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Class of 2024 Law Graduates Exceed Employment Expectations, But Equity Gaps Persist

WASHINGTON, DC – NALP today released the 51st consecutive edition of its *Jobs & JDs: Employment and Salaries of New Law Graduates – Class of 2024* report, available in NALP’s bookstore. This hallmark research report includes a comprehensive analysis that examines the employment types and salary outcomes of recent law graduates, drawing on data from nearly 97% of the Class of 2024 graduates from law schools accredited by the Council of the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar.

While the Class of 2024 entered a historically strong job market, NALP’s flagship report highlights persistent racial disparities in employment outcomes. For example, Asian, Black, Latinx, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander graduates experienced lower overall employment rates than their White peers, though the gap widened this year only for Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander graduates.

Disparities also remained for employment in bar admission required/anticipated positions (i.e., attorney positions). While the gap narrowed for most racial groups this year, it increased for Black graduates. Further, employment rates in these attorney positions continues to be lowest for Black, Native, and Indigenous graduates.

Racial gaps were also evident in judicial clerkships, where graduates of color were less likely to be employed than their White counterparts. Within private practice, employment rates remain lowest for Black, Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander graduates.

Similar disparities were also apparent in the employment outcomes of graduates by parental education level. First-generation law students had lower overall employment rates and were less likely to secure a position requiring bar admission compared to graduates with a lawyer parent. They were also underrepresented in judicial clerkships and private practice relative to their continuing-generation college and JD peers.

“NALP’s findings for the Class of 2024 establish a critical benchmark for understanding how recent policy and cultural shifts may shape the legal employment landscape,” said Nikia Gray, NALP’s Executive Director. “Because this class graduated just before the wave of challenges to diversity, equity, and inclusion, their

outcomes provide a vital reference point for assessing how changes in employer policies and practices will affect future graduates — particularly graduates of color — and whether these existing employment disparities widen or narrow.”

Highlights Based on Graduate Demographics

By Race/Ethnicity

- Racial disparities in employment outcomes persisted this year. While the overall employment rate was 93.4%, rates were lower for Asian, Black, Latinx, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander graduates — ranging from 89.3% (Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander graduates) to 92.3% (Latinx graduates). In contrast, White graduates had a higher employment rate (94.7%) than the class overall. Employment rates were also higher this year for Native American and Alaska Native graduates (94.8%) and for multiracial graduates (93.8%), although historically these groups have had lower rates.
- White graduates also had the highest level of employment in bar admission required/anticipated jobs (86.5%), while rates were significantly lower for Black (74.3%), Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander (78.6%), and Native American/Alaska Native (79.4%) graduates.
- Consistent with long-term patterns, employment rates within private practice were lower for Native American/Alaska Native (40.2% of employed graduates), Black (53.8%), and Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander (56.0%) graduates. Private practice employment was highest for Asian graduates (66.0%).
- Latinx graduates were among the most underrepresented racial groups within judicial clerkships — comprising 11.8% of the Class of 2024 but securing only 7.7% of all clerkships and 7.3% of federal clerkships. Overall, graduates of color represented more than one-third of the class (33.7%) yet obtained just 27.1% of all clerkships.
- Median starting salaries for employed graduates by race/ethnicity ranged from \$80,000 for Native American and Alaska Native graduates to \$150,000 for Asian graduates. The Class of 2024 national median salary was \$95,000. The higher median salary for Asian graduates can be partially attributed to greater levels of private practice employment, particularly within large firms.

Employment Status by Race/Ethnicity for the Class of 2024		
Race/Ethnicity	Employment Rate	% Employed in a Bar Admission Required/Anticipated Job
All Graduates	93.4%	84.3%
Asian	92.0%	83.8%
Black or African American	89.7%	74.3%
Latinx	92.3%	83.4%
Multiracial	93.8%	84.1%
Native American or Alaska Native	94.8%	79.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	89.3%	78.6%
White/Caucasian	94.7%	86.5%

By Highest Level of Parental/Guardian Education

NALP also measures employment by highest level of parental/guardian education. First-generation college students are defined as students who do not have at least one parent or guardian with a bachelor's or higher degree. Continuing-generation JD students are students who have at least one lawyer parent, or guardian.

- The overall employment rate was more than three percentage points higher (96.6% versus 93.3%) and the rate of employment in bar admission required/anticipated jobs was more than eight points greater (90.8% versus 82.7%) for continuing-generation JD students in comparison to first-generation college students.
- Employed continuing-generation JD students were more likely to secure jobs in private practice (62.7%) and judicial clerkships (12.5%) as compared to first-generation college students (57.6% and 8.4%, respectively).
- About 30% (30.4%) of all first-gen college students employed in private practice worked for a small firm of 1-10 lawyers; that compares to just 20.6% of continuing-gen JD students. Students with a lawyer parent were much more likely to work for a large firm of more than 500 lawyers (42.3%) than first-gen college students (28.9%).
- Continuing-generation JD students were particularly overrepresented within federal clerkships. They comprised 14.2% of the class overall but obtained 20.7% of federal clerkships. In contrast, first-generation college students represented 21.0% of the class but secured just 12.6% of all federal clerkships.
- The median salary for continuing-gen JD students was higher (\$103,500) in comparison to first-gen college students (\$90,000). Greater levels of BigLaw employment for continuing-gen JD students contribute to these salary differences.

Other Graduate Demographics

- Employed gender non-binary graduates were four times as likely to obtain a public interest position as compared to graduates overall (38.3% vs. 9.7%). LGBTQ+ graduates were nearly twice as likely to be employed in public interest (18.6%).
- Graduates who identified as having a disability, gender non-binary, LGBTQ+, and/or a military veteran were less likely to be employed by a law firm as compared to graduates overall.
- Graduates with disabilities had a lower employment rate (89.0%), as well as a lower rate of employment in bar admission required/anticipated jobs (77.2%).

How are law firm opportunities changing for new law graduates? Which geographic markets provide the most jobs? Where did the graduates who are not practicing law find employment? How do employment findings vary by gender, race/ethnicity, level of parental education, and other graduate demographics? This year's *Jobs & JDs* report includes over 120 detailed tables and charts with employment and salary data by geography, graduate demographics, and law school characteristics. *Jobs & JDs: Employment and Salaries of New Law Graduates — Class of 2024* is now available in NALP's [bookstore](#).

For more information on the overall employment outcomes for Class of 2024 law graduates, see NALP's July 31, 2025, media release on the Current Press Releases page at www.nalp.org/current. To request an interview, contact media@nalp.org.

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About NALP

NALP is an association of more than 3,000 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. What brings NALP members together is a common belief in three fundamental things. First, all law students and lawyers should benefit from a fair and ethical hiring process. Second, law students and lawyers are more successful when supported by professional development and legal career professionals. Third, a diverse and inclusive legal profession best serves clients and our communities. That's why NALP members work together every day to collect and publish accurate legal employment data and information, and champion education and ethical principles for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than 50 years, NALP has played an essential role in the success of our members and the lawyers and law students they serve. NALP maintains an online archive of press releases at www.nalp.org/pressreleases. For additional information, contact NALP at info@nalp.org or call (202) 835-1001.