

**2015-2016**



# **PRE-LAW DIVISION**

## **MEMBERSHIP GUIDE**



# ABOUT NBLSA

National Black Law Students Association ("NBLSA") is one of the nation's largest student-run organizations of its kind, representing thousands of law students and nearly 200 chapters and affiliates throughout the United States and six other countries.

## HISTORY

Algernon Johnson ("AJ") Cooper founded the first Black American Law Students Association at New York University School of Law in 1968. In 1983, BALSA revised its name, and the word "American" was deleted to encompass all Blacks, including those not of American nationality. Later, the word "National" was added to reflect the organization's national expansion, which now includes representation in the law schools of 49 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

## VISION

NBLSA is a global catalyst for the respect, acceptance, and engagement of Black law students in law schools, communities, and throughout the legal profession.

## MISSION

The mission of NBLSA is to increase the number of culturally-responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community.

## NBLSA'S STRUCTURE

### NATIONAL

NBLSA is governed by its National Constitution and Bylaws, which are ratified by the NBLSA membership. The NBLSA Constitution establishes a National Executive Board ("NEB"). The NEB is comprised of both elected and appointed officers and is led by an elected National Chair. The National team also includes NBLSA Pre-Law Fellows, who are members of the Pre-Law Division that have shown incredible leadership potential. Fellows are appointed, non-voting members of the National leadership team and are not considered members of the NEB.

### REGIONAL

NBLSA is divided into six geographic regions: Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Northeast, Rocky Mountain, Southern and Western. Regions function as the conduit between the national organization and its chapters. Each region has a Regional Exec Board ("REB"). The REB provides chapters with programmatic direction and supports chapter activities.

### CHAPTERS

Chapters are NBLSA's foundation. They develop creative programming that furthers NBLSA's strategic goals and are a critical component of the NBLSA membership experience. They also facilitate the membership dues collection process. Each chapter has an executive board comprised of elected and appointed positions.



## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL CHAIR



It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your National Chair this year. As NBLSA enters its 48th year of existence, we remain as relevant today as when we were founded in 1968. Law schools are enrolling fewer and fewer African-Americans every year. Black law students are facing one of the worst legal employment markets in decades, and the unemployment for our community is at an all-time high. In continuing on our Road to Fifty, it is imperative that we aim for new heights and continue distinguishing ourselves as a premier legal organization.

The Pre-Law Division plays an important role in the pipeline. The future of the Black law student depends on our ability to cultivate the next generation of African-American law students. NBLSA is in a unique position, unlike any other pre-law organization, to assist future law students in preparing for the rigors of law school. In order to leverage that ability, we have transitioned from the College Student Division to the Pre-Law Division. This provides an opportunity to reach an often overlooked segment of pre-law student—college graduates who desire to attend law school.

We are excited to steward this incomparable organization and to offer you increased communication, exceptional service, and greater value. As the year continues to progress, we will remain diligent in our efforts and build towards a better future today. We hope to exceed your expectations, and if we fall short, we hope that you will provide us with the constructive criticism necessary to improve our efforts. We welcome your feedback throughout the year, and I personally invite you to share your thoughts and ideas with me directly at [www.nblsa.org/feedback](http://www.nblsa.org/feedback), or (202) 618-2572. As a family, we can all do our part to ensure that NBLSA continues to uphold its mission, purpose, and obligation of developing the talented Black lawyers of today and being the leading advocate for diversity.

Best Regards,

*Caylin Young*

**National Chair**

**University of Baltimore School of Law**



# MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF PRE-LAW

## ROD HICKMAN



I am extremely excited about the opportunity to serve as the National Director of Pre-Law. The Pre-Law Division looks forward to charting new paths as we *Build a Better BLSA*. This year, we hope to make membership in NBLSA's Pre-Law Division a valuable experience for our members.

The Pre-Law Division was created to further advance NBLSA's mission. It is our mission to increase the number of culturally-responsible Black and minority law students who will eventually become **culturally responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community**. Students who become members of NBLSA's Pre-Law Division will join the membership of a prestigious organization that continues to culturally transform the legal community. Since 1968, NBLSA has produced some of the most talented and well-respected members of the legal community. Our Pre-Law Division is the first to encounter them.

As a member of the Pre-Law Division, our members gain access to irreplaceable resources, invaluable networking opportunities, as well as exceptional mentorship. This year, we hope to provide our pre-law membership with the tools necessary to make law school dreams a reality—from LSAT prep to First Year Success, and everything in between. We are excited to offer the following:

- \* Pre-Law Chapter of the Year
- \* Pre-Law Fellows Program
- \* Pre-Law Member of the Month
- \* Pre-Law Compleitive Events
- \* Regional and National Pre-Law Programing
- \* An Online Digital Resource Packet
- \* Advocacy Competitions

There are many ways to get involved, and we look forward to working with you. If you would like to get involved, or if you have any questions about the Pre-Law Division, please feel free to contact me at [prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:prelaw@nblsa.org).

Thank you for your interest in the Pre-Law Division. I look forward to hearing form you. Best wishes for a successful school year!

In NBLSA Service,

*Rod Hickman*  
2015-2016 National Director of Pre-Law  
The University of Mississippi School of Law



## GREETINGS FROM THE MID-ATLANTIC REGION

DELAWARE, MARYLAND, NEW JERSEY (SOUTHERN), PENNSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA,  
WEST VIRGINIA, AND DISTRICT COLUMBIA



Greetings,

My name is Hermionne Cadet, and I am a 2L at the Penn State, Dickinson School of Law. I am excited to serve as the 2015-2016 Director of Pre-Law for the Mid-Atlantic Black Law Students Association ("MABLSA"). In this role, I support pre-law collegiate chapters of MABLSA. Additionally, I help to create and implement programs, projects, and activities for the development and benefit of the Pre-Law Division.

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There are many ways to get involved, and we look forward to working with you. For more information, please contact me at [mablsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:mablsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).

Thank you for your interest in the Mid-Atlantic Pre-Law Division. I look forward to hearing from you, and best wishes for a successful school year!

In NBLSA Service,

*Hermionne Cadet*  
2015-2016 MABLSA Director of Pre-Law  
The Penn State, Dickinson School of Law



## GREETINGS FROM THE MIDWEST REGION

ILLINOIS, INDIANA, IOWA, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA, MISSOURI, NORTH DAKOTA,  
OHIO, SOUTH DAKOTA, KANSAS, KENTUCKY, WISCONSIN



Greetings,

My name is Shantel Thompson. I am excited about the opportunity to serve as the 2015-2016 Midwest Regional Director of the most exciting component of this organization – the Pre-Law Division. Pre-law is off to an exciting start, and the Pre-Law committee is looking forward to serving our pre-law members. This year, we hope to make membership in MWBLSA's Pre-Law Division a valuable experience for our members.

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There are many ways to get involved, and we look forward to working with you. For more information, please contact me at [mwblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:mwblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).

Thank you for your interest in the Mid-Atlantic Pre-Law Division. I look forward to hearing from you, and best wishes for a successful school year!

In NBLSA Service,

*Shantel Thompson*  
2015-2016 MWBLSA Director of Pre-Law



## GREETINGS FROM THE NORTHEAST REGION

CONNECTICUT, MAINE, MASSACHUSETTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE, NEW JERSEY  
(NORTHERN), NEW YORK, RHODE ISLAND, AND VERMONT

Greetings,

The Northeast region is excited about new ventures in Pre-Law. This year, there are a number of opportunities for Pre-Law members to get involved. If you would like more information about Pre-Law in the Northeast Region, please feel free to contact Northeast Pre-Law at [neblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:neblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).





## GREETINGS FROM THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

COLORADO, MONTANA, NEBRASKA, NEW MEXICO, OKLAHOMA, TEXAS,  
UTAH, AND WYOMING



Dear Prospective Law Student:

I am so excited to serve as the Director of Pre-Law for the Rocky Mountain region this year! I am a second-year law student at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

A little over a year ago, I was navigating the law school application process, knowing little about what a legal education entailed. My first day of law school was probably the first time I had ever stepped foot in a legal classroom. While there is nothing wrong with learning as you go along, there are so many resources to help prepare prospective law students for a legal education, long before they step through the door. Simply knowing what to expect can put you a few steps ahead.



Come join the Rocky Mountain region on **September 11-13 in Austin, Texas**. We will be hosting our annual academic retreat geared specifically for pre-law and new law students. You will learn what to expect in law school and how to excel on exams. You will also have the opportunity to explore various career paths and network with law students and attorneys. I hope you will join us. Have a successful year!

Sincerely,

***Camille Gregory***

2015-2016 RMBLSA Director of Pre-Law

University of Colorado



## GREETINGS FROM THE SOUTHERN REGION

ALABAMA, ARKANSAS, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, TENNESSEE, AND PUERTO RICO



My name is Shanice Bailey, and I am proud to serve as one of the Pre-Law Co-Directors for the Southern Region of NBLSA. I am a 3L dual-degree JD/MBA student at Mercer Law School in Macon, GA. I am also an alumnae of Spelman College, where I received my B.A. in Psychology. My Co-Directors and I are extremely excited for the various events that we have planned for this year. We hope to get more undergraduate students involved with their respective NBLSA Pre-Law chapters. Additionally, we hope to implement new chapters on more undergraduate campuses across the Southern Region. I look forward to this year's success. Feel free to reach me at [srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).

My name is Charles McGee, and I am honored to serve as one of the Pre-Law Co-Directors for the Southern Region of NBLSA. I was born and raised in Oakland, CA and relocated to Miami, FL, where I received my B.A. in Criminal Justice at Florida Memorial University. I am a 3L at Florida International University College of Law, where I also serve as the Vice-President of the H.T. Smith Black Law Students Association chapter. The Pre-Law Division is very important to the development and recruitment of future law students of color, and I am fully invested to help in any way that I can. I look forward to working with you all. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).



My name is Neena Speer, and I am a 2L at the University of Alabama School of Law, where I currently serve as the 2nd Vice President of UA Black Law Students Association. I am a proud alumnae of Howard University, where I received both a B.S. in Psychology and a B.A. in French. I am excited about the opportunity to serve as one of the Pre-Law Co-Directors for the Southern Region of National Black Law Students Association. My fellow Pre-Law Co-Directors and I are off to an exciting start as we begin to plan for our upcoming academic retreats across the Region to serve our pre-law members. This year, we hope to coordinate programming that recruits more members, and we are striving to create more successful Pre-Law events at our Regional Convention. Furthermore, we

aim to increase Pre-Law chapters and build a valuable experience for all members. There are many ways to get involved, and my fellow Co-Directors and I look forward to working with everyone. If you would like to get involved, or if you have any questions about the Pre-Law Division, please feel free to contact me at [srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).



## GREETINGS FROM THE WESTERN REGION

ALASKA, ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, HAWAII, IDAHO, NEVADA, OREGON, AND  
WASHINGTON



My name is Jaslyn Johnson, and I am honored to serve as the 2015-2016 WRBLSA Director of the Pre-Law Division. As a Black law student at Santa Clara University School of Law, I am disheartened daily by the lack of Black faces at my law school and in law schools across the western region. The mission of NBLSA is to increase the number of culturally-responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community. However, NBLSA cannot accomplish this goal and remain relevant if the students whom NBLSA seeks to support are declining in number. Pre-law students are the future of NBLSA, and it is imperative that

we serve their needs and assist future Black law students in preparing for the rigors of law school. A successful Pre-Law Division is the only way to continue building pipelines for our future.

This year, I have an ambitious agenda for the WRBLSA Pre-Law Division. First, I hope to establish at least five pre-law chapters by reaching out to and developing relationships with undergraduate Black Student Unions and Pan African Organizations. Second, to maintain, develop, and benefit these pre-law chapters, I hope to implement at least one program in each of the following areas: Professional Development, Academic Development, Alumni Networking, Social Programming, and Community Service. This programming will include LSAT prep, Meet and Greet with law school admissions directors, Dress For Success programs, and everything in between.



I am eager to work with all of you over the course of this year to expand our membership and increase the opportunities offered to our pre-law members. If you have any questions, comments, or ideas on how to ensure the future of the Black law student, please contact me. I can be reached via email at [wrblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:wrblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).

In WRBLSA Love and Service,  
*Jaslyn Johnson*  
Santa Clara University School of Law,



# NBLSA PRE-LAW DIVISION'S MEMBERSHIP & BENEFITS

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Pre-Law Division is open to undergraduate students and individuals who have obtained their undergraduate degree. Individuals may join a Pre-Law Chapter at their undergraduate institution or they may join the Pre-Law Division as At-Large Members.

Dues for At-Large Members are \$20. Dues for members of an existing Pre-Law Chapter are \$10, if paid before January 1st. If dues are paid on January 1st or thereafter, they are \$20.

Members of newly-chartered chapters do not have to submit individual membership dues. The initial chapter charter fee of \$100 covers all members of that chapter for the 2013-2014 academic year. The Chapter charter application can be found [here](#). After the initial charter year, each chapter will be required to submit membership dues of \$10 per member in order to keep their chapter active.

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Members of the Pre-Law Division gain invaluable resources and opportunities. Members are invited to attend the national convention as well as their regional convention. Both conventions include programming specifically designed for pre-law students. Pre-law students will also have the opportunity to compete in two competitions. We have also partnered with companies to offer the NBLSA Pre-Law Division members exclusive discounts on their products. NBLSA Pre-Law Division members will also have access to our Digital Resources Packet containing a wide array of useful information for pre-law students—from LSAT Prep to writing personal statements.

We are continuously working to enhance the membership benefits of the Pre-Law Division. Please visit [www.nblsa.org/prelawdivision](http://www.nblsa.org/prelawdivision) for more information. If you have any suggestions for benefits that you would like to see in the Pre-Law Division provide, please let us know at [prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:prelaw@nblsa.org).



# PRE-LAW DIVISION PROGRAMS

## MEMBERS OF THE MONTH

The Pre-Law Division will select 12 financially active members to become Members of the Month. Members of the Month will be selected based on an essay of no more than 500 words that describes how the nominee has contributed to his/her community, and contributed to his/her fellow Pre-Law Division members.

The selected members will be recognized on the NBLSA website, via social media, and again in Baltimore, Maryland, at the National Convention. The selected Members of the Month will need to submit a professional headshot to accompany the publication.

Pre-Law Division Members of the Month nomination forms must be submitted by the 20th day of each month.

## NELSON MANDELA SCHOLARSHIP

The Nelson Mandela Scholarship is awarded to members of the Pre-Law Division who exemplify the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela. This year's scholarships will be awarded to deserving members of the Pre-Law Division during the National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland.

## COMPETITIONS

Financially active members of NBLSA Pre-Law will be eligible to compete in two competitions: a negotiations competition, as well as an oral advocacy competition. Please view our Competitions Guide for the rules and guidelines.

## CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

Pre-Law chapters will have the opportunity to compete for the title of NBLSA Pre-Law Chapter of Year. Please see our Chapter of the Year Guide for more details.

## NATIONAL/REGIONAL CONVENTION

Pre-Law Division members are invited to attend their regional convention, as well as the national convention. There will be Pre-Law specific programming at each convention.



# Pre-Law Fellows Program

## MISSION

The purpose of the Pre-Law Fellows Program is to provide students with unparalleled law-related, non-profit experience. Now, in its second year of existence, the Fellows Program pairs a select number of pre-law students from across the country with key members of NBLSA's National Executive Board to work on cornerstone areas of our organization's operations. This fellowship gives prospective law students the invaluable opportunity to experience NBLSA even before starting their law school careers. Members of the Pre-Law Fellows Class are also invited to attend NBLSA's annual National Convention celebration as the capstone event of their fellowship with us.

## QUALIFICATIONS

NBLSA is always looking for driven, self-motivated students to join our ranks as NBLSA Pre-Law Fellows. If you are a junior, senior, or recent college graduate who has demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to service, NBLSA would love to hear from you!



# SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR PRE-LAW CHAPTERS



## LSAT 101

Chapters are encouraged to host events that assist chapter members in preparing for the Law School Admissions Test. These events can include a mock LSAT, LSAT Prep Course, and a guide to registering for the LSAT.



## COURTHOUSE/ LAW SCHOOL TOUR

It is important that pre-law students are exposed to the profession to which they aspire to work in. Chapters are encouraged to schedule tours with their local courthouse. Chapters with attached law schools are also encouraged to schedule a tour of the law schools with the schools' admissions department.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE WEEK

Chapters are asked to plan a week of community service. This week provides local chapters with an opportunity to integrate the concerns of their communities with at least one of the national or regional initiatives. Community Service Week should consist of at least three events and should occur in October.



## FOUNDER'S DAY OF SERVICE

In honor of the vision of NBLSA's founder, all chapters should observe this day by hosting an event on the last Saturday of October, which can be done in conjunction with the National Week of Service. The goal is for 100% participation by chapter members, while promoting the focus of NBLSA's service in the community.



## MLK Day of Service

All chapters should have a service day that is generally committed to service in honor of Dr. King. The intention of this project should be to motivate students to honor the memory of Dr. King by servicing the community.



## COLLEGE 101/ YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

This program should target high school students preparing for the next step in their education. Pre-Law Division chapters are encouraged to work with other organizations to assist high school students with preparing for college.



## PRE-LAW CHAPTER

### SAMPLE CALENDAR OF EVENTS



#### OCTOBER

11th Annual National Black Pre-Law Conference (Houston, TX)  
Founder's Day of Service  
Monthly Meeting  
Fundraising Event



#### NOVEMBER

Community Service  
Monthly Meeting  
Form Competition Teams

#### DECEMBER

Aids Awareness Program  
Deadline to Submit Chapter Dues for \$10  
Study Hard For Finals



#### JANUARY

MLK Day of Service  
Attend Regional Convention  
Hold Competition Team Practice  
Fundraising Event



#### FEBRUARY

Plan Black History Programs in conjunction with other organizations  
Attend Regional Convention

#### MARCH

Attend NBLSA's National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland.

#### APRIL

Hold Officer Elections  
Submit New Leader Information to NBLSA via our online web form

**\*Note:** These are only suggested activities. Each chapter is encouraged to create additional programs and work closely with local BLSA chapters and other undergraduate organizations.



# SAMPLE PRE-LAW CHAPTER CONSTITUTION

## Article I: Organization Name

The name of the organization shall be the University Pre-Law Division of the National Black Law Students Association ("NBLSA").

## Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the Pre-Law Division is to articulate and promote the educational, professional, political, and social needs and goals of Black pre-law students.

## Article III: Membership

### Section 1.

Membership in this organization shall be open to all students in good standing who are currently enrolled at the University, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical disability.

### Section 2.

In order to remain an active member of the Pre-Law Division, each member is required to submit dues to NBLSA via their chapter.

## Article IV: Officers

### Section 1.

The officers of this group shall consist of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

### Section 2.

All officers shall be registered undergraduate students at the University.

### Section 3.

These officers shall constitute the executive board.

### Section 4.

The duties of these officers are as follows:

The **President** shall be the chief executive officer of the group and shall have general supervision and control of its activities and programs. He or she will also set the vision and direction of the chapter.

The **Vice President** shall assist the President and assume his or her duties when the President is unable to serve. The **Treasurer** shall have general charge of the financial affairs of the group. He or she shall keep an accurate record of these affairs.

The **Secretary** shall keep a record of all meetings of the group and of all activities and programs. He or she will handle all formal correspondences between members and officers of the group.

### Section 5.

The President and Treasurer shall be the only authorized signers on the organization's bank account.



# **SAMPLE PRE-LAW CHAPTER CONSTITUTION CONT.**

## **Article V: Elections**

### **Section 1.**

Officers shall be elected annually by the membership. Elections shall be held during the month of *April*.

### **Section 2.**

The Officers' terms shall begin on June 1.

### **Section 3.**

The roster of newly-elected officers shall be submitted to NBLSA's Pre-Law Division no later than July 1.

## **Article VI: Meetings**

### **Section 1.**

Meetings of the groups shall be held on a regular basis for the purpose of determining policy, activities, programs, and other business. The President, Secretary, or any member of the executive board may call special meetings.

### **Section 2.**

A simple majority of the membership shall constitutes a quorum.

### **Section 3.**

The President shall govern all meetings. In the President's absence, the Vice President shall govern.

### **Section 4.**

The Secretary shall communicate notice of regular and special meetings to all members of the organization.

### **Section 5.**

All dues-paying members shall have one vote with respect to any resolutions put forward during a meeting.

## **Article VII: Amendments**

### **Section 1.**

The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the dues-paying membership.

### **Section 2.**

Any financially active members of the group may propose an amendment. Proposals shall be filed in writing with the Secretary prior to the meeting so that the group may have time to debate the proposal.



**Contact Us:**

**Rod Hickman | National Director of Pre-Law**

Email: [prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:prelaw@nblsa.org)

Web: [www.nblsa.org/prelaw](http://www.nblsa.org/prelaw)