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NJSBA Leadership Academy fellows announced

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The New Jersey State Bar Association welcomed a dozen attorneys to its Leadership Academy. The 12 fellows represent the third class to participate in the program.

Under the leadership of then-president Miles S. Winder III, the association established the academy two years ago to groom less-experienced lawyers to become the next generation of bar and community leaders. A core goal of the academy is to foster diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

This year's fellows include:

Maria Anderson, associate university counsel at Montclair State University

Michael Austin, a partner at Conte Clayton & Austin, P.A.

Diane Cardoso, a partner at Javerbaum Wurgaft Hicks Kahn Wikstrom & Sinins

Bhavini Doshi, assistant corporation counsel with the Jersey City Law Department

Elizabeth Featherman, a member of Mandelbaum Salsburg, PC

Sylvia-Rebecca Gutierrez, an associate with Day Pitney, LLP

Emily Kelchen, director of public affairs at New Jersey Civil Justice Institute

Jeffry Nielsen, legal specialist/attorney with the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

Ryan O'Neill, an associate at Riker Danzig Scheer Hyland & Perretti, LLP

Kimberly Parson, senior associate at Smith, Stratton, Wise, Heher & Brennan, LLP

L. Suzette Price, principal at the Law Office of Lynn Suzette Price

Brett Yore, an assistant prosecutor with the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office

A Clear Mission Statement

The mission of the NJSBA Leadership Academy is to: "Identify, nurture and inspire effective leadership within the bar and the legal community; foster diversity and inclusion within the leadership of the New Jersey State Bar Association; enhance leadership skills of a diverse and inclusive group of lawyers; raise the level of awareness and engagement regarding concerns facing the legal profession through the study of ethical, professional and public service issues; build relationships, networking and leadership opportunities among the future leaders of the bar of New Jersey; and look to securing the future of the NJSBA by creating a cadre of well-informed, committed leaders upon whom the NJSBA, state, federal and local government entities, local bar associations and community groups can call for leadership and service."

The academy's programming consists of eight sessions between September and May, culminating in a graduation ceremony that in the first two years was held at the NJSBA Annual Meeting in Atlantic City.

Sessions will focus on understanding leadership; applying leadership techniques; work-life balance; marketing, business development and communication techniques; dealing with the Legislature; and current issues of interest to the NJSBA.

In addition to the programming, the fellows are expected to participate in a state bar association section or committee, or in a bar-related or community group. Each also must agree to act as a mentor to future fellows for at least two years.

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