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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NALP Reports Employment Outcomes for First-Generation College Students Fall Below Those of Their Peers, and Disparities in Outcomes by Race/Ethnicity Persist

WASHINGTON, D.C. — For the first time, the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) has measured the law school employment outcomes for graduates who do not have at least one parent/guardian with a bachelor's degree or higher degree and the new data show that these students fare less well than their peers in the competition for jobs. Graduates with a parent or guardian who held a JD degree had a higher employment rate and were employed in bar passage required jobs at a rate 11 percentage points above that of first-generation college students. Outcomes on these measures were also higher, but to a lesser degree, for continuing-generation college students (students with at least one parent or guardian with a bachelor's degree or higher but lacking a JD degree) as compared to first-generation college students. In addition, stark and persistent disparities in outcomes by race/ethnicity continued to be evident this year. Notably, Black and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander law school graduates had the lowest overall employment rates and were employed in bar passage required jobs at rates 16 and 21 percentage points below that of white graduates.

NALP today released its *Jobs & JDs, Employment and Salaries of New Graduates, Class of 2020*, available at www.nalp.org/bookstore. *Jobs & JDs* is NALP's hallmark annual research report that presents a comprehensive analysis of the types of employment and salaries obtained by the Class of 2020, with data on nearly 97% of Class of 2020 graduates from ABA-accredited law schools.



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“It’s exciting to be able to begin to quantify the impact that parental education has on law school employment and salary outcomes,” said James Leipold, NALP’s Executive Director. “It is sobering but perhaps not surprising that law graduates with a least one parent with a JD degree find considerable advantage in the job market, and graduates who do not have at least one parent/guardian with a bachelor’s degree fare less well. Significantly, a higher percentage of graduates of color were reported as first-generation college students, and distressingly we continue to see that the lowest overall employment rates were measured for Black and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander law school graduates. It is incumbent upon law schools to put in the hard work necessary to close these gaps.”

Highlights Based on Level of Parental/Guardian Education:

- The employment rate was almost 5 percentage points higher (92.8% vs. 88.0%) and the rate of employment in bar passage required/anticipated jobs was more than 11 points greater (84.3% vs. 73.2%) for continuing-generation JD students in comparison to first-generation college students.
- Overall, 22.5% of Class of 2020 graduates reporting parental education data were first-generation college students, but this figure was higher for Native American or Alaska Native (55.0%), Latinx (41.9%), Black (35.9%), and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (33.3%) graduates.
- 14.4% of Class of 2020 graduates reporting parental education data were continuing-generation JD students. Asian (3.6%), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (4.4%), and Black (6.1%) graduates were the least likely to have a parent or guardian with a JD degree. White graduates were the least likely to be first-generation college students (17.8%) and the most likely to be continuing-generation JD students (17.7%).
- Employed continuing-generation JD students were more likely to secure jobs in private practice (62.7%) and judicial clerkships (13.6%) compared to first-generation college students (56.3% and 9.0%, respectively).



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- Overall, the median salaries for continuing-generation JD students and continuing-generation college students were about \$13,000 and \$8,000 higher, respectively, in comparison to the median salary for first-generation college students, primarily due to the greater share of continuing-generation college and JD students employed in private practice, and in large law firms in particular.
- First-generation college students employed in private practice were more likely to be employed by small law firms of 25 or fewer attorneys.
- First-generation college students with clerkships were more likely to be employed in state or local clerkships, while continuing-generation JD students were more likely to hold federal clerkships.

Highlights Based on Other Graduate Demographics:

- Disparities in employment outcomes by race/ethnicity continued to be evident this year. White/Caucasian graduates had the highest employment rate (90.1%), while Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and Black or African American graduates had the lowest employment rates (81.5% and 83.8%, respectively). White/Caucasian graduates also had the highest level of employment in bar passage required/anticipated jobs (78.0%), while the rate was nearly 16 percentage points lower for Black graduates (62.5%) and more than 21 percentage points lower for Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander graduates (56.8%).
- Median starting salaries for employed graduates by race/ethnicity ranged from \$70,000 for Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and Native American or Alaska graduates to \$140,000 for Asian graduates. The higher median salary for Asian graduates can be attributed to greater levels of employment in private practice.
- By gender, women had the highest employment rate (89.4%), but men had a higher median salary (\$76,570) than both women (\$73,000) and gender non-binary graduates (\$64,000).



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- Employed gender non-binary graduates were more than four times as likely to take a job in public interest as compared to employed graduates overall (37.3% vs. 8.7%). Employed LGBTQ graduates were more than twice as likely to be employed in public interest positions as compared to employed graduates overall (19.8% vs. 8.7%).
- Graduates with disabilities had a lower overall employment rate (83.0%), as well as a lower percentage of graduates employed in bar passage required/anticipated jobs (68.1%).

How are law firm opportunities changing for new law graduates? Which geographic markets provided the most jobs? Where did the graduates who are not practicing law find jobs? How do employment findings vary by gender, race/ethnicity, and other graduate demographics? The publication includes over 120 detailed tables and charts with data by geography, graduate demographics, and law school characteristics in order to answer these questions. *Jobs & JDs, Employment and Salaries of New Graduates, Class of 2020* is now available for purchase at www.nalp.org/bookstore.

About NALP

NALP is an association of more than 2,500 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 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.