“All of the NCLA students have come to Washington, D.C., from different parts of the country, and over the past couple of days we have really bonded.”
The National Civics & Law Academy provides a group of twenty high school students from across the country a unique educational experience to visit the nation’s capital and interact with leaders in law and government. Participants have the opportunity to examine public policy issues from diverse perspectives, develop citizenship and leadership skills, and learn about different pathways for pursuing a legal education and career. Students are introduced to the role of law and lawyers within the U.S. government through personal seminars with national leaders working in the federal courts, Congress, and government agencies. Guided educational tours of the U.S. Capitol, museums, memorials, and other historic sites enrich the experience for participants, many of whom are visiting Washington, D.C., for the first time.

The American Bar Association Division for Public Education offers the National Civics & Law Academy annually in coordination with the Close Up Foundation. The mission of the ABA Division for Public Education is to educate the public about the law and its role in society by fostering a network of educators, bar leaders, and lawyers who believe in the value of educating young people to connect the knowledge of the law and the legal process to civic participation in order to develop informed and engaged citizens.

Harry Johnson
Chair, ABA Standing Committee on Public Education

Mabel McKinney-Browning
Director, ABA Division for Public Education

Christine Lucianek
Manager, National Civics & Law Academy
Education Programs & Research Manager, ABA Division for Public Education
“The National Civics & Law Academy allowed me to meet new people, learn more about law in the United States, and it allowed me to grow as a citizen, which is invaluable.”
Gary Kemp, Deputy Clerk of the U.S. Supreme Court, explains the different ways that cases can end up before the Court.
“The days are full of opportunities and exposure to numerous career options that the average 18-year-old does not experience.”

Students tour the Capitol Building.
“I learned about the role that citizens and the government play in developing public policies.”
Senator Roger Wicker (MS) talks to students about the important role that “separation of powers” plays in our system of government.
Thomas Lambert, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Belgium, meets with students.
“Throughout the week we visited the Supreme Court, the Embassy of Belgium, the U.S. Capitol, and so much more. I now know that I want to pursue a career in U.S. Diplomacy.”
Alicia Wilson, attorney at Gordon Feinblatt in Baltimore, Maryland, and Randy Abreu, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Law Graduate Fellow, share education and career advice with students.
“I learned that people who hold high-level positions are just as normal as I am. Their backgrounds are not privileged; hard work and dedication got them to where they are today.”
What is a refugee?

Any person who, “owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”

– UN 1951 Refugee Convention

Brian Street, Public Affairs Officer for the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration at the U.S. Department of State, explains his role as a foreign service officer.
“It was inspiring to hear how the law is being used to improve human rights and equality, domestically and worldwide.”

Students participate in a refugee crisis simulation at the U.S. Diplomacy Center in the U.S. Department of State.
“Getting to experience a week of action-packed, real-life education broadened my horizons to other career opportunities.”

Following a presentation by Melanca Clark, Chief of Staff at the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services at the U.S. Department of Justice, NCLA student expresses appreciation for her remarks.
"I am inspired to continue to serve my community and make a change. I have a voice and it matters."
2016 Participants

Osvaldo Aguilar - Santa Ana, California
Alea Bond - Wilmington, Delaware
Kevin Botros - Nashville, Tennessee
Alex Bracy - Westminster, Maryland
Justin Clark - New Orleans, Louisiana
Serena Cuts The Rope - Hays, Montana
Krystina Derby - Miami, Florida
Helena DeVone - Atlanta, Georgia
Tia Floyd - Jackson, Mississippi
Isabel Lafky - Seattle, Washington
William Lanzilotti - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Vianey Martinez - Santa Ana, California
Tamah Minnis - Norman, Oklahoma
Diego Salazar - Waco, Texas
Hope Shearer - Fruitland, Maryland
CJ Smith - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Marisol Torres - Kankakee, Illinois
“I have met lifelong friends and formed unbreakable bonds with all of the participants.”

WATCH: Students talk about their experiences during the 2016 National Civics & Law Academy.

Watch the video at ambar.org/civacademy

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Contributors
Aggie Alvez
Judge Pamila Brown
Leslie Hayashi
Angela Hinton
Harry S. Johnson
Alan Kopit
Jodi Levine
Kent Lollis
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Your involvement makes a difference!
For more information on supporting a student in your community, visit www.ambar.org/civacademy
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