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.
“I got a chance to experience things that I could only imagine, such as visiting the Supreme Court, the U.S. Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, and the British Embassy.”
“I was inspired by the diversity of the speakers. All of the speakers were successful in either law or government, and they all came from different backgrounds. This shows that anything is possible no matter where you’re from.”

Speakers Tubi Retta, U.S. Department of State, and Paul Waters, Democracy Fund, talked with students.
Question...
“I learned more about what it means to be a lawyer, the presence of law in many positions, and unique perspectives on domestic and foreign policy issues.”

Nicole Austin-Hillery, Brennan Center for Justice, encouraged students to pursue their passions.
“The NCLA is a four-day program full of information catered to those with a passion for law and public service in a city that lives and breathes politics. It’s a truly great experience.”
“I came into the program expecting a dialogue strictly on legal and civics topics. Instead I was provided with information that extended to all areas of life. I was able to see the connection law has with almost everything that goes on in my country.”
Interact...
Maryland students Reagan Dunham and LeAnn McDowall meet with Ben Cardin, U.S. Senator from Maryland.
“I have been able to experience things that many people never get a chance to. I even had the opportunity to have a conversation with our senator, Ben Cardin.”
Students participate in a moot court through the Marshall Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project at American University Washington College of Law.
“My interactions with other participants inspired me to go back home and do more for my community.”
2015 Participants

Donovan Barner - Jackson, Mississippi
Tristen Belgarde - Box Elder, Montana
Ramone Bridges - Minneapolis, Minnesota
Ray’Monik Brown - Kansas City, Kansas
Jesus Carrera - Waco, Texas
Ann Marie Correa - Huntington Beach, California
Qwinnsetta DeVaughn - Charleston, South Carolina
Reagan Dunham - Ocean City, Maryland
Carina Gonzales - Tucson, Arizona
Ciarran Grayson - Wilmington, Delaware
Darla Harrison - Mount Nebo, West Virginia
LeAnn McDowall - Pocomoke City, Maryland
Niayla-Dia Murray - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Michael A. Parker - Fairfield, Alabama
Beck Pulis - Denver, Colorado
Tamerick Simpson - Miami, Florida
Ziana Alexandria Townsend - Atlanta, Georgia
Rosa Vazquez - Santa Ana, California
Sierra Williams - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Rida Zaidi - Chicago, Illinois
Experience...

“Do it! That is the most important thing I can tell somebody about this program. This program is something I’ll take with me for the rest of my life.”

— Michael A. Parker, NCLA student

WATCH: Students talk about their experiences during the 2015 National Civics & Law Academy.

Watch the video at ambar.org/civacademy

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