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## **The Lasting Impact of Law School Debt**

### **ABA Young Lawyers Division Survey: Law School Debt Forces Unwanted Career Paths, Erodes Mental Health**

Almost all law school graduates are impacted by student loan debt and, for many, this debt grows after graduation. Student loans negatively affect law school graduates' mental health, play a significant role in their personal lives and decisions, and force them to take unwanted career paths. What's more, student loans take a disproportionate toll on lawyers of color. These sobering statements express the key themes that emerged from data gathered by the ABA Young Lawyers Division for its newly released 2020 Law School Student Loan Debt [Survey Report](#). What are some of the numbers that relate to these themes, how did respondents convey their distress in their own words, and what might help improve this dire situation?

### **Ford Backs New Law Pipeline Program in Detroit Area High Schools**

A four-year law program set to launch next month in a Detroit area high school aims to help diversify the legal profession, in part by tapping into Black students' interest in social justice. The Ford Law Career Academy will debut at Henry Ford Academy, a charter school in Dearborn, Mich., with plans to expand to a Detroit high school in 2021 and possibly nationwide. Ford Motor Co., its charitable arm, and its learning institute are all directly involved in this new pipeline project for young people of color. [Detroit Free Press](#) has more details, including how the idea first arose, the curriculum and how it will be delivered, and why the academy's organizers think 2020 is a great time to start this new program.

### **Election News: Past ABA Presidents Call for a Fair Process, Lawyers Step up as Poll Workers**

At least 18 past ABA presidents were among the more than 100 civic leaders to sign a statement calling for officials to safeguard the election process and for Americans to exhibit "patience, civility and restraint." The joint appeal, organized by the World Justice Project and also signed by the American Bar Foundation, lists several factors that must be ensured so Americans can have confidence in the election results. Learn more at [ABA Journal](#). Also related to the November 3 election, [Law360](#) looks at the impact of COVID-19 on many people's willingness to volunteer as poll workers, and why some lawyers responded to a recruitment effort by the Association of Pro Bono Counsel (similar to the ABA's Poll Worker, Esq. initiative).

### **3 Tips to Help You Present Better on Zoom**

Look at your webcam, not at your screen. Chances are, you've heard this before, regarding effective use of Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and similar platforms. But chances are, you still look down at your screen when you speak because that's where you see the faces of the people with whom you're trying to connect. There's no question that when it comes to using these new communication tools, human nature is often at odds with technology. This means that maintaining your leadership presence takes some extra work. At [Fast Company](#), public speaking consultant and actor Vanessa Wasche shares three tips to help you present better in your next video meeting.

## New Benchmarks Report Focused on COVID-19 Shows Impact on Bars' Operations

Among local bars with 2,000 or more members, 56 percent say that member renewals are coming in more slowly compared with this same time last year. While the majority of state bars reported that most or all of their staff were working remotely, this is less true among local bars. Program cuts have been made by 4 percent of mandatory state bars and 21 percent of voluntary state bars. These are only a few of the statistics from the ABA Division for Bar Services 2020 State & Local Bar Benchmarks Survey that offer a comprehensive view of how operations at bars across the country have been affected by COVID-19. For the benefit of everyone in the bar community, all pandemic-related data from this year's survey has been gathered into a [special report](#) available at no charge on the division's COVID-19 resource page. The full 2020 Benchmarks report will be available next month.



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