

LEGAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES— A NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT

The Legal Education Opportunities Program was established at the University of Wisconsin in 1968, when seven members of minority groups were admitted, with special consideration of their academic backgrounds, and special financial assistance. Each year the number of entering minority group students has increased. In the fall of 1972, there were 17 new students accepted into the program. The group includes 2 American Indians, 4 Chicanos and 11 black students.

The total number of LEO students presently attending the Law School is 35. It is anticipated that 20 new students will be added in August, 1973, and at least that many each year thereafter. Of the 35 now in attendance, it is expected that six will graduate in 1973. Ten students are in their second year. Academic requirements for graduation are the same for all students, regardless of race or academic background.

Financial assistance is provided from gifts of alumni, students and friends of the Law School. Some of the money comes in earmarked gifts to the Law Alumni Fund; some of it is allocated by the WLAA Board of Directors from the funds given to be distributed at the Board's discretion. Both the Board of Directors and the Board of Visitors are enthusiastic supporters of the program. The University's contribution consists of a small number of non-resident tuition remissions.

First year LEO students receive grants as needed to cover all their expenses. Continuing students have National Defense Student loans and part-time employment.

Selection from among many applicants is made on the recommendation of the LEO Committee. The number chosen is limited by the amount of financial aid available.

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It is only in recent years that institutions of higher education, including law schools, have concluded that non-discriminatory admissions policies did not solve the problem of providing equal educational opportunities. The University of Wisconsin, for example, has never excluded students for reasons of race, color, or creed. No records of the racial composition of the student body were kept. Despite its open admissions, it became clear here, as elsewhere, that our institutions were almost totally white. In 1964-65, when the first hard look at the racial composition of the student body was taken, the number of blacks on the Madison campus of the University was less than 4/10ths of 1%. In some other state colleges, it was zero.

It was true elsewhere as well.

So there have been efforts made in all colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools of any standing to encourage the participation of minority group students in what we have always assumed to be the mainstreams of American education.

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The result of the failure to admit minority students to law schools is easily seen in the State Bar of Wisconsin. Because there have been so few graduates, only thirty-five of the 6650 active members of the Bar of Wisconsin, who reside in the state, are black. At

present, there are more black law students in the two law schools of Wisconsin than there are black lawyers in the state. While the population of Wisconsin is 4% black, the number of black lawyers represents one half of one percent of all lawyers.

In the United States as a whole, there is one black lawyer for every 7000 black citizens, compared to one white lawyer to 637 whites. In the south, an estimated 350 black lawyers serve 13 million black citizens. There are just a few more than 100 black law professors, and almost half of these make up the faculties of the few predominantly black law schools.

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Pressures from the public at large, from the black community and from various governmental agencies which dispense funds have begun the slow turn-around of American education.

The Association of American Law Schools has begun a careful monitoring of minority enrollments and of efforts to increase. The results are somewhat encouraging, although there is still a long way to go. The stated non-discriminatory provision in the Association's articles is interpreted to require affirmative action to increase the number of minority group students in each of the Association's members.

The total number of law students from all minorities in the United States increased from 2933 in 1969-70 to 5568 in 1971-72. It can be presumed that there is further increase in 1972-73. Of these totals, 2128 of the 2933 in 1969-70, and 3732 of the 5568 were black students in 1971-72.

In 1971-72, only 8 law schools reported that 15% or more of their student populations were members of minority groups. Sixteen law schools reported 1%, 25 reported 2%, 20 reported 3%, 19 had 4% and 18 had 5%.

The effort is being made on many fronts. Under sponsorship of the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools, the Council on Legal Education Opportunities has conducted summer pre-admission programs for minority group students. Successful participants are granted financial assistance while attending law school. The CLEO program was financed originally by private funds, particularly the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. More recently the Legal Services Division of the Office of Economic Opportunity has supported it. Over 1200 students have participated in the CLEO program since 1968. There is a similar program at the University of New Mexico which eases the way into Law School for a group of American Indians each year, through a special preadmission preparatory program and special financial assistance.

It is estimated that more than 60 law schools in the United States offer special programs for minority group students. Many of these include the application of special entrance standards; many of them include special financial assistance; some include both.

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There are counter-pressures, of course. Expansion of minority group enrollment is seriously hampered by shortage of funds. Most programs are handicapped by an inability to plan for next year or the year after.

Last year, a state Superior Court in the state of Washington ordered the Law School of the University of Washington to admit an applicant who was denied admission, although minority group students with lower qualifications were accepted. This case is on appeal in the Supreme Court of the state of Washington.

**SUPPORT
THE LAW SCHOOL
FUND**

In Wisconsin, there has been vociferous objection by some to alleged discrimination against middle-class white applicants, many of whom are denied admission each year. Selection of law students, as alumni are aware, is based on an annually elevating academic standard.

Although progress is slow, and problems are great, this is a landmark year for LEO. The first American Indian within recent memory to be graduated from the Wisconsin Law School is a highly successful member of the Class of 1973.

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**PLAN NOW
FOR
THE 1973 SPRING PROGRAM
APRIL 7, 1973
A full day of activities**

Morning

Moot Court Final Arguments
Meeting of WLAA Boards of Directors,
Visitors

Afternoon

Reunion Luncheon
Classes of 1923, 1928, 1933, 1938, 1943,
1948, 1953, 1958, 1963, 1968
Special Honors to 1933, 1948
Awards to Distinguished Faculty, Alumnus
Awards Convocation

Evening

Gala Dinner Dance

SAVE ME A PLACE!

Make _____ reservations for me Lunch
Dinner

Name

Address

**NOTICE TO BENCHERS
MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND
THE ANNUAL BENCHERS DINNER
APRIL 6, 1973
DETAILS WILL FOLLOW**