



## **Mass. Black Lawyers Assc. partners with Leadership Brainery to aid Black law students.**

Leadership Brainery, a non-profit education startup based in Boston, has partnered with the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association to aid 45 Black law students experiencing financial hardship during these challenging times with mini-grants for immediate support. The LB's [Student Relief Fund](#) was created in March 2020. Through the generosity of its donors this fund has raised thousands of dollars to aid students from disadvantaged backgrounds primarily enrolled in Massachusetts-based colleges and universities.

While there is an increasing call for Black leadership nationally and locally, those who are training to fulfill those roles, such as Black law students, are experiencing significant burdens exacerbated by the pandemic.

Black Americans are among those hardest hit by the pandemic. Law students from disadvantaged backgrounds must compete with their peers while balancing disproportionate systemic hardships during these unprecedented times.

With more students learning remotely or having to leave campus abruptly, these students are at greater risk of facing barriers when accessing stable housing, food, technology and Wi-Fi, medication, books, professional attire, exam fees, and more. Unlike more privileged counterparts, these hardships alter Black law students' ability to live, learn, graduate, and thrive while in the professional market.

[According to the American Bar Association](#), there were 2,198 first-year law students enrolled in all 8 Massachusetts law schools in 2019. Only 137 (6%) across the State identified as African American or Black. MBLA's befitting partnership with LB exists to ensure these rising leaders can find a helping hand and a belonging community while journeying their path in the legal profession.

Leadership Brainery operates [programs](#) to help first-generation and diverse college student leaders gain access to postgraduate education. Such efforts work to increase diversity in professions, such as law, that favor advanced degrees. There are roughly 1,340,000 resident active attorneys in the United States, and only about 200,000 are non-white. Less than 5% are Black.

In 2017, the Boston Globe published their Spotlight Series covering race and racism in Boston. The reporters noted at the time that out of the 1,010 partners at Boston's Top 10 Law Firms, only eight partners were Black. LB and MBLA are committed to ensuring diverse leaders in the pipeline can survive and thrive during and beyond these times.

### **Law students applying for aid must:**

- Be enrolled in a Massachusetts based law school
- Be a member of their school's Black Law Students Association
- Be experiencing financial hardship

Funds are limited. Please visit <https://www.theleadershipbrainery.org/srf> to apply for aid or support this effort through tax-deductible donations.