

Esq. Apprentice

Scholarship | Service | Success

ANNUAL REPORT

Closing the women's wealth gap one
apprentice lawyer at a time!

FISCAL YEAR
2021-2022

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Photo Credit: Sarah Arnold

FREE TO CHOOSE!



The freedom to choose is increasingly under attack in the United States. Whether it be the choice to have a family or the choice to take the families we do choose safely to public spaces, our legal system is placing the rights of guns and zealots above all else, and women of color are suffering disproportionately.

In December 2020, Black, Brown and Asian women accounted for all job losses in the United States. Over the course of the pandemic, women--particularly women of color--have accounted for 5.4 million jobs lost; nearly 1 million more jobs lost than men. And as people begin to return to work, women of color are being left behind. Black women have been described as the "least recovered" working group while Latinx women saw the steepest decline in employment of any group in the pandemic. At our current rates, it may take 176 years to close the women's wealth gap.

The legal profession can offer economic security to those who can access it, but, according to the American Bar Association, women of color comprise such a small percent of lawyers in the United States that the ABA found that 'there are not enough women of color lawyers to collect data that is statistically significant.' But a lack of statistical significance is a better indicator of structural racism than the power, ability or importance of women of color to the future of this nation.

At Esq. Apprentice we utilize the legal system to fight for a freedom that predates U.S. Jurisprudence. And because we focus on low-income women of color, we root our work in reproductive justice which holds that all birthing people have the right to (1) have a family, (2) not have a family, and (3) raise the families they do choose in safety and with dignity and respect.

WE CHOOSE SAFETY.

Women of color are extremely underrepresented in the legal profession yet extremely overrepresented among incarcerated women. Esq. Apprentices strives to bring more women of color into the legal profession because, if we can establish a truly representative legal profession, we will all become more safe.

WE CHOOSE DIGNITY.

Poverty strips us of dignity by making inherent human rights like food and housing inaccessible. Disproportionate job loss and wage disparity among low-income Black, Brown, and Indigenous women leads to disproportionate economic insecurity. With a focus on economic justice, Esq. Apprentice utilizes a reproductive justice frame to close the women's wealth gap, and alleviate the deleterious effects of poverty, one apprentice lawyer at a time.

WE CHOOSE RESPECT.

We welcome all those with lived experience as women and create space for them to determine their path and that of their families and communities for themselves. At Esq. Apprentice, we know that meaningfully shifting how low-income communities access the law is lifelong, if not multi-generational work. We honor the gifts that each of us brings to this fight, because we know that we can only achieve the change we wish to see together.

In short, Esq. Apprentice chooses freedom, and we celebrate the choice to strive for a world where the law works for and not against low-income people of color. All of you are essential to achieving this vision, and I thank you with all my heart for supporting Esq. Apprentice and each of our apprentices. Together, I know that, no matter the attack, we will create a different world of our choosing for ourselves and our communities.

FREE TO ACHIEVE!

Presenting the 2022 Cohort!

2022 marked our largest applicant pool to date, and these eight women stood out among the applicants. Among other things, these women are innovators, changemakers, problem-solvers and mamas.

In short, the 2022 cohort are game changers who are shaping the future of the legal profession! Please Join Me in Welcoming Erika, Brittany, Zhané, Mary, Angelina, Rebecca, Analisa, and Isra to the Esq. Apprentice Family!



Erika Cardona

Esq. Apprentice enables me to reach my goal of establishing easy access to reliable immigration assistance in and for the communities who have made me who I am.



Brittany T. DeWeaver

Esq. Apprentice is another one of the many doors that has opened for me. I am definitely living my ancestors' wildest dreams, and I will definitely pay it forward.



Zhané E. Garlington

I've known since age five that I wanted to become a lawyer to free my brother Kyle & others like him from the grasp of the prison industrial complex. With Esq. Apprentice's help, I will become the lawyer that my community needs!



Mary Hinojosa

Life has not been easy, but I'm rewriting my story. I applied to Esq. Apprentice to secure a better future for me & my family. I know that with hard work, self-belief, & determination, this new chapter will be one of hope and resiliency!

FREE TO ACHIEVE!

Presenting the 2022 Cohort!



Angelina M. Rodriguez

When I was six, I wrote to Santa asking that my dad come home from prison. When I shared it with my class, my teacher scolded me & told me such wishes were silly. I decided that day to become an attorney. With Esq. Apprentice, I'll show the world that "silly" wishes can become reality.



Rebecca Romero

It has been the privilege of my life to work with survivors of violence, advocate for them & empower them to break cycles of victimization. I want to be an attorney to honor those brave survivors, my own family & community that got me here, and to stand out as a fierce woman of color advocate in a white, male dominated profession.



Analisa Ruiz

My goal is to become a criminal defense lawyer because I know what it feels like to be in a courtroom fighting for your life, your sisters, friends, & partners. I am no longer ashamed of my struggle, but empowered by it. I am a third generation, Xicana student, healer, & community organizer. With Esq. Apprentice, I will use the law to serve my community.



Isra Sebiaa

I have enjoyed my time as a housing rights advocate & anticipate the day when I can become a licensed attorney! With Esq. Apprentice's help, I will defy stereotypical notions of Muslim women's ability & thrive as a well balanced mother, community member, & lawyer!

FREE TO GIVE!

This year marked Esq. Apprentices largest fundraising year to date!

Supporters (\$0-\$500)

Rosa Bay
*Michael Carrillo
*Rajeev Chanderraj
*Micah Clatterbaugh
Betsy Cotton
Deborah Dauber
*Jessica Diehl
Alison Forman-Rickert
*Christine Fry
*Jeremy Goldman
*Shanthi Gonzales
Marc Janowitz
*Jamila Johnson Phillips
Mr. Mitch
*Hernan Orozco
Zoe Polk
*Elizabeth Sanchez
*Semi-Priceless
*Sydney Thomas
*Jocelyn Wong

Champion (\$500-\$10000)

Chase Behringer
*Erin Le

Landmark (\$10,000 or more)

Stupski Foundation
Tipping Point Community
Walter & Elise Haas Fund

With landmark support from the Stupski Foundation, Tipping Point Community, and individual support from each of you, Esq. Apprentice more than doubled our budget and raised nearly half a million dollars!

Thank you!

WALTER & ELISE HAAS FUND



* Sustaining donors giving monthly. You are our base. Thank you!

FREE TO CELEBRATE!

We celebrate our diversity!

Black, Brown, & Indigenous women comprise only 10% of the law school student population.

At Esq. Apprentice, we are 100% Black, Brown, Indigenous & African women of Color

We celebrate Our Community!



Photo Credit: Bethanie Hines

Esq. Apprentice is a part of an ecosystem of advocates representing low-income communities in housing, criminal, worker's compensation, civil rights, probate, and so many other areas of law.

We Celebrate Our Impact!



Lauren Richardson with her supervising attorney and Oakland legend, Walter Riley, Esq.

Our apprentices provided over 4000 hours of service while working with their supervising attorneys this year!

FREE TO GROW!



Claudia has a diverse professional background from stage managing for live theatre, to on-site coordination of commercial construction projects. They studied technical theatre and stage management at Ohlone College and UC Irvine. During their time in various management positions, Claudia learned and developed their thoughtful and considerate managerial style and embraced the joys of organizational stationary.

Claudia is a learner, an explorer, and a collector of skills. They enjoy working as part of a team and helping facilitate dreams of all kinds. Their pastimes include crafting and working on large scale cooperative art.

Free access to knowledge is a core value of Claudia's. It is a driving force of their commitment to the success of Esq. Apprentice and its apprentices. They believe that everyone has the right and capability to learn anything.

Knowledge is power and power belongs to ALL people.

As with everything they are a part of, they hope to have a positive and lasting impact. They are very excited to join Esq. Apprentice and support its mission of accessible legal careers for low-income women of color.

FREE TO SERVE!

When service called, these Board Members answered!



Photo Credit: Jason Hairston

At Esq. Apprentice, our board is our family—each with their own unique gifts and talents. And, just like family, no two-year term limit will keep us apart.

In that spirit, three of our stellar board members—Serina Rankins, Christina Oatfield, and Cynthia Chandler are moving from our board of directors to our advisory board. Esq. Apprentice thanks you for all that you've done to help grow our organization to 13 apprentices, multiple staff members and a half a million dollar budget!



Photo Credit: Sarah Arnold

Special thanks to Serina Rankins who served Esq. Apprentice since its founding.



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