With the new year officially underway, we hope yours is off to a great start. LSAC embarked upon many new horizons in 2019 and we look forward to the wealth of possibilities that lie ahead this year. Amidst all the exciting changes and opportunities, one thing remains the same — how pleased we are to work with you to advance our **mission of promoting quality, access, and equity in law and education worldwide by supporting individuals’ enrollment journeys and providing preeminent assessment, data, and technology services.** Your support is invaluable to us!

We began the new year with a rededication to nurturing the vital ecosystem for law school admission that our member schools have created together. The theme chosen by the planning committee for the LSAC 2020 annual meeting, which you can read more about in the update below, will center on community and building a stronger future together.

It was an honor to again work with the Section to finalize data for the 2019 incoming class. We were pleased to see that the total number of students enrolled in JD programs increased by 1.2% and enrollment across all programs increased by 2.1% from 2018. This positive but modest growth is accompanied by a steady rise in the matriculants’ undergraduate GPAs and LSAT scores. In terms of demographic trends, we continue to see steady growth in the proportion of women entering law school (53%). The percentage of students from each of the major racial and ethnic groups admitted to JD programs continues to track closely with the percentages of college graduates within those same groups and has remained relatively stable over the past five years.

Working together to continue to improve the pipeline so that the demographics of the legal profession more closely mirror the rich diversity of society is vital. We have been hard at work on a series of initiatives designed to do just that, from our national forums, PLUS programs, active digital campaigns, and recent HBCU tour to our growing outreach to candidates in India. In addition, we have increased our storytelling to generate interest and awareness through more student profiles on our blog and continued promotion of our BE IndiVISIBLE campaign, which has attracted 450,000 engagements from prospective applicants across the web — whether through video plays, social media touches, or site visits — since its launch in May 2019.
As for the current admission cycle, as of January 30, there are 33,165 applicants to U.S. law schools for 2020. Last year on this date, there were 33,099 applicants, representing a 0.2% increase, and a 3.0% increase when compared to two years ago. Applications are up compared to last year, with 216,334 compared to 212,728, representing a 1.7% increase over last year and a 0.5% increase compared to two years ago. Currently, there are 6,363 applicants to Canadian member law schools. Last year at this time, there were 6,149 applicants, representing a 3.5% increase. Applications in Canada are also up compared to last year, with 24,252 so far compared to 22,390, representing an 8.3% increase. We invite you to visit the data library on our website for the latest volume data, which is updated daily, and to tune in to our monthly “Keeping Up to Data” podcast.

Please enjoy reading the rest of this report, which provides more data on LSAT test takers as well as an update on some of our key services and initiatives. We appreciate your continued partnership and are proud to work alongside you to advance legal education and the profession.

Best regards,

Kellye Y. Testy
President and CEO
Law School Admission Council
LSAT Update

The most recent LSAT administration was held on January 13. We had approximately 18,400 candidates registered to take the LSAT at more than 500 test centers across the U.S., Canada, and major cities around the world. Our test center supervisors reported a smooth day for test takers. The one major exception was that the devastating earthquakes in Puerto Rico rendered testing on the island impracticable; we are working closely with the schools there and are providing test takers and schools with various forms of support.

Including the unofficial January count, we’ve now administered just over 115,000 tests this cycle, with three more administrations to go between now and April. We are on track to exceed last year’s total of 138,230 test takers, which is another positive indicator that the number of students considering a career in law continues to grow. The final test taker numbers for September, October, and November were, respectively, 19,739, 15,210, and 22,764.

The next LSAT is on February 22 and as of January 30, there are over 13,600 registrants.

News and Research

**LSAC LAUNCHES PILOT OF POST-1L FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE**

We recently announced our Post-1L Formative Assessment Initiative to explore the creation of a new national assessment tool designed to help individual law students and their law schools benchmark first-year student performance and identify interventions that may improve bar passage. Schools were invited to submit an expression of interest in participating in the spring 2020 pilot research phase, and selected schools will be notified in early February. Additional schools may be invited to participate in an expanded pilot in spring 2021. Interest among schools is very robust.

Participating schools will be able to provide students who have completed their first year of law school with a three-hour “performance test” similar to the bar exam performance test used in most U.S. jurisdictions. They will also be able to provide input on the design of a data analytics platform to help identify students who are at risk of failing the bar in order to intervene and improve their outcomes.
SKILLS ANALYSIS STUDY — FULL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

In our last update, we shared some key findings from our 2019 Skills Analysis Study in which faculty from close to 100 ABA-approved law schools rated the importance of 70 law school tasks in 14 skill-related categories based on their importance to success in required law school courses. We are pleased to announce that the full report of that study is now available.

Research highlights

• Of the 70 skills included in the study, the 15 skills that were rated as most important by law school faculty, such as reading critically, deductive reasoning, and inductive reasoning, are all measured by the LSAT.

• Skills like algebra and geometry that are not included on the LSAT were deemed among the least important for law student success.

• All of the top skills identified by faculty as highly important are measured by the LSAT today, while skills identified as not important are not included on the test, making the LSAT the only valid test for law school admissions.

This research is part of LSAC’s ongoing efforts to continually evaluate and improve the LSAT to ensure it remains the best indicator of prospective students’ success in law school. To download the full study, visit https://www.lsac.org/data-research/research/lSAT-skILLS-ANALYSIS-STUDy.
LAW SCHOOL FORUMS

In November, we hosted our final law school forum of the 2019 season in Los Angeles, which was attended by over 800 JD registrants. In total, 7,200 potential candidates attended the 2019 forums, which were also held in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Miami, New York, San Francisco, Toronto, and Washington, D.C. Forums are a critical part of pipeline-building efforts and are often attended most heavily by applicants who do not otherwise have access to prelaw services and counseling.

The new forum season will begin with our annual D.C. forum in July. Our website lists the full 2020 forum schedule, and we are already planning our outreach to candidates. While our forum marketing efforts have a primary goal of generating strong attendance, LSAC’s data intelligence shows that our newly launched marketing tactics build and bolster the law school pipeline in other ways as well. Just since August, more than 3,000 people who have interacted with LSAC’s online forum advertisements — regardless of whether they signed up to attend a forum — have gone on to take additional steps in their law school journey by registering for the LSAT or the Credential Assembly Service.

LSAC ENROLLMENT CONSULTING SERVICES

LSAC has recently announced the inauguration of the LSAC Enrollment Counseling service for our member schools; we believe this service will be beneficial because of our ability to tailor support to the unique needs of each school and enable schools to reach more data-driven conclusions. The Enrollment Counseling service includes, but is not limited to:

- Developing scholarship models and grids
- Creating and customizing data reports and dashboards
- Assisting with the compilation of data for institutional projects and initiatives
- Extracting and analyzing admissions, financial aid, and enrollment data with ongoing interpretation and guidance of that data as it pertains to institutional goals and objectives

To learn more about LSAC’s Enrollment Counseling service, contact Evan Didier at edidier@LSAC.org or 617.221.5484.
UNITE

LSAC is currently working with member law school admission offices on the rollout plan and schedule for Unite, the next generation of our proprietary admission software formerly known as ACES². Early adopters helped us to test the new system as well as the system data conversion and training process. The software system features an intuitive new way of processing applications that schools have termed “a game changer.” One example cited was how consolidating information about prospects and applicants into “people” would save time and allow users to focus on what they do best — enrolling great classes and building the future of justice.

Expanding the Legal Education Pipeline

NEW LAW DEGREE PAGES ON LSAC.ORG

While we know that a legal education can open many doors, we also understand that not everyone who studies law wants to become a lawyer. Many potential applicants do not even realize the benefits a legal education can confer, as they view law school as a singular pathway to just one destination — becoming a practicing attorney — without recognizing the wealth of options and opportunities available to them. By changing that perception through education about the various types of law degrees available, and how they can lead to success in a multitude of career pathways, we aim to broaden and diversify the law school applicant pipeline with a rich and varied assortment of students who would have otherwise never considered law as an option. We have and will continue to add new pages to LSAC.org that describe these different types of law degrees and how they can be useful for those with various career aspirations. Candidates can also search for schools’ master’s and certificate programs by law-related focus area (environmental, health, etc.) through their LSAC online account.
DEI WRITING COMPETITION

In December, we announced our biennial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion writing competition for law students. The competition is designed to advance the dialogue about recruitment and retention strategies that can attract a more diverse class of law students, thus bringing attention to our goal of increasing diversity in the legal profession.

The topic for this year’s competition is “why a diverse and inclusive bar is essential for equality, justice, and the rule of law.” All currently enrolled law students are eligible for the competition, and submissions must be received by LSAC no later than March 31, 2020. One winner from each of three categories (1L, 2L, and 3L/4L) will receive a $5,000 prize. In addition, one winning paper will be submitted to a legal publication.

For more information about this year’s writing competition, please contact Kent Lollis at klollis@LSAC.org or LSAC’s Diversity Office at diversityoffice@LSAC.org.

LAW-THEMED HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORY

In November, we announced the launch of a Law-Themed High School Directory, created in collaboration with Street Law to connect and support law-themed high schools and increase access to legal education. Many law-themed high schools serve students of color and other underrepresented groups, yet lack the resources needed to improve their law-focused programs. The new directory aims to address these needs by providing a centralized source of information for high school and younger students looking for schools that focus their curricula on law, justice, and careers in the legal profession, as well as for schools at the university level that are interested in recruiting future law students. In this way, the directory will be a key resource for diversifying the pipeline of candidates attending law school and, in turn, promoting universal access to justice, which is at the core of LSAC’s mission.
We launched our BE IndiVISIBLE campaign in May 2019 with the goal of generating awareness and interest among prospective law school students through storytelling by real people from various backgrounds at different points on their law school journeys. We recently added two new blog posts on Law:Fully profiling two individuals from the original campaign video and their unique paths to law school.

One post features Luisa Hernandez, who came to the United States from Venezuela with her family when she was 13. Luisa didn’t speak English and lived in a low-income neighborhood, but a family role model helped her realize she could be an agent of change by working through the justice system to improve the lives of others.

The other post profiles Derrick Sawyer, who arrived at law school later in life after retiring from his career as a commissioner with certifications as a fire officer, fire instructor, and fire inspector — proving it’s never too late to change course and consider a legal education. Derrick is eager to understand how the law affects the area to which he’s devoted most of his life.

Since BE IndiVISIBLE’s launch, there have been 450,000 engagements with the campaign across the web, whether through video plays, social media touches, or site visits.

LSAC’s Prelaw Undergraduate Scholars (PLUS) programs are targeted, but not restricted, to college students from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in the legal profession. Designed for students in their first two years of college, the four-week programs provide an intense focus on the skills required to succeed in law school, the law school admission process, and a legal career.

In October, we profiled three former PLUS program participants on our blog, Law:Fully, to share how taking part in the program had positively impacted their lives. We introduced Miosatti Tenecora, who said the program improved her self-esteem by making her believe she could obtain a graduate degree. “It showed me that it was not impossible for an economically disadvantaged...
student of color to aspire to attend graduate school,” she said. Program participant Sarah Pierre explained that having the opportunity to meet an African American judge helped her realize that being successful as a black person in the legal field was not an unrealistic goal. “It’s nice to see people who have already broken barriers,” she expressed. Bangladesh native Debjanee Nandy noted the diversity she saw among other program participants — which inspired within her the confidence to know she could serve people both in the U.S. and in Bangladesh who, like her, are minorities in their own communities. “I believe the quest for social change includes a commitment to the law,” Debjanee said.

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF JUSTICE HBCU TOUR

LSAC Presidential Innovation Fellow Miguel Willis recently concluded his Building the Future of Justice HBCU tour. As part of LSAC’s commitment to advancing access and equity through law and legal education, the tour was geared towards students who attend historically black colleges and universities not close to LSAC forum locations, with the goal of demystifying the legal education application process and inspiring African American students to consider a career in law. In a series of seminars, Miguel shared his own experience as a first-generation college graduate navigating the law school admission process and the many challenges he overcame throughout his law school journey.

Attendees provided positive feedback, reporting they found the seminars both insightful and inspiring, and that they now feel equipped with the resources and knowledge they need to study for the LSAT and apply to law school.
HELPING STUDENTS IN INDIA DISCOVER LAW

In December, we hosted the inaugural Law College Forum in New Delhi, India, which much like our law school forums, provided an opportunity for law schools to meet with prospective students on a more personal level. The event was geared toward legal professionals and current law graduates in India interested in pursuing an LLM degree and other graduate law programs. Twenty U.S. law schools were represented at the forum, for which over 300 potential LLM candidates registered, 87 of whom attended. Indian law colleges were also invited to recruit high school students interested in LLB or five-year integrated programs. Over 600 law aspirants came to attend workshops and meet with the law colleges.

The event began with a showcase dinner the evening before the forum, allowing U.S. law schools to network with Indian law colleges and other stakeholders in the legal community. After welcoming remarks from Yusuf Abdul-Kareem, vice president of emerging markets for LSAC, the group heard from keynote speaker Dr. Vinod Surana of Surana & Surana International Attorneys, followed by a panel discussion on “The Impact of Innovation in Technology on the Practice of Law” featuring Dean Megan Carpenter of University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law as well as local attorneys and advocates from the Supreme Court of India.

We recently launched an India-specific website, DiscoverLaw.in, that contains event listings, articles, testimonials, and LSAT—India prep materials for students in India who are interested in pursuing a legal education.

Events and Updates

SAVE THE DATE: LSAC ANNUAL MEETING AND EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The 2020 LSAC Annual Meeting and Educational Conference will take place from Wednesday, May 27, through Saturday, May 30, at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, in the heart of Scottsdale, Arizona. This year’s theme will focus on community and building a stronger tomorrow together. We look forward to sharing more details in the coming months.
LSAC AMBASSADORS UPDATE

LSAC created our Ambassador program to assist member schools and prelaw advisors in supporting the success of candidates during their legal education journey and to help LSAC fulfill its mission of increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in legal education. Trained experts in law school admission matters, the LSAC Ambassadors provide both law school candidates and legal education professionals with encouragement, current information, and instruction through educational presentations and professional consultations. The Ambassador team became fully staffed in July and since then has taken part in a number of events, including Digital LSAT demonstrations at every law school forum in 2019, CLEO program presentations, and participation in various school and regional law fairs in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. Ambassadors have also participated in multiple legal education and prelaw conferences, including serving on panels, and presented extensively to prelaw students on topics such as LSAT Prep, Why Law School, How to Apply to Law School, and others. In addition to these events, LSAC was represented at the EDUSA LLM Recruitment Events in Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, and Sao Paula, Brazil, through the Ambassador program.

For more information or to request an Ambassador visit, go to https://www.lsac.org/events/lsac-ambassadors-program.

LIVE WITH KELLYE AND KEN

Each month, Deans Emeritus Kellye Testy (LSAC president and CEO) and Ken Randall (iLaw founder and president) host a live stream dialogue about the present and future of legal education. The webinars feature expert panels of law school deans and have included such topics as the virtual classroom, gender equity and law, and the financial landscape of legal education.

Our most recent “Live with Kellye and Ken” took place on January 22 and featured a discussion on careers in law. Guest panelists included James Leipold (National Association for Law Placement) and Deans Mary Lu Bilek (CUNY), Dan Hamilton (UNLV), Melanie Leslie (Cardozo School of Law), and Ben Barros (University of Toledo College of Law).

The next live stream, to be held on February 25, will feature a discussion on what law schools are doing to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion and why these efforts are important for law and justice. To view past shows, visit LSAC.org/live-with-kellye-and-ken.
NEW LAW:FULLY BLOG POSTS

In addition to the blog posts highlighted in our BE IndiVISIBLE and PLUS Program updates above, we featured others recently including an inspiring Q&A with Marc Maurer, a blind lawyer whose perseverance helped him navigate a fulfilling career despite the challenges he faced along the way. Maurer attended law school in the 1970s at a time when access to information had not yet been enhanced through technology; he often had to hunt down the information in print and then hire people to read it to him. Job opportunities were also scarce for those with disabilities, but Maurer managed to break down barriers and become a successful lawyer as well as an advocate for the blind. We invite you to read his interview to learn more about his journey — including why he never took the LSAT — and the advice he has for those who think a law career is unattainable.

In another recent blog post, “Sizing up the 2019 Incoming Class – What Do the Numbers Tell Us?”, we highlighted key data points and trends to watch from recently compiled information about the size and makeup of the incoming class of students at law schools across the United States. The robust set of aggregated data was gathered and verified by both LSAC and the ABA’s Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar and includes class size, full- and part-time status, racial, ethnic, and gender information, as well as LSAT score and undergraduate GPA by quartiles for each institution.

And in one of our latest posts, we commemorated Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with an interview with Vermont Law School’s Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity Associate Professor of Law Shirley Jefferson. Born in segregated Alabama, Jefferson marched and protested with Dr. King, integrated her high school, and developed a lifelong commitment to fighting injustice as a lawyer. In her interview with LSAC’s Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Kent Lollis, Jefferson discusses her background and memories of a pivotal time in American history while exploring the role the legal system can play in fighting racism and prejudice.

We always welcome story ideas for our blog. To share yours, please email news@LSAC.org.