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## **Ambassadors for Racial Justice**

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### **Georgetown Law's Juvenile Justice Clinic & Initiative (GJI)**

Georgetown Law's Juvenile Justice Clinic & Initiative have served youth in the District of Columbia for over 40 years. Together, they aim to raise the quality and scope of juvenile defense practice in the District of Columbia, the Mid-Atlantic region, and nationally through continued direct representation, policy advocacy, and the training of juvenile defenders during law school and beyond. As part of those efforts, the Initiative currently houses NJDC's Mid-Atlantic Juvenile Defender Center and the JTIP Summer Academy on site at Georgetown Law. The Initiative has also launched and expanded a number of racial justice projects designed to advocate for youth of color in the juvenile legal system and train juvenile defenders across the country on emerging racial justice issues, such as implicit racial bias and the intersection of race and adolescence.

### **National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC)**

NJDC promotes justice for all children by ensuring excellence in juvenile defense. NJDC believes that all youth have the right to zealous, well-resourced representation and that the juvenile defense bar must build its capacity to produce and support capable, well-trained defenders. NJDC, through its national headquarters and its Regional Defender Centers, works to create an environment in which defenders have access to sufficient resources, including investigative and expert assistance, as well as specialized training, adequate and equitable compensation, and manageable workloads. NJDC provides guidance and support to the field including training and technical assistance, policy reform, advocacy, and resource development to juvenile defenders across the nation.

### **Ambassadors for Racial Justice Program**

The Ambassadors for Racial Justice program is a pilot program for racial-justice minded defenders who are particularly interested in challenging racial injustices in the juvenile justice system. The Georgetown Juvenile Justice Initiative, in partnership with the National Juvenile Defender Center, hopes to inspire enthusiastic, dedicated frontline juvenile defenders to assume leadership roles in developing strategies to combat racial inequities in their respective jurisdictions and courthouses, and throughout the country. The 12-month-program will (1) encourage and support defenders to challenge racial injustices through legal advocacy, (2) engage defenders in systemic and policy reform, and (3) equip defenders to facilitate difficult conversations about race. By creating a community of racial-justice minded juvenile defenders to share their challenges and successes, the program also hopes to (4) attract and retain a cadre of attorneys of color into the fight for youth justice.

GJI and NJDC will select six to eight attorneys per year to participate.

## **Components of the Program**<sup>1</sup>

Ambassadors will remain in residence and in practice in their own local jurisdictions, but participate in the following program components:

- Leadership Retreat weekend in Washington, DC (January 2020)
- JTIP Summer Academy (June 2020)
  - The JTIP Summer Academy is an annual one-week intensive training program comprised of approximately 20+ juvenile law and practice lessons taught by elite trainers recruited from across the country. The program is designed to build community and equip juvenile defenders with skills they can use and share with colleagues in their home states. *Ambassadors who have previously attended JTIP Summer Academy will be excused from this component.*
- Monthly conference calls and webinars on topics such as:
  - Defenders & Implicit Racial Bias: Confronting Our Own Bias
  - Strategies for Policy Reform
  - Black Girls & the Juvenile Legal System
  - The Reasonable Black Child
  - Trauma-Informed Decision-Making
  - Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline
  - Challenging the Criminalization of Adolescent Behavior
  - Police & Youth Engagement
  - Prosecutors as Change Agents
  - Raising Race in My Jurisdiction (Case Rounds)
- Mentoring by policy advocates, litigators, and trainers
- Ambassadors for Racial Justice listserv
- Development and exchange of resources, such as sample legal pleadings
- Certification as a trainer in Raising Race JTIP lessons
- Possible expert site-visits to Ambassador's home jurisdiction for court observation

### **Defenders Must:**

- Carry a significant juvenile defense caseload in their jurisdiction, or otherwise demonstrate current experience, commitment, and engagement in juvenile justice reform, and strong partnership with juvenile defenders (e.g., juvenile appellate defenders, juvenile policy experts in defender offices).
- Demonstrate a commitment to expressed-interest advocacy on behalf of all youth.
- Commit to completing one capstone project of their own design. Possible projects may include:
  - Hosting/leading a training related to racial justice for juvenile defenders in their local jurisdiction;
  - Spearheading legislative reform in their local jurisdiction;
  - Preparing a social media campaign related to racial equity and youth rights; or
  - Creating an internship program that encourages college/law students of color to pursue careers in juvenile defense work. Internship programs may be paid, pro bono or for school credit. Ambassadors may partner with any regional defender center to launch internship program.
- Participate in all components of the program.

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<sup>1</sup> The Georgetown Juvenile Justice Initiative and the National Juvenile Defender Center will sponsor Ambassadors' hotels and flights to attend the Leadership Retreat weekend and JTIP Summer Academy.

## Expected Outcomes

- Empower juvenile defenders with the training, resources, and information to fight the over-policing, over-criminalization, and school exclusion of youth of color through case litigation and systemic policy.
- Grow the number of juvenile defenders and juvenile justice advocates equipped to train other defenders on raising race and facilitating difficult conversations about race.
- Raise the level of practice among racial-justice minded juvenile defenders across the country and improve outcomes for youth of color nationally.
- Embolden a group of well-trained, diverse juvenile defenders and juvenile justice advocates who may go on to become policy advocates, judges, and legislators, to represent minority viewpoints, empower communities of color, and systemically reform our juvenile legal system.

## Timeline for 2020 Class

Open applications cycle —**May 17, 2019**

Application deadline—**July 15, 2019**

Decisions made by **September 30, 2019**, *if not earlier*.

Orientation and Leadership Retreat—**January 2020**

## **Ambassadors for Racial Justice Application**

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The Ambassadors for Racial Justice Program will be limited to six to eight attorneys per year. Please return your completed application along with a letter of recommendation and resumé as one pdf. to [lawjjc@georgetown.edu](mailto:lawjjc@georgetown.edu) by 11:59 PM EST **July 15, 2019** with the subject line: [Last Name] Ambassadors for Racial Justice Application. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

*Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and decisions will be released by September 2019.*

### **1. Applicant Information**

Name:

Gender:

Race/Ethnicity:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

### **2. Criminal Defense Practice Information**

- a. Type of Legal Practice (Public Defender/Court Appointed/Private Practice/Non-Profit/Solo Practice):
  
- b. How many years overall have you practiced as an attorney?
  
- c. How many years have you practiced solely criminal defense?
  
- d. How many years have you practiced solely juvenile defense?

- e. Juvenile Defense Trainings Attended and Year, *if any*:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- f. Racial Justice/Racial Bias Trainings Attended and Year, *if any*:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- g. Jurisdiction[s] in which you practice:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- h. What percentage of your caseload is juvenile defense?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- i. What percentage of your juvenile cases involve youth of color?

**Short Essay Questions**

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- 1. Please complete this sentence: “The role of juvenile defense counsel is \_\_\_\_\_”  
(250 words or less)

2. In what ways can a juvenile defense attorney implement racial justice arguments in their legal advocacy? What kind of training does an attorney need to effectively address race in their cases? **(250 words or less)**

3. Why do you want to participate in the Ambassadors for Racial Justice Program? **(250 words or less)**

4. Diversity: *If applicable*, please describe how your race, age, ethnicity, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or other characteristic will add to the diversity of the cohort group. **(150 words or less)**