

# SAN DIEGO LAWYER®

## 2023 DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



FEATURING:

The Mentor-Mentee Relationship

Maneuvering The Work-Life Balance

A Half Century with Greg Knoll



# 2023 DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

By Nima Shull

In June, the Supreme Court struck down affirmative action, effectively ending higher education race-conscious admissions practices and wiping away 40 years of precedent.<sup>1</sup> The Court used the equal protection clause, enacted to address the immense inequality faced by Black Americans, to achieve this result.<sup>2</sup> For many advocates of diversity and inclusion, this decision — though it purportedly champions neutrality — ignores our country's history of systematic and pervasive racial injustice.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, it has served as a harbinger of unprecedented gutting of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives across the country.

In May, Florida governor Ron DeSantis signed a bill into law banning the state's public universities from spending any funds on DEI programs.<sup>4</sup> Lawmakers have sought to introduce similar legislation in several other states banning universities from allocating funds to DEI programs, prohibiting implicit bias and diversity training, and forbidding mandatory diversity training for students and faculty. So far, at least one anti-DEI piece of legislation has been introduced in 22 states this year.<sup>5</sup> These measures pose a serious threat to DEI on college campuses — and by extension, law school and other graduate programs — across the nation.

Given the increasing polarization and politicization of this subject, safeguarding DEI initiatives is critical for legal and business leaders, now more than ever. Despite progress made toward improving diversity in the legal profession, expanding attacks on DEI threaten to diminish the number of diverse law students and new attorneys employers can hire. One solution to this growing problem is to support programs like the SDCBA-ACC Diversity Fellowship

Program (DFP), launched in 2009. The DFP employs a holistic process focused on students' legal research and writing skills, personal backgrounds, leadership experience, commitment to diversity, and career goals — rather than GPA or law school name — in selecting students. The program provides students with mentors and collaborates with employers to give students the necessary tools, early in their legal careers, to help level the playing field and increase the number of diverse legal professionals in our community.

Through its competitive application process, the DFP places promising and diverse first-year and part-time second-year law students with prominent employers, many of which have participated in the program for over a decade. The 2023 program saw 28 employers<sup>6</sup> matched with 31 fellows, one of the largest classes in the program's history. This year's participating employers included several law firms, public employers, corporate legal departments, and — for the first time in the program's history — a nonprofit organization. This year also marked a record-breaking number of student applications, making the program's selection process even more rigorous.

Learn more about the DFP and ways to participate in 2024 at [www.sdcba.org/dfp](http://www.sdcba.org/dfp).



**Nima Shull** is the Director of the SDCBA-ACC Diversity Fellowship Program (DFP). He is also an associate at Buchalter, APC, a DFP employer. His practice focuses on commercial and labor and employment litigation. Prior to becoming Director, Nima previously interviewed and mentored DFP fellows and is also a past DFP fellow himself.

1. See *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, Docket No. 20-1099, 600 U.S. \_\_\_, available at [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/20-1199\\_hgdj.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/20-1199_hgdj.pdf); see also Andre M. Perry, Hannah Stephens, Manann Donoghoe, "The Supreme Court's decision to strike down affirmative action means that HBCU investment is more important than ever," *Brookings*, (June 29, 2023), available at <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-supreme-courts-decision-to-strike-down-affirmative-action-means-that-hbcu-investment-is-more-important-than-ever/#:~:text=The%20June%202029%20Supreme%20Court,erodes%2040%20years%20of%20precedent>

2. *Id.*

3. *Id.*

4. See *CS/CS/SB 266: Higher Education*, available at <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/266/?Tab=BillText>.

5. See *The Chronicle of Higher Education DEI Legislation Tracker*, available at [https://www.chronicle.com/article/here-are-the-states-where-lawmakers-are-seeking-to-ban-colleges-dei-efforts?cid=gen\\_sign\\_in](https://www.chronicle.com/article/here-are-the-states-where-lawmakers-are-seeking-to-ban-colleges-dei-efforts?cid=gen_sign_in); see also Jaclyn Diaz, "Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signs a bill banning DEI initiatives in public colleges," *NPR*, (May 15, 2023), available at <https://www.npr.org/2023/05/15/1176210007/florida-ron-desantis-dei-ban-diversity>.

6. A total of 30 employers signed up for the DFP in 2023, though two employers were ultimately unable to participate due to unforeseen student withdrawals from the program.





# 2023 FELLOWSHIP EMPLOYERS



## KORRY HUFFMAN

AMERICAN SPECIALTY HEALTH, INC.

Diversity and inclusion betters our company and office in every way. Including many employees of different backgrounds creates a better culture of collaboration and creativity, and helps encourage innovation and teamwork. Our DFP fellow was all-around great this summer, but a standout moment was her willingness to take on many projects at once and complete an entire memo from start to finish in one week. The memo task is a huge lift, and I was very impressed by her ability to complete it in such a short timeframe.



## HEATHER PARK

CLARK HILL, LLP

We chose to participate in DFP to gain access to the valuable diverse talent pool. With a mission to serve and treat our clients and each other with integrity and compassion while providing effective, high quality service, diversity and inclusion serves as a tool to not only get us there, but keep us there. Our diversity and inclusion initiatives allow us to build upon a culture that celebrates differences and praises innovation.



## GABRIELA TORRES

DISABILITY RIGHTS CALIFORNIA  
(SAN DIEGO OFFICE)

Diversity and inclusion, especially for legal services firms like Disability Rights California, is vital to the successful representation of clients. My biggest tip to other employers looking to increase diversity would be to participate in the DFP program annually. It is very easy to focus on GPA and LSAT scores when hiring, but that is only one factor. I was so impressed with the professionalism and enthusiasm that our fellow brought to this team. We liked her so much that we asked her to stay on after the program's end.



## JUSTIN PAIK

FERRIS & BRITTON, APC

We believe DFP is a valuable tool to promote diversity and inclusion in the San Diego legal community, and that is why we have participated in this program since Summer 2010. It is a great way to not only foster diversity and inclusion within your firm/organization, but also to help the San Diego legal community continue pursuing diversity and inclusion by giving opportunities to local law students with diverse backgrounds to succeed.



## DAVID LATIMER

BECTON, DICKINSON AND COMPANY

There are many ways that a company can implement inclusion programs that add up to meaningful impact. At BD, we've enhanced our training, hiring, mentorship, and internships, and created associate resource group programs to foster this important initiative. Unconscious bias training has been a fundamental organizational initiative in this area.



## KRIS CHEREVAS

COZEN O'CONNOR

Annual participation in the DFP is a commitment of our office. We value the program's purpose and the benefits it provides to the students, employers, and local legal community. Diversity, equity, and inclusion bring fresh energy, perspective, and collaboration to our firm.



## PATRICIA HOLLENBECK

DUANE MORRIS LLP

DFP allows participants to begin the transition from law students to lawyers. They see, often for the first time, how concepts learned in law school have practical application. We also learn a tremendous amount from the different points of view represented by the DFP fellows. The firm's diversity management is integral to our core business and each of our practice groups; our programs for recruitment, retention, and promotion of historically minority groups are a priority. Seeking out different points of view strengthens our firm.



## EDWIN M. BONISKE

HIGGS FLETCHER MACK LLP

Higgs Fletcher & Mack chooses to participate in this rewarding program because the benefits are overflowing. Our DFP fellows often bring us perspectives that we aren't normally privy to, including what the next generation of lawyers is looking for from future employers. They also have shown us the value of embracing diverse perspectives and ideas, and how their generation's views and values will shape the practice of law and make further progress towards the ideal of providing access to justice for all.



### ARCELIA MAGANA

JACKSON LEWIS P.C.

We believe an inclusive culture makes us a stronger, better firm. Participating in impactful pipeline programs such as the San Diego County Bar Association's Diversity Fellowship Program allows the firm to support the development of exceptional, diverse law students. Working with Paul and being around his joyful and optimistic personality reminded our office how lucky we are to advocate for our clients, and that someone is always watching and learning.



### JESSICA YANG

LAGASSE BRANCH BELL & KINKEAD LLP

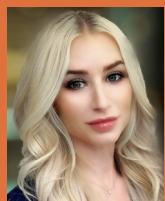
We have participated in the DFP program for over 10 years. I was a DFP fellow myself shortly after the program was first created! It has been incredible to see its expansion and wonderful to work with all the fellows we have had. Sofia was a fantastic presence in the office this summer with her enthusiasm and curiosity. She fit in with our culture effortlessly and quickly became a go-to for research and assistance for our attorneys!



### JOANNE BUSER

PAUL PLEVIN QUARLES

DFP provides a meaningful opportunity to celebrate local diversity. Inclusivity is not just about making sure attorneys feel valued, but also about our legal professionals feeling 100% a part of the team. When it comes to our fellows, I most enjoy learning about their personal interests and lives outside the law. They bring such unique attributes to our firm, and often have some of the most creative ideas about how we can easily adjust our practices to make them more inclusive and thoughtful.



### JAIME STEFFENS

PROCOPIO

From our fellow, I learned to never judge a book by its cover. I thought Ayham was a quiet and soft-spoken law student, but I watched him blossom over the summer into a talkative, extroverted, and confident aspiring attorney who pushed boundaries and opened the door to unique discussions. Law firms must actively recruit and seek out diverse hires, promote diverse businesses, aim to support diverse affinity groups, celebrate diverse holidays and traditions, and create an inclusive culture.



### BRIAN MURPHY

KLINEDINST PC

Building an environment where all employees are free to be themselves contributes to a sense of team and belonging, and creates the space where we can do our best work. Our fellow, Lin, did a lot of outstanding work for us over the summer. We were particularly impressed with her ability to interact with high-level attorneys and judges. At one event, Lin spoke with a superior court judge who was so impressed that she gave Lin her cell phone number, then invited her to lunch with three other judges. She made the firm look great!



### CORINNE HAWKINS

LPL FINANCIAL

I have learned that there are still very hungry, highly intelligent young students in our midst that are very excited and interested in the legal profession. Nathaniel took every single opportunity he had to meet people, ask questions, and experience everything he could in his short internship with us. It was great to see such initiative and investment on his part.



### NICOLE D. ALLEN

PETTIT KOHN INGRASSIA LUTZ & DOLIN PC

Our firm is proud to provide talented law students from diverse backgrounds with an opportunity to gain valuable experience, expand their skill sets, and thrive in a supportive and inclusive environment. Working with our fellow allowed our firm to become aware of some of the issues facing young, diverse law students. Based on our fellow's performance this summer, we are very optimistic about future attorneys entering the legal profession.



### DEBRA WYMAN

ROBINS GELLER RUDMAN & DOWD LLP

Participating in DFP is a tremendously rewarding experience. The benefits and richness of diverse backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints translate to a more balanced and cohesive office culture. Carlos dove head-first into our high-stakes, intensely complicated practice area and shined.



**JERRILYN MALANA**  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY DISTRICT  
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The District Attorney's Office has participated in DFP for many years as diversity and inclusion are part of our core values. We support programs and initiatives that share our values. Diversity pipeline programs such as DFP are critical to increase the number of diverse attorneys so that our legal profession is reflective of the communities we serve.



**N. CAROL KIM**  
SEMPRA

Sempra was a founding member of DFP and has participated every year since. Each summer, we host two fellows from the program, and consistently find them to be a pleasure and the program to be rewarding. At Sempra, our future is rooted in the strength of our people. When we value diversity and inclusion, employees can bring their whole selves to work and share their unique perspectives and ideas.



**INDIA JEWELL**  
SONY ELECTRONICS INC.

Sony Electronics Inc. continues to see DFP as a strong partner in the mutual goal of supporting diversity and inclusion in the law practice. Our internship programs are mutually beneficial. We want to teach and mentor law students, and also learn from new professionals. This summer's fellow helped us initiate a project significant to the business that we will continue for years to come. It was a great experience.



**IAN FRIEDMAN**  
WINGERT GREBING BRUBAKER JUSKIE

We have been very pleased with DFP participants and candidates in the past. This year was no exception. Our fellow was able to provide a fresh perspective on issues with respect to motions; in particular, a motion for summary judgment and how to approach it. We would definitely recommend this program to other employers. The experience is well worth the time, effort, and commitment.



**KRISTEN HADEN**  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY PUBLIC  
DEFENDER'S OFFICE

The more diverse the backgrounds and perspectives of our employees, the better we are able to aid the diverse population we are appointed to represent. For the past 9 years, we have received stellar fellows from this program who not only add to the diversity of our office, but also have a unique perspective that our clients greatly benefit from.



**MATTHEW FAUST**  
SHARIF | FAUST LAWYERS, LTD.

DFP is the ultimate win-win situation. In addition to having an opportunity to right inequities that have historically plagued our profession, we were provided the opportunity to work with two outstanding fellows this summer, and one last year. Two of them are still with our firm and represented us tremendously in a very public-facing role. It was quite heartening to see our investment with the DFP provide such immediate and meaningful representation in the community at large.



**PARADA ORNELAS**  
WILSON TURNER KOSMO LLP

At WTK, diversity and inclusion are in our DNA. We are one of the largest certified women-owned law firms in the region. By recruiting and retaining top talent with diverse backgrounds and experiences, we have created a vibrant workplace, where a variety of viewpoints are celebrated. We truly believe that our diverse teams come up with more creative strategies and solutions for our clients.



## 2023 FELLOWSHIP STUDENTS

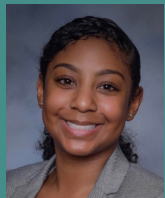


CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

### DEANNA MAAYAA

AMERICAN SPECIALTY HEALTH INC.

One standout moment from my time working at American Specialty Health was the team's unwavering support of my memo project regarding artificial intelligence. Every attorney on my team contributed valuable insights and guidance, fostering an environment of collaboration that not only enhanced the project but also bolstered my confidence and growth as a legal professional. This fellowship was a transformative experience that bridged the gap between academic learning and real-world application.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### MAYA RAMOS

BECTON DICKINSON AND COMPANY

DEI is important to me because, without it, opportunities are limited for people from diverse backgrounds. I've lived my entire life trying to fit inside of a box that society has told me is best, and programs like DFP show me that I can pursue my passions while still being myself and loving who I am. This is especially impactful when navigating an elite and predominantly white field such as law. The dedication that BD had in mentoring their interns and giving them a diverse experience in in-house counsel work really stood out to me.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### VALERIA ORTEGA

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE,  
CITY OF NATIONAL CITY

The most important takeaway from my fellowship was the mentorship I received. When I started law school, I experienced imposter syndrome and became stuck in the so-called "comfort zone," which paradoxically proved quite uncomfortable. DFP provided me with the support and guidance necessary to tackle my imposter syndrome and leave this comfort zone. I aspire to become a mentor and support other diverse individuals looking for their place in law school and the legal community.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

### ROBERTO GAYTAN

BECTON DICKINSON AND COMPANY

DFP helped me shift my career goal toward a focus on employment law. The most important takeaway for me was that it is necessary to take on new projects and try things that you are not comfortable with because it might just turn out to be something that you really like and would like to do more of. Such was the case for me. Moving forward in my career, I will continue to foster diversity through visibility and representation, by taking up as much space as I can so that diversity becomes a norm.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### REEM DABBOUS

BUCHALTER

My DFP fellowship has not only reaffirmed my aspirations within the realm of business law, but has also ignited my passion for litigation and its problem-solving attributes. The invaluable experiences of attending depositions and hearings, coupled with insightful conversations with experienced trial attorneys, have cultivated in me a profound appreciation for the strategic thinking and persuasive advocacy required in the courtroom setting.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### KAYLA MARIE SIDECO

CLARK HILL, LLP

This summer has not only strengthened my legal skill set, but has solidified my core values of hard work, authenticity, and community. This summer I was able to attend Clark Hill's Executive Committee dinner, where I spent three hours talking to four attorneys over food and drinks. This moment was special to me because it allowed me to experience a positive work culture that went beyond just my local office. I felt these attorneys were truly invested in getting to know me and furthering my future career, whether or not it was with their firm.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**ANIKA PAZ LOPES***COZEN O'CONNOR*

Through DFP I have found that while the San Diego legal community is large, it is also very accessible. My employer hosted weekly "subro lunches" where attorneys would roundtable problematic cases, share past experiences, and congratulate one another on successful outcomes. Being able to participate in these weekly meetings exposed me to the extensive practice of subrogation and the firm's collaborative culture. I feel very fortunate to have been surrounded by a group of encouraging, positive, and inclusive professionals.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

**ZACHARY SMITH***FERRIS & BRITTON*

Through the DFP I have been exposed to several practice areas that I did not have any experience in before. One of the most important lessons I've learned from the DFP is to be open minded when considering what practice area you want to pursue. A good lawyer should know a little about all areas of the law.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

**CAITLYN BATTY***HIGGS, FLETCHER, & MACK LLP*

My DFP fellowship opened my eyes as to how interesting litigation and employment law can be. A standout moment was when I was able to go to court and hear motions in limine. I also got the chance to write a demurrer, which was super cool! As I move forward in my career, I hope to meet more diverse professionals and move towards an overall inclusive work environment.

CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**PAUL YIM***JACKSON LEWIS P.C.*

DFP has shown me that there is an active movement to include diverse members in the legal community. My fellowship guided my decision to become an advocate in this field. Diversity in the workplace is the financially responsible decision. By having a diverse team, you will bring a wide range of experience and ideas to the table. As such, I will take an active role in my community pushing for this exact type of diverse inclusion that I was blessed to have experienced.

CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**HEATHER HUNTER***DISABILITY RIGHTS CALIFORNIA*

My fellowship with Disability Rights California reinforced my desire to work in public interest, but it also changed my perspective on what that could look like. I hold many identities: woman living with a mental health issue, queer, first-generation college graduate, grandchild of Mexican immigrants, daughter of a single mother. It is important to acknowledge our intersecting identities, feel seen, and give space for others to do the same.

CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**MATTHEW COSTELLO***FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP*

In a summer loaded with stand-out moments, my most memorable moment was attending my first class action mediation. This happened during my first week with the firm and was a priceless experience! I am taking many things from my DFP fellowship, and the most important thing is the relationships I formed. The entire experience was a whirlwind. Side-by-side with my peers, we were able to take the whole thing in stride and create lasting friendships.

OSU - MORITZ  
COLLEGE OF LAW**AMINA MOHAMED***HORTON OBERRECHT AND KIRKPATRICK*

My most important takeaway from my fellowship is the amazing connections I made, both with employers and law students. I appreciated that my employer took the time to explain how my work impacted the bigger picture. I felt like a part of the team! Moving forward in my career, I want to see a world where diversity and inclusion just happen naturally. But first, diverse individuals need to be able to take up space.

CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**LIN NGUYEN***KLINEDINST PC*

Through DFP, I had the opportunity to explore different legal practice areas and gain exposure to diverse legal challenges. One pro bono case stands out in my memory. The way my employer approached this case highlighted their commitment to social responsibility and access to justice. While legal expertise is crucial, the heart of our work lies in making a positive impact on individuals' lives. The collaborative spirit, empathy, and dedication displayed by my employer during this endeavor have inspired me to integrate these values into my own career.

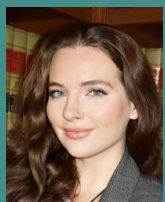


USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### SOFIA LINARES

*LAGASSE, BRANCH, BELL, + KINKEAD*

Going into this summer, I had an idea of what I liked, but didn't know what type of law I wanted to practice. Through my fellowship I learned that I do actually enjoy civil litigation and would like to try criminal law to further help me narrow it down. When thinking about my employer, I think about how open, friendly, and helpful everyone in the office was. I got to not only watch part of a trial in Orange County, but also attend depositions and conduct research.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

### STEPHANIE HAUMSCHILD

*NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH*

The environment in my employer's office was so supporting and genuine. I was able to stumble around in the beginning because everyone was rooting for me and there to support me. I look forward to fostering diversity in my career because diversity builds empathy. Law is the game everyone is playing, and lawyers are really the only ones who know the rules – empathy helps us play with fairness, kindness, and compassion.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

### NICOLETTE YOHN

*PETTIT KOHN INGRASSIA LUTZ & DOLIN*

One of the more important and rewarding aspects of working in the legal community is networking, especially as a law student. Networking was something I had anxiety about, but I now genuinely enjoy it. Pettit Kohn went above and beyond in creating a welcoming environment. Shareholders went out of their way to regularly check in on me and involve me in a wide variety of projects to ensure I had a well-rounded experience. DFP is a great bridge to building your network.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

### CARLOS CUEVAS

*ROBBINS GELLER RUDMAN & DOWD*

Robbins Geller generously gave me and the other summer associates a plethora of activities to participate in, and I enjoyed the opportunity to connect with and learn about different practice groups at the firm at our weekly "lunch and learns." Growing my career is not necessarily a linear path, and being able to step into new practice areas while I am still in law school is something I am both grateful for and happy to have done.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### NATHANIEL MALICDEM

*LPL FINANCIAL*

The DFP Program taught me the importance of giving back and paying it forward. I have witnessed students who have gone through this program helping incoming law students in their career paths. To impact the community means you must first embrace the community around you. Therefore, it is important to accept, empathize, and help everyone you come across.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### JACK EDMOND

*PAUL PLEVIN QUARLES*

After working with such a strong team this past summer with a variety of different styles, I am committed to becoming an effective litigator and am looking forward to seeing how my own courtroom style evolves. The culture at Paul Plevin Quarles was supportive and inclusive beyond what I imagined. I really valued the firm's open-door policy. All the attorneys were genuinely interested in my growth as a young legal professional.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW

### AYHAM DAHLAN

*PROCOPIO*

Through my fellowship, I was able to practice the field of law I longed to learn about in several different ways. I also learned that I like to do litigation! As a Muslim Palestinian, I am driven to support other minorities like me to enter the legal field. It is important that we have a variety of viewpoints from all cultures because that is the only way we will produce mindful and adequate legal representation.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

### MATTHEW DAHLBERG

*SAN DIEGO COUNTY DISTRICT  
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE*

I was able to gain a broad understanding of what it means to be a prosecutor, working with an amazing team of Deputy District Attorneys. One stand-out moment was my participation in the George Bennett competition at the end of the summer. It was a great way to practice my oral advocacy and witness my fellow interns excel under pressure. My most important takeaway was that the San Diego legal community is a great community of people who are all there to help you build the foundation to succeed.



CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**CHLOÉ KRAMER***SEMPRA ENERGY*

A stand-out aspect of my experience was the quality and timeliness of feedback I received for my work. As a first-generation lawyer, meeting and networking with lawyers was also an invaluable reinforcement for my career goals. The San Diego legal community is replete with people who care deeply about supporting the next generation of lawyers. Building my professional network with people who actively care about diversity and inclusion affirmed my decision to work in this field.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

**DENNA SISAY***SHARIF FAUST LAWYERS*

The most important takeaway I got from my fellowship is that networking is a must! It was very cool to see firsthand how far the power of connections and reputation could take you. Moving forward, I will work to give the same guidance that I've received. I plan to take part in my law school's 1L mentorship program, and I know that once I become an attorney, I will take part in efforts such as DFP to give diverse students the same opportunity that I benefited from.

CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**TATIANA PEREGRINA***WILSON TURNER KOSMO LLP*

This experience has opened my horizons to areas of law that I had not considered before. An incredible moment I had this summer was when I utilized my Spanish-speaking skills to translate a witness's responses for an English-speaking attorney. I enjoyed having an active role in assisting the attorney with collecting information. Seeing others of a similar background is motivational and pushes me to want to be that inspirational figure to other Latinas considering a career in law.

CALIFORNIA WESTERN  
SCHOOL OF LAW**JILLIAN HOLLAND BROWNE***SHARIF FAUST LAWYERS*

I'm not originally from San Diego, so DFP allowed me to connect with a law firm where I could grow not only as a law student, but in the legal profession in general. I've gained invaluable experience in legal research, writing, and the practice of litigation. I am also eager to engage in conversations on social justice and leverage my legal education to advocate for marginalized communities. My experience as a Vietnamese-American woman entering the legal field further fosters my commitment to diversity.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

**NUPUR MARWAHA***SONY ELECTRONICS INC.*

As a first-generation legal professional, it is easy to feel like you don't belong or don't know what you are doing. Working alongside experts who thought highly of my contributions made me realize that imposter syndrome affects everyone. A standout memory for me was when I presented to the entire legal department. Not only did everyone attend, but they actively engaged by asking questions and providing encouragement. This experience made me truly feel like a valued part of the team.



USD SCHOOL OF LAW

**MARILYN COLLI***WINGERT GREBING BRUBAKER & JUSKIE, LLP*

Programs like DFP set the stage for employers to consider factors beyond grades and undergraduate education. I strongly believe in emphasizing lived experience and how it motivates individuals in their pursuit of a legal career, and I aim to encourage this perspective as I move forward in my own career. Prior to my internship, I was set on pursuing a career in either criminal defense or corporate transactional work. Now, I find myself strongly interested in civil litigation and look forward to furthering my experience within the field as I continue working with Wingert Grebing into the fall.

**PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS NOT PICTURED:**

Buchalter  
City of National City, Office of the City Attorney  
Fisher Phillips  
Horton, Oberrecht, & Kirkpatrick  
Nelson Mullins

**PARTICIPATING STUDENTS NOT PICTURED:**

Kenan Elzoobi  
Eunsol (Anna) Park  
Melika Taheri