

# Advising First Generation and Low Income Students

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# A bit about us

- Kory Hawkins
  - Associate Director of Admissions at UC Hastings College of the Law
  - Attended Morehouse College and Emory Univ School of Law
- Grace Kim
  - Career Counselor at UC Berkeley Career Center, Pre-Law Advisor
  - Previous experience with community college students and graduate school students; Southern California Transplant
- Scott Vignos
  - Associate Director of Admission and Outreach at UC Davis School of Law (King Hall)
  - Attended UC Davis School of Law; practiced in San Francisco before returning to King Hall

# Agenda

- Who are first generation and low income students?
- How can advising first generation and low income students differ?
- What are some strategies for successfully advising first generation and low income students?
- What resources are available to help first generation and low income students successfully navigate the law school admissions process?

# First-Generation and Low-Income Students

- First-generation – first in family to receive a degree from a four-year institution
- Low-income – from an economically underserved community, or family income is less than 200% of the federal poverty guidelines

# First-Generation and Low-Income Students

- May include, but not limited to:
  - Students of color
  - Undocumented students
  - Students from rural or underserved areas
  - Veterans and Active-Duty Personnel
- Don't automatically assume
- Challenge is making sure that all identities are considered when advising

# How advising first-generation and low-income students may differ

- Professional Network
- Academic preparation
- Financial considerations and concerns

# Strategically Advising First-Generation and Low-Income Students

- Academics
- Post-Undergraduate
- Applying to Law School
- Financial Aid

# Academics

- Encourage students to seek out classes and resources to improve writing and analytical skills
- Discourage pursuit of extracurricular activities to the detriment of classroom performance
- Help students create a balance between class and work



# Academics

- Encourage contact and relationship building with professors and academic mentors
- Help students understand the impact of poor grades, pass/fail grades, and withdrawals on law school applications
  - Important to understand how the LSDAS GPA is calculated

# Post-Undergraduate

- Gap Year(s) - Encourage students to identify which skills, experience, or areas of knowledge they may want to build upon. Support students in identifying options that will best fit their needs.
- Encourage students to establish realistic timelines for LSAT preparation (prep courses), and scholarships
- Have a conversation about the time commitment involved to finishing law school. This can help a student self assess their readiness for law school.

# Applying to Law School

- Selecting a Law School - Special considerations for this population beyond academics
- Counsel students through LSAC account creation and LSDAS procedures
- Advise students to apply for the LSAC fee waiver

# Applying to Law School

- Seek out law school admission preparation programs
- Connect students with law school admission officers
- Personal Statements - OK to discuss adversity but show progression of growth

# Financial Aid

- Develop programs to increase financial aid literacy
- Encourage students to gain a complete understanding of financial aid terms and requirements
- Once admitted, encourage students to connect with financial aid officers at law schools to ask questions
- Counsel students on how to engage in professional discussions about financial aid
- Encourage students to seek out sources of external scholarship funding

# Special Considerations

- Undocumented students
  - Undocumented students can and do go to law school (and can practice law in California)
  - Be knowledgeable about (and sensitive to) the impact of laws and policies affecting undocumented students and potential gaps in financial aid
  - Seek out and direct students to school resources for undocumented students

# Additional Considerations

- Veterans and Active-Duty Personnel
  - Federal and state benefits will often cover large portions of tuition and fees for veterans (and in some cases, their dependents)
  - Seek out and direct students to school resources for veterans and active duty personnel

# Resources

- SF Bar Association Destination Law School - [http://www.sfbar.org/jdc/diversity/educational-programs/destination\\_law\\_school.aspx](http://www.sfbar.org/jdc/diversity/educational-programs/destination_law_school.aspx)
- Council on Legal Opportunity - <http://www.cleoscholars.com/>
- For People of Color, Inc. – <http://forpeopleofcolor.org/>
- DiscoverLaw.org Scholarships Opportunities - <http://www.discoverlaw.org/diversity/scholarships.asp>
- Educators for Fair Consideration - <http://e4fc.org/>
- UC Undocumented Student Resources (includes info on Graduate Schools) - <http://undoc.universityofcalifornia.edu/>
- Service 2 School - <http://service2school.org/>
- UC Veterans and Active-Duty Personnel Resources - <http://www.ucop.edu/student-affairs/programs-and-initiatives/student-populations/veterans-and-active-duty-military-personnel.html>



Questions or Comments?