



# PRE-LAW MEMBERSHIP GUIDE

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**2020-2021**



**NBLSA<sup>TM</sup>**  
*Striving to Balance Since 1968.*

# ABOUT THE NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENT ASSOCIATION

2020-2021

National Black Law Students Association ("NBLSA") is one of the nation's largest student-run non-profit organizations of its kind, representing thousands of law students and over 200 chapters and affiliates throughout the United States.

## BLSA Pre-Law Student Division

NBLSA's Pre-Law Student Division exists to create a pipeline between undergraduates/college graduates and law school. The Pre-Law Division conducts programs and connects pre-law members with law school admissions offices to provide valuable insight on the application, financial aid, and curricular processes. T

## History

Algernon Johnson ("AJ") Cooper founded the first Black American Law Students Association chapter at New York University School of Law in 1968. In 1983, BLSA revised its name, and the word "American" was deleted to encompass all Blacks, including those not of American nationality. Later, the word "National" was added to reflect the organization's national expansion, which now includes representation in the law schools of 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

## Vision

NBLSA is a global catalyst for the respect, acceptance, and engagement of Black law students in law schools, communities, and throughout the legal profession.

## Mission

The mission of NBLSA is to increase the number of culturally responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community.



## PRE-LAW DIRECTORS

**Sylvia Wilson**  
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**Okeya Smith**  
Northeastern Regional  
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# NBLSA'S STRUCTURE

Our organization's structure includes a national, regional, and local chapters.

## Local

The local chapters (both law school and pre-law undergraduate) are NBLSA's foundation. Chapter's are led by a president, an executive board, and overseen by the local membership, and work on the behalf of the local students. These chapters develop creative programming that furthers NBLSA's strategic goals and are a critical component of the NBLSA membership experience. They also facilitate the membership dues collection process.

## Regional

NBLSA is divided into six geographic regions: Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Northeast, Southern, Southwest, and Western. Regions function as the conduit between the national organization and its respective local chapters. Each region has a Regional Executive Board ("REB"). The REB provides its chapters with programmatic direction and supports its local chapters' activities.

## National

The National level of NBLSA provides the overarching policy and programmatic direction to the entire organization and provides resources to chapters for program development. It is led by the National Chair, the National Executive Board, and overseen by the National General Assembly.



## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL PRE-LAW DIRECTOR

Pre-Law Family,

My name is Sylvia Wilson and I am a second-year law student at Washington University in Saint Louis School of Law. I am honored to serve as the 2020-2021 National Pre-Law Director.

The mission of the Pre-Law Division is to increase the number of culturally-responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community. Students who become members of the Pre-Law Division will join the membership of a prestigious organization that continues to transform the legal community. Since 1968, NBLSA has produced some of the most talented and well-respected attorneys. Pre-law members are the future of NBLSA, and I am here to assist aspiring Black law students in preparing for the rigors of law school.



As a member of the Pre-Law Division, you will gain access to invaluable resources, networking opportunities, and exceptional mentorship. This year, I hope to provide these resources and opportunities to build on the foundations of our predecessors, address issues that Black law students face, and provide members with the necessary tools to become leading attorneys.

I am eager to work with all of you over the course of this year to expand our membership and increase the opportunities offered to our pre-law members. Thank you for your interest in the NBLSA Pre-Law Division. I look forward to hearing from you and best wishes for a successful school year!

In NBLSA Service,

Sylvia Wilson  
2020-2021 National Pre-Law Director  
Washington University in Saint Louis School of Law

## MESSAGE FROM THE NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF PRE-LAW



Greetings:

My name is Okeya Smith and I am a second-year student at the Fordham University School of Law. I am excited to serve as the 2020-2021 Northeast Director of the Pre-Law Division!

The Northeast region is comprised of the following states: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

As NEBLSA Director of the Pre-Law Division my goals include: (1) demystifying the journey of pursuing a legal career; (2) providing our pre-law members with the necessary tools to dominate the law school application process; and (3) creating visibility of our village of young black law students who are rooting for them and who are here to assist them along the way.

This year, the theme of the Northeast region is "CONNECT." I am eager to work with each of you over the course of the year to expand our membership and to help you perfect your vision.

Thank you for your interest in the Northeast Pre-Law Division. I look forward to an enjoyable year with all of you!

Be sure to mark your calendars for our 53rd Regional Convention, January 20 – 24, 2021! If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact me at [neblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:neblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).

In NBLSA Service,

Okeya C. Smith  
2020-2021 NEBLSA Director of the Pre-Law Division  
Fordham University School of Law

## MESSAGE FROM THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF PRE-LAW

Greetings,

My name is Kenya Adams; I am the Southern Regional Director of the Pre-Law Student Division, 2020-2021. My regions include Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and The U.S. Virgin Islands.

With police brutality and injustices within the legal system disproportionately affecting the black community, MORE black lawyers are needed to help start the CHANGE our country desperately needs. That being said, I felt called to share my professional experience in higher education to encourage, educate, and support the next generation of black lawyers.



In this role, my primary goal is to increase the percentage of black lawyers in America. The only place to go is UP! The grind continues!

I look forward to continuing to work with aspiring attorneys in my region!

In SRBLSA Service,

Kenya Adams

2020-2021 SRBLSA Director of Pre-Law

University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law



## MESSAGE FROM THE MIDWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF PRE-LAW



Greetings:

My name is Krystal Hunter and I am a third-year student at Indiana University McKinney School of Law. I am honored to serve as the 2020-2021 Director of Pre-Law Affairs for the Midwest Region of the National Black Law Students Association!

The Midwest region includes the following states: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Our purpose is to “articulate and promote the educational, professional, political, and social needs and goals of Black law students in the Midwest.”

This year, the theme for the Midwest region is “Black to the Future: The 5% is Rising.” Currently, Black people comprise about 5% of the legal profession; I look forward to partnering with you to increase the number of Black attorneys in the Midwest and nationwide.

Pre-Law students are essential to securing the future of the National Black Law Students Association. It is our hope that you utilize the resources and opportunities we provide to continue to build a pipeline of skilled Black attorneys. As we enter these unprecedented times, you will benefit greatly from the guidance, networking, and mentorship that NBLSA and Midwest BLSA have to offer.

Thank you for your interest in the Midwest Pre-Law Division. I look forward to hearing from you and best wishes for a successful school year!

Please mark your calendars for our 53rd Regional Convention, February 3- February 7, 2021 in Detroit, Michigan! If you have any questions, comments, or ideas on how to support future Black law students, please contact me at [mwblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:mwblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org).

In NBLSA Service,

Krystal Hunter  
2020-2021 MWBLSA Director of Pre-Law  
Indiana University McKinney School of Law

## MESSAGE FROM THE MIDWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF PRE-LAW

Greetings, Scholars:

My name is Marcena Day, and I am a second-year student at the University of Washington, School of Law. I am honored to have the privilege of serving as your 2020-2021 Regional Pre-Law Director for the Western Region!

The Western region includes: Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah.

Joining NBLSA as a Pre-Law member will help prepare future law students to navigate the application process and take on the rigors of a legal education. The future of NBLSA is determined by ensuring that as the nation's largest student-run organization, we continue to fulfill our obligation to lift as we climb, and nurture our pre-law pipeline.



In response to our current national climate, the law school application pool is as competitive as ever. Becoming a pre-law member of NBLSA creates an opportunity to make your application stand out in the crowded field. Your legal career will be a marathon, and as Pre-Law Director it is my responsibility to equip the lawyers of the future for the long run.

This school year the theme for the Western Region is "24/8: Fostering Professional Competence, Academic Excellence, and Social Movement." Our legal community's future is dependent on the strength of our Pre-Law Division. We are committed to ensuring that WRBLSA Pre-Law members are afforded excellent opportunities and resources.

Please mark your calendars for our Regional Convention, January 6-10, 2021 in Seattle, Washington. It will be a true Pacific Northwest experience!

On behalf of the Western Region executive board, thank you for your consideration of the Western Region Pre-Law Division. Please do not hesitate to reach out via email with any questions, comments, or suggestions at [wrblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org](mailto:wrblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org). Good luck with the start of the school year, and I look forward to an exciting and rewarding year!

In NBLSA Service,

Marcena Day  
2020-2021 WRBLSA Director of Pre-Law  
University of Washington, School of Law



## NBSLA PRE-LAW DIVISION MEMBERSHIP & BENEFITS

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Pre-Law Division is open to undergraduate students and individuals who have obtained their undergraduate degree. Individuals may join a Pre-Law Chapter at their undergraduate institution or they may join the Pre-Law Division as At-Large Members.

Dues for all pre-law members are \$10 for the academic year (August to July) and can be paid by joining NBSA [here](#).

Members of newly-chartered chapters do not have to submit individual membership dues. The initial chapter charter fee of \$100 covers all members of that chapter for the 2020-2021 academic year. The Chapter charter application can be found [here](#).

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Members of the Pre-Law Division gain invaluable resources and opportunities. Members are invited to attend the national convention as well as their regional convention. Both conventions include programming specifically designed for pre-law students. We have also partnered with companies to offer the NBSA Pre-Law Division members exclusive discounts on products, a mentorship program, and more!

We are continuously working to enhance the membership benefits of the Pre-Law Division. Please visit [www.nbsa.org/prelaw](http://www.nbsa.org/prelaw) for more information. **If you have any suggestions for benefits that you would like to see the Pre-Law Division provide, please let us know at [prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:prelaw@nbsa.org).**

## FORMING A NBLSA PRE-LAW CHAPTER

### STEPS:

1. Submit a charter application and pay the application fee of \$100 via the following link:  
<https://nationalblsa.wildapricot.org/join-us>.
2. Review this Membership Guide in its entirety, and the NBLSA Pre-Law Constitution and By-Laws. Also, have the executive board of the pre-law chapter read the documents.
3. Email the National Director of Pre-Law (prelaw@nblsa.org) and copy the National Director of Membership (membership@nblsa.org) a Membership Roster in Excel, including the names, titles, and email addresses of all the chapter members. Please save the file in the following format: “[School Name]\_Pre-Law Membership Roster\_2020-2021.” Indicate “[School Name]: Charter Registration” in the subject line of the e-mail.
4. Create a Constitution for your specific chapter and attach it to an email to the National Director of Pre-Law. Please save the file in the following format: “[School Name]\_Constitution\_2020-2021.” Indicate “[School Name]: Charter Registration” in the subject line of the e-mail.
5. Once you receive National Board approval and a certification of your chapter from the National Pre-Law Director, you may begin your programming!

## CONTACTS

If you need any assistance during the academic year, please reach out to the Pre-Law Director in the region where your undergraduate chapter is located or the National Director.

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### Northeast (NEBSA)

Okeya Smith  
2020-2021 Pre-Law Director  
[nebsa.prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:nebsa.prelaw@nbsa.org)

*States: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.*

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### Mid-Atlantic (MABSA)

Nana Yaw Osei  
2020-2021 Pre-Law Director  
[mablsa.prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:mablsa.prelaw@nbsa.org)

*States: District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.*

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### Southern (SRBSA)

Kenya Adams  
2020-2021 Pre-Law Director  
[srbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:srbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org)

*States: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.*

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### Southwest (SWBSA)

Ayo Adaranijo  
2020-2021 Pre-Law Director  
[swbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:swbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org)

*States: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.*

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### Midwest (MWBSA)

Krystal Hunter  
2020-2021 Pre-Law Director  
[mwbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:mwbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org)

*States: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.*

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### Western (WRBSA)

Marcena Day  
2020-2021 Pre-Law Director  
[wrbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:wrbsa.prelaw@nbsa.org)

*States: Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah.*

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### National (NBSA)

Sylvia Wilson  
2020-2021 National Director of Pre-Law  
[prelaw@nbsa.org](mailto:prelaw@nbsa.org)

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<https://www.nbsa.org/>