



LEO C. TRUJILLO-COX, J.D. '97 UCLA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH  
INSTRUCTOR, LAW FELLOWS PROGRAM  
PHONE: (310) 794-5720  
FAX: (310) 794-8840  
EMAIL: TRUJILLO@MAIL.LAW.UCLA.EDU

SCHOOL OF LAW  
BOX 951476  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90095-1476  
PHONE: (310) 825-4841

Of all the ways in which the UCLA School of Law serves California, none is more important than our efforts to offer access to an outstanding legal education to people from all walks of life. However, highly selective institutions such as ours have always faced an enormous challenge in sustaining diversity in the face of broad social inequities. Recent changes in California law have made this task even more daunting. Despite the fact that our state will soon be one in which there is no racial majority, the legal profession in California is 85% white. In 2000, Latinos constituted 32.4% of the state's population, yet were only approximately 5% of those licensed to practice law. While 6.7% of California's population was African American, only approximately 2.5% of our state's lawyers were African-American. Dramatic declines in the enrollment of African American, Latino, and other underrepresented students at California's public law schools only threaten to intensify this representational imbalance.

For example, the class which entered the UCLA School of Law in the fall of 1998 represented a 66% decline in Hispanic, and an 87% decline in African American enrollment, as compared to our average 1990-94 enrollment numbers. These data reflect the predictable result, given the new constitutional constraints and the nature of the law school application pool. The upper reaches of the national law school applicant pool, have extremely small numbers of African Americans and Latinos. The average admitted UCLA law student for fall 2000 had an LSAT score in the 93rd percentile and a 3.71 GPA. However, in the *entire nation* in the 2000 application year, out of 66,712 applicants to law schools, only 24 African Americans and 45 Hispanics had LSAT scores above the 92nd percentile and grades of 3.5 or better. Furthermore, UCLA and UC Berkeley, the two top feeder schools to UCLA's law program, have seen their undergraduate ranks become reflective of the post-209 era, further reducing the numbers of Latino and African American applicants likely to be highly competitive for admission to law school at UCLA.

It became quickly became apparent that it would be increasingly difficult for UCLA to enroll a sizable pool of underrepresented students unless we engaged in aggressive and innovative outreach initiatives designed to increase the small number of underrepresented applicants throughout the academic pipeline who have highly competitive academic credentials.

With the support of outreach funding from the state, The Academic Outreach Resource Center was created and The Law Fellows Program was launched in the 1997-1998 academic year with 20 UCLA undergraduate students. Over the years, the size and scope of the Program has steadily expanded to include eighteen undergraduate institutions and a number of students who had completed their undergraduate careers. Over 450 students have participated or are currently participating in the Program.

The Law Fellows Program format demystifies the law school experience and the legal profession, presenting them as viable and attainable options, and introduces participants to fundamental legal concepts and principles through the use of cases and other materials commonly used in law school. A

primary goal is to increase the academic competitiveness of socio-economically disadvantaged and underrepresented students for admission to top law schools, with the added intention of fostering a positive relationship with UCLA School of Law while advancing the principles of equity and access in legal education.

The Law Fellows Program includes a multi-year curriculum designed to increase academic competitiveness beginning with six Saturday Academies. Each participant completes a Juris Doctorate Action Plan and meets with the Directors regularly, often over the course of several years until they matriculate to law school and beyond, receiving continuous academic support, mentoring and counseling. Supports are provided through the Directors' ongoing academic/career counseling, critique of Law Fellows' work product by law student readers, and guidance offered by Graduate Mentors employed by our office.

While the Law Fellows Program is, at its heart, a long-term endeavor, some very exciting short-term and mid-range successes deserve mention here:

- **GPA:** Nearly three-quarters of all Law Fellows who join the Law Fellows Program as undergraduates see a significant increase in their cumulative GPA.
- **LSAT:** Fellows average an initial diagnostic LSAT score that places them approximately in the 25th percentile nationally. After participating in the Law Fellows LSAT preparation program, Fellows final score places them approximately in the 75th percentile nationally.
- **Enrollment:**
  1. The number of applications received by the Law School from underrepresented minority students has increased by 63% since 1999.
  2. Law Fellows achieve exceptional success in the law school admissions process and account for a significant and ever-growing portion of the unrepresented students in our entering class. Last year, 36 Law Fellows applied to law schools and 18 gained admission to UCLA's 03-04 entering class.
  3. To date, 46 Fellows have gained admission to UCLA and 31 (67%) of those admitted have enrolled here. (Our seven-year average yield amongst all African-American and Hispanic students admitted to UCLA is significantly less -- 38%.)
  4. There has been a 136% increase in the number of underrepresented students enrolled at UCLA Law since 1999. Underrepresented minority students comprise 17% of the fall 2003 entering class. This represents a significant increase from 12.8% for the 2002 entering class and up from 7.6% in 1999.

The underlying premise of the Academic Outreach Resource Center and the Law Fellows Outreach Program can be simply stated: to equip talented and motivated students with the learning tools that will help them take maximum advantage of the opportunities available to them. While much work remains to be carried out, we are encouraged by the short-term and mid-range successes of our outreach initiatives. With continued state funding of outreach, pursued aggressively and imaginatively, we are optimistic that we have turned a corner with respect to enhancing diversity in our entering classes. Without that funding, our continued successes and recent gains are in peril.