

# CORPORATE LEGAL DIVERSITY PIPELINE PROGRAM

an initiative of Street Law, Inc. and the Association of Corporate Counsel



The Corporate Legal Diversity Pipeline Program is a nationwide partnership between **Street Law, Inc.** and the **Association of Corporate Counsel**. The aim of the program is to expose young people from diverse communities to everyday law and legal careers. As many companies and law firms strive to implement diversity initiatives, this pipeline program can serve as one component of those efforts. With the goal of encouraging more young people of color to consider pursuing a legal career, the program uses volunteer legal professionals to deliver lessons about the law, engage the students in interactive simulations, and serve as role models and advisors. [www.streetlaw.org/acc](http://www.streetlaw.org/acc)

## Evidence-Based Design

Our research into career choice and counseling psychology has suggested that in order to encourage young people to pursue a particular career, you must provide them with several things: career pathway education, career role models, social support and persuasion, and a chance to experience and enjoy career-related tasks. Street Law has designed its Legal Diversity Pipeline Programs to address those research-based factors.

## Program Overview

Since 2001, more than 50 companies and a dozen ACC chapters have joined the Corporate Legal Diversity Pipeline Program. Street Law matches in-house legal department volunteers with nearby, diverse high school social studies courses. The legal department volunteers are trained and then visit their partner classes a few times to teach about civil law and legal careers. The corporation then hosts a Legal Careers Conference where the students participate in exciting, interactive workshops and simulations of legal activities and attend a career fair.

Today, more than 1,000 legal professionals from companies like Coca-Cola, Merck, Verizon, Nationwide, HP, GE, Turner, and Capital One volunteer with more than 4,000 students each year. A list of participating companies is available at [www.streetlaw.org/acc](http://www.streetlaw.org/acc).

## Program Components

1. Street Law provides a **half-day training** for the participating legal department staff and partner teachers. Together, we choose several topics for the legal department to focus on over the course of the semester. These topics frequently include intellectual property, contracts, torts, alternative dispute resolution, employment law, or environmental law.
2. Department volunteers (including attorneys, paralegals, and administrative staff) **visit the students' classroom** 2-6 times over the course of the semester to teach about the chosen topics and the legal profession.
3. The students attend a **day-long legal careers conference** at the company to participate in interactive, authentic legal simulations where they utilize the skills and knowledge acquired over the course of the semester. The students also attend a career fair at the conference, where they learn about the variety of legal jobs in the corporate sector.
4. In the second year of the program, many corporations offer some sort of **follow-up with the most promising students**—several have offered job shadow days, mentoring, internships, or scholarships.

“ I always knew that I wanted to go college, but I didn’t know how to get there. The lawyers and paralegals helped me and gave me the confidence I needed. Today, I’m a freshman in college, majoring in legal studies.”

– participating high school student

## Volunteering for the Program

Anyone in the legal department can be a successful volunteer in this program. There are a variety of roles for volunteers.

Teaching volunteers can expect to devote between 8–20 hours to the program over a three-month period. They should strive to attend the program training, one visit to the school, and the day-long Legal Careers Conference. Of course, the schedules of busy professionals do not always permit this level of involvement, and some volunteers must miss the class visit or the conference day. Teaching volunteers all choose one Topic Team to join. Each team has 4–8 members and focuses on one single legal topic, as chosen at the training session. The team is responsible for one or two class visits and a workshop at the legal career conference about their topic. The workshops are legal simulations like mock negotiations, mock trials, or mock mediations. Street Law provides all the lesson plans and legal simulations for the program. We assist with the adaptation of those activities to the company’s business and can develop new activities on emerging legal topics.

Volunteers are also needed to administer the program—to schedule visits with the teacher, plan the legal career conference, reserve space for the event, handle student transportation and lunch, and generally support the Topic Teams. These volunteers should expect to spend 8–12 hours preparing for and attending the Legal Careers Conference. Street Law provides an extensive library of documents and templates to assist with planning the event, as well as ongoing support from Street Law staff.

Volunteers typically find the experience to be a rewarding way to interact with students from the community. They often have fun and collaborate with colleagues in a new and interesting way.

## The Partners



Street Law, Inc. is a global, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with 45 years of experience developing classroom and community programs that educate young people about law and government. Street Law programs and materials help advance justice by empowering people with the legal and civic knowledge, skills, and confidence to bring about positive change for themselves and others.



The Association of Corporate Counsel is the bar association for in-house lawyers—those who practice in corporate legal departments.

## Contact

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