



Columbia
Law School

The Max Berger '71 Public Interest/ Public Service Fellows Program

PREPARING
A NEW GENERATION
OF LAWYERS
FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Columbia Law School's
Max Berger '71 Public
Interest/Public Service
(PI/PS) Fellows Program
brings together and
supports a community
of students seeking to
use their legal training
to effect positive change
in society.

Designed for students committed to pursuing public interest, government, human rights, or other nonprofit work upon graduation, the PI/PS Fellows Program provides students with specialized opportunities and resources for exploring public interest lawyering in the United States and around the world.

Community Building

From day one, PI/PS Fellows benefit from a diverse and tight-knit community of peers who share their passion for public interest and public service. Community-building events such as orientation programming; group discussions on current events, social justice topics, and lawyering for change; happy hours; and an annual fellows dinner help establish a personal network and camaraderie as fellows make their way through three years of law school.



“To be a Public Interest/Public Service Fellow is to join a lifelong community—not only of fellow students who plan on devoting their careers to serving others, but also of practitioners, professors, and advisers who have achieved those same goals and are leaders in their respective fields. This program helped translate my passion for social justice into concrete career goals that felt attainable. The program also grounded my law school experience by encouraging reflection, so my decisions about classes, internships, and other opportunities were intentional and directed toward serving the public interest. This program is humbling, inspiring, and reassuring.”

AILEE KATZ '22

PUBLIC INTEREST/PUBLIC SERVICE FELLOW

Learning

Fellows explore today's key legal issues and partake in substantive and reflective learning opportunities in and out of the classroom. Leadership development training, skills workshops, and opportunities to interact with distinguished practitioners and faculty provide PI/PS Fellows the foundation and experience they will need for real-world applications after graduation.



“To build effective careers in public service, students will need to prepare both inside and outside the classroom. The Public Interest/Public Service Fellows Program enables students to explore public interest and public service opportunities more deeply, while having fun doing so.”

**RICHARD BRIFFAULT
JOSEPH P. CHAMBERLAIN PROFESSOR
OF LEGISLATION**

Mentoring

Columbia Law School's faculty, alumni, administrators, and upper-class students offer PI/PS Fellows specialized guidance on how to be an effective public interest or public service lawyer. There are many opportunities to engage with and learn from mentors in small group settings and in one-on-one discussions: substantive law and career advising sessions with practitioners; group or peer-to-peer sessions with second- and third-year students; and small social gatherings, such as teas, mixers, or dinners, with faculty and practitioners.



"We prepare lawyers not only with the skills they need for the world of practice, but also to think critically about the world they are entering. To do that effectively, you need a faculty who values what's going on in the real world and who is interested in building places of reflection about the law. Columbia excels at making the connection between the classroom and practice."

OLATUNDE JOHNSON

JEROME B. SHERMAN PROFESSOR OF LAW

Career Counseling

PI/PS Fellows receive in-depth and curated guidance as they shape their individual pathways for meaningful and rewarding careers in the public sector. They have access to customized career and curricular counseling as well as guidance on financial planning for work in the public interest and public service fields.



“At Columbia Law School, every student’s path to success is unique. PI/PS Fellows can expect to work closely with the Office of Social Justice Initiatives as they explore their passions, identify their goals, and search for meaningful educational, employment, and internship opportunities aligned with their interests. We help equip PI/PS Fellows with the skills, experience, and connections they will need to pursue their individualized aspirations.”

**DEVI PATEL
DIRECTOR OF THE
PUBLIC INTEREST/PUBLIC SERVICE
FELLOWS PROGRAM**

Columbia Law School is renowned for its historic commitment to lawyering for the public good by providing its students access to:

Outstanding **faculty** who are actively engaged in cutting-edge legal work.

An extensive **alumni** network of public interest lawyers, government officials, and other social justice leaders.

A wide array of groundbreaking **clinics, externships, policy labs,** and other **experiential learning** opportunities.

Numerous **centers,** led by faculty or practitioners, that provide hands-on opportunities for students to engage with a range of public interest issues.

Myriad student **activities,** organizations, journals, and moot courts specifically devoted to public interest law.

Opportunities to engage with underserved communities through **pro bono work.**

Generous **financial support,** including public interest admissions scholarships, summer funding for public interest or public service positions in the United States and abroad, and an outstanding Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) for graduates.

Post-graduate **fellowships** in government, international human rights, and domestic public interest fields.

Social Justice Initiatives

The Max Berger '71 Public Interest/Public Service Fellows Program is overseen by the Office of Social Justice Initiatives (SJI), which provides career services, programming, and networking opportunities for Columbia Law School students and graduates interested in exploring public interest, government, or other nonprofit careers. SJI also implements and oversees the Law School's mandatory pro bono program, which connects students with attorney-supervised projects in the public good, as well as the Columbia Summer Funding Program and the Human Rights Internship Program. SJI partners with Columbia Law School's Human Rights Institute (HRI) to provide specialized opportunities in human rights advocacy.

SJI is one of the largest public interest advising centers at any U.S. law school and serves as the hub for a wide range of public interest activities at Columbia Law School.

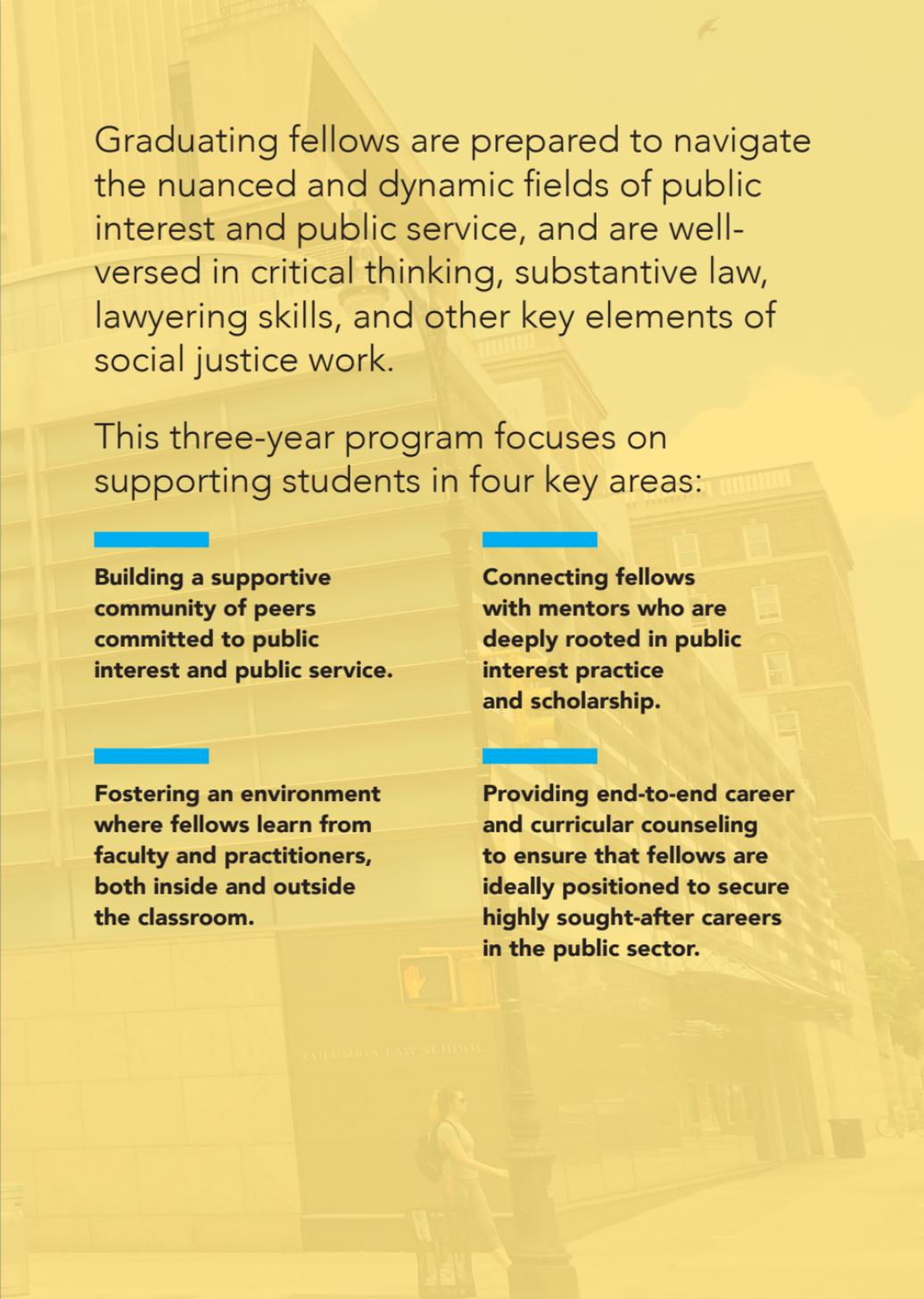
Visit law.columbia.edu/social-justice-initiatives to learn more.



“The Public Interest/Public Service Fellows Program enables students who are committed to public interest and public service to explore these areas on a deeper level while at Columbia. Fellows have the opportunity to examine the many facets of public interest lawyering and substantive practice in the domestic and international realms while thinking about notions of justice, fairness, and 21st century lawyering practice—and positioning themselves to be highly competitive for the most sought-after public interest and public service jobs.”

ERICA SMOCK

DEAN FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC SERVICE LAWYERING



Graduating fellows are prepared to navigate the nuanced and dynamic fields of public interest and public service, and are well-versed in critical thinking, substantive law, lawyering skills, and other key elements of social justice work.

This three-year program focuses on supporting students in four key areas:

Building a supportive community of peers committed to public interest and public service.

Connecting fellows with mentors who are deeply rooted in public interest practice and scholarship.

Fostering an environment where fellows learn from faculty and practitioners, both inside and outside the classroom.

Providing end-to-end career and curricular counseling to ensure that fellows are ideally positioned to secure highly sought-after careers in the public sector.



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