your inheritance?’”

Kruglyph will work at Tesla, Schiller & Flesner in Oakland this summer, and has two clerkships lined up after graduation: first with U.S. District Court Judge Philip G benches in California’s Central District, then with Judge Kimberly McLean Wardlaw at the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. “CLR plays a huge part in making my law school experience so fulfilling,” Krulich says. “I love helping a group that provides so much.”

Family matters: To help save money, Lora Krulich ’16 lives at her parents’ home in San Bruno with her mom, Jasmin, and
manage such conversations and still connect and build professional relationships.

Working closely with FPG’s student leaders, Stern coordinates myriad programs that shed light on how law students should interact with attorneys—and on additional areas that might be common knowledge among other students. He has also organized financial literacy workshops that help FPG pursue their interest in working to manage their personal loans.

“A lot of our classmates have parents who are professors and judges and lawyers; my parents didn’t even complete grade school,” Mosqueda says. “That can be intimidating. But with FPG, the sense of community and the tools we all gain help us be more outgoing.”

Last year’s program leaders, Jackie Aranols ‘15 and Samantha Reed ‘15, augmented the mentoring program by adding a peer-to-peer initiative called FGP Families. Each “family” consists of at least one 3L, 2L, and 1L student. Alumni from the last two graduating classes have since added branches to the family tree—a tradition that Aranols and Reed expect will continue.

“We recognized that mentoring needs persist beyond the first year for FGP students, which is the traditional focus of law school mentorship programs,” Aranols says. “As we keep growing, our members will continue to have peer mentors beyond law school and into their legal careers.”

This school year, Ziel Setaure Homayoni, Lora Kriukhe, Gilbert Rivero, and Tim Studke joined Aranols and Reed on the leadership team and bolstered FGP programming through focused panels, trainings, and alumni dinners. In March, Colbyville, Boston, and professor Melissa Murray hosted a dinner for current FGP students at which Ross was honored with the group’s first Professor of the Year award.

Reed, raised in a small-town public housing by a single mother with mental health limitations, sees FGP’s success as a clear signal—which she hopes other schools take note of—that ability alone does not ensure law school success.

“If you come from a poor background, it’s easy to feel like you don’t belong and to be a bit mistrustful of people,” she says. “Research shows that just talking about socioeconomic issues makes it easier for FGP students to feel comfortable in higher education. It’s rewarding to help FGP students gain confidence with interviewing networking, and even participating in class.”

SPREADING THE SUCCESS

Looking back, Herrera Cuenca marvels at the cavernous gulf between his upbringing and university life. He remembers his mother trying to get him into a better elementary school through a lottery system, and that before it was implemented, parents would camp out for hours to better the odds. Later, in Berkeley for his college career, they drove by a homeless encampment in People’s Park near campus.

“My mom asked me all the time to the people gathered there were camping out to try to enroll at UC Berkeley,” he says. A decade later, Herrera Cuenca is now a capital markets attorney at Omnia Partners in San Francisco—and has hosted the FGP orientation at the firm. After achieving success in Berkeley, his goal was to help other students.

McKale is thoroughly enjoying his work as a public defender in San Diego. Mosqueda won last year’s Taxpayers Pro Bono Clinical Advocacy, given annually to Berkeley Law’s top clinical student, and is now an Equal Justice Works fellow with the Public Counsel Law Center Immigration’s Rights Project in Los Angeles. Ross earned a prestigious Public Lawyering Fellowship at Washington, D.C., office, specializing in intellectual property and appellate work.

Culturally, Burton is journeying far from his neighbors and the farms of Kentucky. After attending the Berkley School of Law, he will move to Washington, D.C., office, specializing in intellectual property and appellate work.

“Burton has lived in two different states, and he has gone on to obtain a master’s degree in business administration,” Mosqueda says. “That’s the kind of experience that shows the potential for success.”
Yarden Kakon ’19

HOMETOWN: DAVIE, FL
EDUCATION: UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA 2016
AFFILIATIONS: FOUNDER, WOMEN IN TECH LAW; FIRST GENERATION PROFESSIONALS

When I first got to Berkeley, I attended a BCLT introduction session, and as all the different groups came up to present, I realized there was nothing focused on women. It felt so obvious since the inequalities of women versus men in leadership roles in the technology and startup space is such a big conversation right now. I started doing some research and discovered that there were almost no organizations focused specifically on women in tech law. It wasn’t even a suggested term on Google.

So that’s how Women in Tech Law (WiTL) at Berkeley started. Even at the first meeting, people came up to us to say thank you for creating this community where we can talk about the struggles that come with being a woman in this area of law. It’s also given a lot of support to women like me — who don’t have a tech background — in saying that you can succeed in tech law without a CS or engineering degree.

Our “It’s Lit” (Ladies in Tech) Lunch talks bring in women from in-house, public interest, corporate, and firms to talk about their experiences. We don’t focus on the practice itself, but rather on them as women in the field. We’ll have the General Counsel of Uber or another big company sharing stories of how it feels to be the only woman in a board meeting and being otherized as a female lawyer. It’s remarkable to sit in the audience and relate so deeply with these inspiring women and realize we’re just like them, that
Print Materials

Events - Strategy and Messaging

- *Where* are we visiting?
  - What our presence says
  - What our absence says
  - Using quantitative & qualitative data
- *When* are we reaching out?
- *What* is our message?
- *Who* is representing the school/program?
  - Doing more than representing our schools or programs (Bios)
- *Why* are we attending certain events (or why not)?
- Long term investment
What’s In Your Application?

Socioeconomic Information
Completion of this questionnaire is optional and will in no way adversely affect your candidacy. Berkeley Law seeks to identify students whose ability to overcome disadvantages or obstacles of any sort promises success in law school and the profession. If you choose to complete this section, it will be used to augment the other factors that are considered during the evaluation of your application. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. Answer the questions to the best of your knowledge. You may add clarifying comments about any answer by attaching an addendum.

Name of the high school you attended for the longest period:

High school address (if available):

What is the zip code for the home where you lived when you attended high school?

How many of your friends dropped out of high school before graduating?

At the high school you attended for the longest period, how many of your friends went on to a two- or four-year college?

After high school, were you ever enrolled full-time during the academic year in a two-year community college?

How many hours were you typically employed during the academic year while you were in college?

Have you had primary responsibility for raising children during high school or college?

Socioeconomic Information continued
If English is not your native language, when did you learn it?

When did you learn it?

By age 5
During elementary school
During high school
After high school

How many people typically lived in your home when you attended high school?

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Were you raised by a single parent?

Yes
No

Are you a First-Generation College student (FGC)? We define FGC as: Neither of your parents earned a bachelor’s degree in the equivalent.

Yes
No

Are you a First-Generation Professional student (FGP)? We define FGP as: Neither of your parents earned a graduate or professional degree (MA, PhD, JD, MD, etc.) or the equivalent.

Yes
No

To the best of your knowledge, are you the first person in your family to ever attend college (whether or not another family member actually earned a degree)?

Yes
No

Will you be the first person in your family to attend law school?

Yes
No

What is the highest level of education attained by your mother?

grade school
High school
Some college
Bachelors
Masters
PhD/Professional degree

First-generation students at UC
The Application, Continued

Socioeconomic Information continued
What is the highest level of education attained by your father?
____ Grade school
____ High school
____ Some college
____ Bachelors
____ Masters
____ PhD/Professional Degree

Did any of your grandparents graduate from college?
____ Yes
____ No
____ Probably yes
____ Probably no

What were your parents' primary occupation during their working years?
Mother:
____________________

Father:
____________________

Did your parent(s) own or rent the home where you lived the longest during your high school years?
____ Own
____ Rent

Did anyone in your immediate family receive public assistance, welfare, or food stamps during your pre-college years?
____ Yes
____ No

While in college did you receive a Pell Grant?
____ Yes
____ No

While in college, were you ever the recipient of: (Check all that apply)
____ Cal Grant A
____ Cal Grant B
____ Perkins Loan
____ Financial Need-Based Grant
____ Financial Need-Based Scholarship
Contextualizing Cost

FINANCIAL AID

RESOURCES SUPPORTING PUBLIC INTEREST CAREERS

SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS
University of California’s President’s Public Service Summer Fellowships are administered by the Career Development Office. They provide up to $4,000 to $4,500 to all JD students who are employed in an approved, unpaid judicial externship or legal internship with a non-profit government agency during the summer after their first or second year. Students must complete at least 75 hours of pro bono work to be eligible to apply.

LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LRAP)
Berkeley Law’s goal is to preserve career choices by removing the student debt barrier. Currently our LRAP is integrated with the federal government’s Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF) and Income Based Repayment and offers no out-of-pocket payments for graduates that are working in a public interest law job at a salary of less than $55,000. Graduates that are in PSLF qualifying jobs for 10 years and make 120 qualifying payments can apply for loan forgiveness through the federal government’s PSLF program.

POST-GRADUATE PUBLIC INTEREST FELLOWSHIPS
Bridge Fellowship Program supports new Berkeley Law graduates committed to pursuing careers in public interest fields and to secure employment, by providing Fellows with limited financial support while searching for permanent public interest positions after the bar exam.

First-generation students at UC
Contextualizing Cost

Release of Information

If you are admitted, may we release your demographic information combined with your contact information (name, address, email address and telephone number) to members of our faculty, the alumni association and our student organizations so that they may give you more information about Berkeley Law School? Release of this information is voluntary and will not affect your admission. The release will take effect upon your admission and will last until you graduate or you revoke it.

___ Yes
___ No

Scholarships

Applicants who wish to be considered for the following scholarships must complete and submit their applications and associated materials no later than February 1 (with the exception of BLOS, which has a December 15 deadline). Please note that the Berkeley Law Opportunity Scholarship (BLOS), the Graduate Diversity Program (GDP), the Hyundai-Kia Scholars Program, and the Judge Martin Pence Scholarship all require an additional essay. You should submit the essay(s) in the Attachments Section of this application.

In addition to the scholarships listed below, Berkeley Law also awards other named and general scholarships. These awards may range from approximately $5,000 per year to full tuition. Instructions on applying for gift aid (fellowships, scholarships, grants, etc.) will be emailed to you when you receive your admissions decision. Scholarship recipients will not be required to accept any scholarship offer prior to April 1 of each year.

Are you applying for the Berkeley Law Opportunity Scholarship (BLOS)?
The Berkeley Law Opportunity Scholarship provides full tuition and fees for all three years of law school. Candidates must be a first generation college student in order to be considered. A first generation college student is someone whose both parents did not earn college degree or the equivalent. Finalists will be chosen from all qualified applicants by a selection committee and will be invited for an in-person interview. Interviews are required. Recipients will be chosen from among the finalists and will be notified in mid-March. The deadline to apply and submit all required materials for BLOS is December 15. You are required to submit a one to two page essay addressing the following prompt: Why do you believe that you are a strong candidate for the Berkeley Law Opportunity Scholarship?

___ Yes
___ No
Leveraging Partnerships

Incoming 1L Wins ‘One Lawyer Can Change the World’ Scholarship

By Andrew Cohen

Oscar Sarabia Roman has rarely felt at home. The winner of BARBRI’s One Lawyer Can Change the World Scholarship thinks that will change in August, when he arrives at Berkeley Law.

“I love how the school connects with the surrounding community,” Roman says. “I don’t want to stay isolated in an academic bubble, and Berkeley really values training their students through meaningful work with clients in need.”

A BARBRI Law Preview panel chose Roman's winning essay from more than 1,200 entries—including two other incoming Berkeley Law students who were among the 10 finalists, Casey Duckworth and Ashley Johnson. He described migrating to the United States as a young child, getting deported 15 years later, and wanting to become a lawyer who could “impact the lives of those who need a voice.”

Having grown up in a low-income, undocumented, immigrant household, Roman could never afford more than bare necessities. He says the $10,000
Other Things to Consider

● Appointments and Visitors
● Hidden Costs - Application Fee Waivers, Deposits, Admitted Student Visits, Interviews
● Faculty and Senior Staff/Admin - Creating a Culture of Self-Identification
● Experiential Education
● **Benefits!!**
If you build it, they will come… Are you ready?

“At the top 10 law schools, only 3 percent of the cumulative student body comes from the bottom economic quartile and only 10 percent comes from the bottom half,” Herrera said. “That creates an initial disconnect for people from our backgrounds. I remember talking with classmates and thinking, ‘How come no one else knows what government cheese is?’”

The only group of its kind among major U.S. law schools, FGP started small—with seven students attending the first meeting. Three years later, its welcome session drew more than 40 students.
Alejandra Casillas MD, MSHS

Assistant Professor of Medicine in Residence
David Geffen School of Medicine (DGSOM) @ UCLA
Building and supporting the First Gen graduate/professional community at my school… where do I start?
Motivation

• Primary Care Physician and Health Services Researcher
• DGSOM Clinical Medicine and Research Faculty
• DISCLAIMER— not a school administrator or an expert on educational development/curriculum/support

• BUT…proudly FIRST GEN myself

• Vested interest in seeing my First Gen medical students succeed
Motivation

• Returned home *permanently* in August 2016, largely to be of service to my community again (after being gone for 20 years!)
  • Born in Los Angeles, daughter of Mexican immigrants
My First Gen Story continues…

• Mentorship of medical students and residents as part of my academic position

• Realized that my First Gen story continued in the voices of many of my medical students--
  • Stories of resilience and grit (survived the grind to medical school)
  • ...But often while caring for family (emotionally and/or financially)
  • ...Navigating medical education and career decision-making like traveling in uncharted waters (no idea what comes next)
  • ...Lack of professors and mentors who understood their trajectory
  • ...Lack of visible First Gen peers (and/or advisors)
The Timelines/Stars Align

- **November 2016**: received an email from the wonderful Dr. LT Rease-Miles regarding the UCLA First to Go campaign
  - Part of Faculty Outreach initiative

- **May 2017**: UCLA First Gen Institute
  - Connected with other leaders at the university level, doing work on First Gen
  - Realized there was still a lack of visibility at the graduate student level

- **August 2017**: Meeting with DGSOM Dean's’ Office
  - Met with the Dean of diversity affairs and Vice Chancellor of medical education to make them aware of the UC First Gen movement
Strategy to build a First Gen movement at UCLA DGSOM...

- I initially approached leadership with A LOT of ideas on how to address First Gen at the medical education level

- Administrators first wanted to see a First Gen voice “rooted” in our medical students

- To have buy-in, we needed to demonstrate that there was a “need” for a First Gen specific movement

  - Response- “we already have outreach and support programs that include many First Gen students”

- With the help of the Student Affairs Office, I reached out to medical students about a possible First Gen organization-- scheduled a group lunch meeting for November 2017
Inaugural DGSOM First Gen Meeting

- Over 60 medical students from all class years attended!
  - UCLA First Gen Office leaders, Associate Dean for Diversity were present
  - Powerful Student Stories Emerged; What did DGSOM First Gen students need?...

- An invisible community became visible
DGSOM Medical Student Discussions

• “You don’t know what you don’t know” Hidden Curriculum?...
  • Understanding structure of medical school (boards!)
  • What goes into residency applications and beyond
  • Making connections along the training pipeline
    First Gen MS1→MS2-4→Residents→Fellows→Faculty

• Collaborate with other professional schools to hold First Gen conferences for graduate students
  • Health Sciences (Public Health)- Networking between aligned graduate professions in this safe space

• Orientation for First Gen Medical Students
  • Make this community visible from the first day (even in the medical school application process)
  • Orientation is a vulnerable time→ sets the tone for the year
What we have done so far @ DGSOM in 2018…

1) Established the DGSOM First Generation Student Organization with student leadership (helped us obtain funds)
2) Outreach and Identification of Clinical and Research DGSOM Faculty (Diversity Office); DGSOM Mentorship List-Serve (now with 75 UCLA DGSOM faculty, residents and fellows)
3) First Gen Health Sciences Mixer(s) (+ Nursing, Dentistry, Public Health)
4) 2018 DGSOM First Gen Graduates (Honorary Cords at 2018 ceremony)
DGSOM Events for 2018-2019...

- DGSOM First Generation Community Welcome Dinner
- White Coat Ceremony
- DGSOM First Gen Orientation for Family Members
- First Gen Family Dinners throughout the year for faculty/residents/students
- Needs Assessment Research Survey of First Gen population at DGSOM with demographic/educational course data
- Connecting with educational and support leadership for hard “asks” once we have more internal data (sustainability)
Lessons Learned (…or learning in progress)

- Start with identifying your First Gen community
- Use existing infrastructure (UC First Gen, Alumni Assoc.)
- Tailor existing tools (don’t reinvent the wheel)
- Start simple (i.e. you may not need a brand new “First Gen Graduate Mentor Program”)

- Approach admin strategically…
- Use peer pressure (what do other schools in your profession do for First Gen students?)
- Incremental asks (each “simple” task is someone’s paid time/resources…)

First-generation students at UC
Thank You! Questions?