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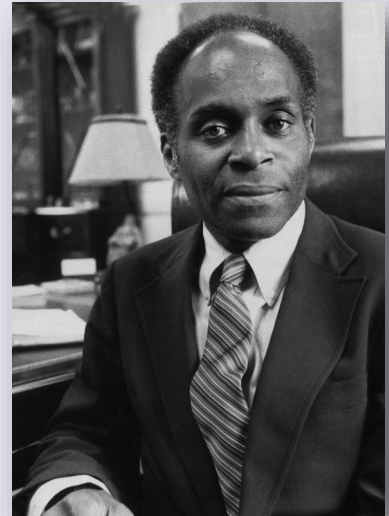
2025 Reginald C. Lindsay & David S. Nelson Fellowship



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"The Nelson Fellowship opened the doors to the courthouse. It was an invitation to be imparted with wisdom and knowledge to be the change we want to see in the justice system."

Stacey Twum-Barimah,
2025 Nelson Fellow



**Judge
David S. Nelson**



**Judge
Reginald C. Lindsay**

"Being a Lindsay Fellow has given me a sense of hope in persevering. Rather than feeling helpless, I've found inspiration in everyone we've spoken to."

Alex Guzman Caceres,
2025 Lindsay Fellow

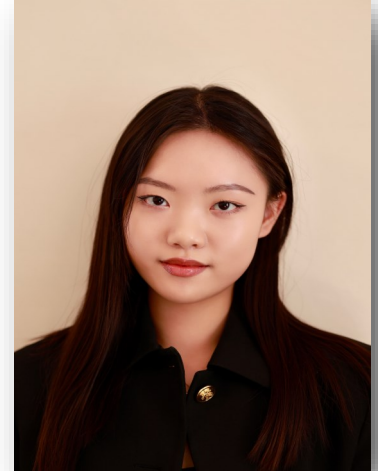


MEET THE COORDINATORS

Anna Zhao

Anna is the program's Lead Coordinator and was a Nelson Fellow in the summer of 2020 and a Programming Intern at Discovering Justice in 2019.

She is a recent Yale University graduate with a B.A. in Political Science and certificate in advanced Chinese Studies. Anna was born in Guangzhou and raised in Boston, and she currently resides on the South Shore. She seeks for a career in Environmental Law and Policy, bridging the gaps in climate innovations and implementation.



Daisy Ogbesoyen

Daisy is the program's Deputy Coordinator and was previously a Nelson Fellow in 2021.

She is a rising junior at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, majoring in Political Science with a minor in Arabic. Born and raised in Boston, Daisy is passionate about the intersections of law, policy, and community empowerment. On campus, Daisy works as an Office Assistant in the International Students & Scholars Office. She also serves as an editor for the school newspaper and supports faculty-led research projects in the political science department.



Caleb Houston

Caleb Houston is our USDC Project Coordinator. Caleb is a Florida native and alumnus of Florida Gulf Coast University, where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice. He has been with the Federal Judiciary for four years and has several years of prior experience in court administration.

Caleb is a collaborator, who is eager to promote community outreach and resources that the John Joseph Moakley Courthouse provides.





Conversation with Mrs. Lindsay and Chief Judge Casper *Wellington Matos*

Receiving the acceptance letter declaring that I have been chosen to be a Lindsay Fellow this summer brought me immense excitement. It was an opportunity for me to gain exposure to the work of District Court judges and their chambers' staff, thereby expanding my passion for legal advocacy. I was curious to explore the different components of legal practice in the Federal District Court.

The Lindsay Fellowship was established to provide college students with the opportunity to explore the field of law, particularly through the lens of the judicial system. The Lindsay Fellowship honors the legacy of Judge Reginald C. Lindsay, who served on the bench from 1993 to 2008. The values of Judge Lindsay's character, impact, and passion for the field of law are passed down to younger generations through this Fellowship.

As Lindsay fellows, we had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Lindsay and Chief Judge Casper. We had the chance to ask questions to get more perspective and insight into Judge Lindsay's accomplishments, and personal attributes. Through our conversation, we learned about Judge Lindsay's background, his work in the courthouse, and the influence he had on the legal field and the individuals he worked alongside. Judge Lindsay was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, in an under-resourced community. Growing up, Judge Lindsay faced challenges going to school during the height of segregation. Despite his upbringing, he persevered with his academic excellence and a hard-working mindset gaining him admission to Morehouse College while in his junior year of high school before obtaining a high school diploma. While Judge Lindsay attended Morehouse, he came to Boston one summer, where he met Mrs. Lindsay. Their relationship formed naturally due to proximity as Mrs. Lindsay lived by Judge Lindsay's aunt that he stayed with. Throughout all the challenges Judge Lindsay faced, he followed his dream of becoming an attorney and was ultimately appointed by President Clinton to become a United States District Court Judge for the District of Massachusetts in November 1993.

It was heartwarming to hear Mrs. Lindsay speak proudly of the opportunity and impact that the Lindsay Fellowship has on young aspiring lawyers and how his legacy continues to live on through the program. As a Lindsay Fellow who comes from a similar background to Judge Lindsay, it is an honor to be awarded the fellowship and to be a part of his legacy. Learning about the upbringing of Judge Lindsay and some of the challenges he faced inspires and motivates me to follow my dreams of becoming a lawyer and serving underrepresented communities in the legal field.



Mrs. Lindsay & Lindsay Fellows



Time with District Judge Angel Kelley *Vinh Nguyen*

On orientation day, the Fellows and I sat nervously in the jury box of courtroom eight. The courtroom was so silent that even our presence felt loud, until Judge Kelley and Caleb Houston, the Project Coordinator, entered and stood across from us wearing bright, warm smiles. “Welcome, welcome, Fellows,” Judge Kelley said. It amazed me how quickly I felt welcomed to join this inspiring learning experience. Judge Kelley gathered Nelson and Lindsay Fellows into one courtroom for weekly check-ins where we each shared our favorite highlights. Rather than an air of hesitation, Judge Kelley’s hospitality gave the Fellows, including myself, a space to speak openly and positively about our experiences, allowing us to find comfort in an environment where competition and opposition is often common. Before interning here, I believed that the courthouse was just a place for formality, but through connecting with my peers, I felt that an authentic connection could be found anywhere.

Over lunch in the Breyer Learning Center, Judge Kelley opened up about her own journey. She wasn’t afraid to mention her setbacks and shared the challenges she faced with honesty: questioning whether to continue in Law Schol and seeking employment after school. She spoke about being rejected for a judgeship and the difficult decisions she had to make throughout her life, such as whether to stay in New York City or move to Boston to start a new life with her husband, and later, deciding to leave her job at Harvard Law School to work in the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

Throughout the fellowship, I’ve had the opportunity to hear from many judges and have discovered how down to earth they are and that they, too, must navigate through hardships.

Judge Kelley enjoyed sharing an inspiring story often told by Judge Reginald C. Lindsay about the bumblebee, an insect that shouldn’t fly according to science, yet does so anyway. It was her reminder that, like the bumblebee, we shouldn’t limit ourselves because of preconceptions. In the justice system, lawyers and judges always persevere against steep odds. This story deepened my passion in pursuing a career in the legal field because it brought the court setting into a view of reality.



Judge Dein, Judge Kelley & Vinh

FELLOWS & JUDGES



Mrs. Lindsay, Judge Kelley, Judge Dein & Lindsay Fellows



Judges Guzman, Hennessy, and Fellows



Judge Grant & Lindsay Fellows



Judge Bostwick & Nelson Fellows



Time in Chambers *Ophelia Brew*

I had the special honor of being assigned to the Honorable Chief Magistrate Judge Donald Cabell's chambers this summer. Walking into the Courtroom and seeing Judge Cabell on the bench was a surreal moment. I had been sitting next to him on the opposite side of the courtroom just a week before. Now, I was observing him from a new perspective, appreciating the full weight of what it means to serve justice. Seeing the legal system from the inside out was one of the many reasons I chose this Fellowship, and that silent, full-circle moment was only one of many. It was such a hard adjustment to spend the summer in Boston alone, but Judge Cabell and his chamber staff's warmth and encouragement made it not just manageable but also very impactful, as I was truly accepted right away into a place where my opinions were respected, and my voice was heard.

The advice I got from Judge Cabell's law clerk, Adriana Faris, stands out as one of the highlights of the experience. Her time and wisdom were so helpful. I spent time speaking with her, soaking in her law school experiences, advice on the application process, and what it means to navigate the legal profession. I was reminded that I belonged in this field and my confidence was reinforced by not just her support, but the rest of the chamber staff.

Whether we were laughing over our shared favorite Disney movies or breaking down cases, I loved participating in the legal discussions at the table. Every conversation had something worthwhile to offer. Judge Cabell had a deep influence on me. He is an exemplary leader and legal professional, as seen by his humility, kindness, and desire to help my law school path, including reviewing my personal statement. Our lunch discussions, which frequently focused on the 1L experience, were so reassuring, and reaffirmed my dreams of becoming a lawyer.

My perspective on the legal system as a whole and my role in it has been forever changed by just being given access to rooms that people like me are rarely able to enter. I now carry with me the guidance, mentorship, and lessons from my experience here, and they will continue to shape my journey through law school and into my future career.

This summer reminded me that the legal system isn't just about laws. It's about people. The people who are willing to teach, uplift, and open doors for those coming after them. Judge Cabell and his chambers staff have my sincere gratitude for making this summer one to remember. Not only did I leave knowing more, but I now carry with me a greater sense of purpose.



Ophelia & Judge Cabell's Chamber



The value of the Judge David S. Nelson Fellowship

Safi Barry

Judge Nelson's impact can be felt through the people and places he encountered. Those who met and worked alongside him often recall how he brought light into the work he did. Judge Nelson took his work seriously, yet he always made himself a resource for others. One of his mentees, Wayne Budd, described Judge Nelson's teachings with an acronym: Respect, Risk, Resilience, Responsibility, and Return. He understood the importance of equal opportunity in education and pursued it through teaching law at Boston University and Harvard University. While his work as a Federal Judge was important, his influence extended far beyond the bench. His humility, dedication, and unwavering commitment to others are what made him truly memorable.

As Nelson Fellows, we carry forward the legacy Judge Nelson envisioned for future generations. Those selected for this opportunity are changemakers – people who, like Judge Nelson, strive for better in the world and are unafraid to put themselves out there. The nations we represent reflect the diversity in education he strived for. This Fellowship is a chance to connect, learn, and experience opportunities that were unavailable to minority youth just four decades ago.

My personal experience as a Nelson Fellow is one I will never take for granted. In retrospect, the fellowship can be compared to a 9 to 5 job; however, it never felt that way to me. The range of activities gave me something to look forward to each day. Whether it was being in chambers with my assigned judge, meeting with attorneys, attending class, or observing court proceedings, I constantly learned new aspects of the federal judiciary, gaining a deeper appreciation for the intricacy of the system and the many moving parts that keep it running smoothly.

While the fellowship allowed us to connect with seasoned professionals, the bonds formed with my cohort of Fellows are truly irreplaceable. Sharing a common interest in the law made our time together more meaningful, especially as we navigated this six-week journey together. We became a community, supporting one another through every challenge. We shared moments of laughter, vulnerability, and courage. We immersed ourselves in the world of the John Joseph Moakley Courthouse, embracing the change. The most beautiful part of all is that I gained ten close friends, each holding a special place in my heart. In all, the Nelson Fellowship is so much more than a job it is a legacy, a mentorship, a learning experience, and a lifelong friendship all in one.



Getting to know Rob Farrell

Johnna Claude

Having lunch with Rob Farrell was such a pleasure; it was delightful to speak with someone who plays such a critical role in the courthouse. Beyond him being the Clerk of the Court, I also got to know him personally. I learned about his upbringing and that he comes from a family of painters. In his office, you can see paintings hung on the walls, a portrait painted by his grandfather, and another of his wife, painted by his daughter. Transitioning into a young adult, Rob shared the various struggles he faced while pursuing a law career. Still, he persevered with the demands of being a father and two bachelor's degrees: one in science and a double major in business and human resources, and a bachelor's in administration.

Working in the district courts for over 25 years, one of his favorite experiences to this day is walking along the seaport and taking pictures for tourists visiting Boston. Furthermore, Rob Farrell's role as Clerk of the Court involves balancing various tasks and ensuring that key actors in our justice system have the resources they need. The courtroom deputy, for example, is a representative of the courtroom who coordinates with the U.S. Marshals Service, Court reporters, U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office, Jury staff, among others. Their job is to ensure that everyone is present for a successful hearing. However, behind the scenes, the clerk's office is the instrument that ties everything together, managing the hiring process and onboarding, the budget, and maintaining the daily docket and calendars. Rob Farrell explains that most of the time, his job requires him to stay out of the way and let folks do their jobs. Still, he does so much more than that despite having these clerical responsibilities. He spends his time keeping in touch with colleagues throughout the country to be updated on the challenges that might affect the courthouse, ensuring the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts runs smoothly. He continues to inspire generations to come. When I sought out his advice for myself and the Lindsay Fellows, he spoke highly of the Fellowship and its dedication to nurturing our potential. He encouraged us to plan for the future while also embracing life experiences, traveling, and reconnecting with friends. "We only have one life to live, so do what you can, and you will ultimately discover your true calling." His motivational words left me feeling grateful for the chance to speak with him.



Rob & Lindsay Fellows

LINDSAY FELLOWS



Lindsay Fellows @ Suffolk University Law School



Lindsay Fellows with Portrait of Judge Lindsay



Lindsay Fellows @ U.S. Marshals Service Office



Lindsay Fellows @ Boston College Law School



CSz Boston Improv *Jah-marri Bruce*

Improv, short for improvisation, is the concept of going with the flow. Initially, I was hesitant about the improv class because I thought I would be put on the spot and must perform without preparation. However, I was pleasantly surprised.

The CSz Boston improv class taught us about their experiences at the theater and how they handled anxiety when given a topic on the spot. They described strategies for continuing a conversation with no prep time. For example, one tip was to use the first letter of the last thing the other person says to start your new sentence. They also gave advice on handling anxiety, such as using proper posture, thinking before you speak, and actively listening.

We were introduced to icebreakers, where we taught a caveman and an old artist from the 1800s about topics concerning the current world. The instructor used various icebreakers that focused on speech and motor skills. Zip Zap Zop stood out to me because the game taught us the importance of clear speaking, good eye contact, and using hand gestures to coordinate with teammates to ensure that everyone was on the same page.

During the past few weeks following the improv class I applied my newly acquired skills to my daily tasks. In a group we participated in the You Be the Judge program, which included a mock trial with a small amount of preparation time, however, just like improv we relied on our quick learning, creative thinking, and presented ourselves confidently. Another moment was during the potluck, I was able to practice conversational skills taught in class. When the conversation was moving slowly, I would try to be more attentive and ask follow up questions. This not only allowed me to expand the conversation but also get more comfortable with having longer conversations with people.

Improv turned out to be a class I initially thought I wouldn't enjoy, but by the end of the class, I realized that it allowed me to use and build upon skills I already possessed. It also helped me gain additional skills that I could apply to my day-to-day life.



Courtney, Nelson & Lindsay Fellows



Legal Research & Writing with Taisha Sturdivant *Mark Tran*

Three hours per class, three classes per week, for four consecutive weeks. I must admit that this class is not something that you could just take lightly. But was it worth every minute I spent working with Taisha in her Legal Research & Writing class. I cannot praise this class highly enough for its value to anyone considering a legal career or debating whether law school is the right fit. This class gave insight into what a real lawyer does in their day-to-day work, and if you enjoy it, I can guarantee you that you are on the right path. Do not let the intensity or time commitment of this class deter you from law school. The meticulousness of our incredible instructor, Taisha, will prepare you for the legal profession.

One of the most important legal principles we dove into this summer was stare decisis; the doctrine that requires courts to follow precedent when making decisions. Before this class, I had heard of precedent, but I had no idea how crucial they are to our legal system. Through reading case law and learning how to synthesize rules (which I must admit was initially very challenging), but ultimately helped me make significant progress towards my choice of becoming a lawyer in the future. I now understand why legal writing and argument must be rooted in precedent, why every memo or brief must reference how the previous courts have interpreted a law, and how to apply such interpretation to the legal problem placed in front of me. With that being said, I believe our Legal Research & Writing class with Taisha is one of the most valuable assets that I take away from this Fellowship.

This class would not be the same without Taisha. She was the reason why this intensive course, which is usually taught for a whole year in law school, was easily digestible and all taught in just one month. Taisha was extremely committed to giving us her best every day. Her feedback on my work was exceptional and instrumental for my growth. She gave all of us feedback throughout the course of the Fellowship to help us improve the quality of our work. I have learned to never hesitate and always reach out for help; and it never failed to amaze me the amount of growth I can gain from her feedback. She didn't just correct our briefs, she pushed us to be the best versions of ourselves, to think critically and express our reasoning with clarity and confidence. She took the time to meet with each of us, outside of instructional time, and worked with us until all of us felt completely ready for our moot court. Her dedication motivated me to work even harder because of the support that I have received, and this will be carried throughout my professional and personal journey.



Mark & Taisha



Attending a Naturalization Ceremony

Sedelia Emmanuel

One of my most memorable experiences this summer was attending a Naturalization Ceremony. When we were first told we were going, I was extremely excited. The thought of being a part of such a life-changing experience for so many people made me giddy. Being a first-generation immigrant myself who has already attended two Naturalization Ceremonies—one for my mother and one for my older sister—I was overjoyed to witness another one.

At first, I thought we would be seated outside the glass with the rest of the families, looking in. Instead, we walked into the room and sat right up front, directly behind Judge Murphy. It felt so intimate being in that space, sitting up front, looking out into the crowd of the new citizens from just a short distance. Although this was not my first Naturalization Ceremony, every time I witness one, the impact is never lost on me.

The sacrifices people make and the challenges they face and overcome to become U.S. citizens is deeply inspiring. I often think of my mother's life story and her journey to America to seek asylum. My eyes get misty as I reflect on everything she's gone through to be where she is today. As Judge Murphy gave his speech to the new citizens, I listened diligently, a smile on my face, thinking back on my first experience. I remembered the pride I felt helping my mother study for her citizenship test and the late nights we stayed up reviewing together.

Judge Murphy shared his family's experiences immigrating to the United States; he was wearing his great-grandfather's cufflinks as a tribute to the stories of his Irish relatives who immigrated here. When he began calling out the names of countries, each person stood as theirs was mentioned. When I heard that someone from my country was becoming a citizen, I clapped just a little bit louder in honor of my family, who had once made the same pledge. I smiled as everyone took the pledge together.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by two young girls whose mother was naturalized during the ceremony. The whole room erupted with pride as families, both inside and outside, recited the words together. Smiles and tears filled the joyous space, and the air was overwhelmingly filled with the promise of bright new beginnings, as well as the endless opportunities that come with being a United States citizen.



Judge Murphy & Nelson Fellows

NELSON FELLOWS



Nelson Fellows @ Worcester City Hall



Migdalia Nalls & Nelson Fellows



Nelson Fellows @ the USS Constitution Museum



Speaking and Debate with Jamele Adams

Alex Guzman Caceres

No one could have prepared us for our first class with Jamele. Jamele walked in, and before we could introduce ourselves, he immediately started reciting a spoken word poem. I felt struck by his words and empowered by his lines about the importance of resilience and legacy. After he was done performing, he asked us to write down our immediate reactions and let our thoughts pour out.

The first time we had the opportunity to share our writing was one of the most formative moments of the summer. All of us took turns sharing what led us to apply to this Fellowship and the types of experiences that motivated us. I found myself getting emotional when sharing about the community I come from. Rather than feeling embarrassed about having an emotional moment, Jamele warmly asked all the Fellows to engulf each other in a group hug and emphasized that we were now a family and would continue moving forward as one.

Although we only had four classes with Jamele, he helped sculpt our confidence in such a short amount of time. We spent our time responding to more poetry, both Jamele's and others' experiences, and always had an invitation to share after. We also had many debates, with topics like "which is stronger, love vs. hate," "police reform vs. defunding the police," and "voting vs. freedom of speech." Jamele constantly listened with an attentive ear, sharing feedback after we were done, from noting our filler words, our pace, tone, posture, and other signs of not feeling confident.

The amount of growth we made from our first share-outs and debates was extraordinary. We learned to keep our heads up straight and to speak clearly and persuasively by speaking with confidence. We created a safe space for each other, encouraging each other to share and be vulnerable. Jamele's class not only prepared us for our moot court at the end of the summer, but it also taught us what to be mindful of when we're speaking out loud to be the most impactful. Our voices are one of the most powerful tools we have. We will always carry the three lessons Jamele taught us: *words are powerful, writing is how I exercise my freedom, and speaking delivers me.*



Jamele, Judge Dein & Lindsay Fellows

We are grateful for how much Jamele believed in us and our presence and showed us how much our voices matter.



Spending the day in Worcester

Susany Louis

During our visit to Worcester, we had a close-up look at how the legal system in Worcester operates on the local, state, and federal level. We met with legal aid professionals at Community Legal Aid (CLA) and Central West Justice Center (CWJC) who work directly with the Worcester community. At CLA and CWJC, we were introduced to different areas of law like family and immigration law; fields I hadn't really considered before. We also attended an info session where they spoke about how they work with low-income citizens, so they can provide them with the legal services they can't afford. We also got to hear about internship opportunities for college and high school students, which we could utilize to take part in learning about the impact legal aid has on different communities like minorities and immigrants. Hearing about these areas helped me realize how deeply the law affects people's lives. It sparked my curiosity about the various paths within the legal field.

Next, we visited the Worcester State House, where we had the chance to speak directly with District Judge Janet McGuiggan. Rather than listing achievements, she shared personal stories, talked about her background, and described her journey. What stood out most was how motivating she was. Her words felt real and relatable. Judge McGuiggan shared that she even changed her college major multiple times, reminding me that everyone's path is different. You don't need to have it all figured out from day one to become successful in the legal world.

At the end of the visit, we observed court hearings. The state court system moved quickly and felt very direct—much faster-paced than the federal court system we had seen before.

Later we went to the Worcester Federal Courthouse, where we had lunch with Judge Hennessy and Judge Guzman and their law clerks and interns. This gave us the chance to hear from young lawyers and those in training. We also spoke with past fellows from our program who had grown tremendously since being in our position. Hearing how they navigated school, internships, and personal challenges made everything feel a little less intimidating and a lot more achievable.

Overall, this experience allowed me to envision myself in the legal world. It made the thought of becoming a lawyer feel less like a dream, and more like a reality.



Judge McGuiggan, Nelson & Lindsay Fellows



Visiting Law Schools

Nolan Murphy

Prior to the Lindsay Fellowship, many of the fellows in my cohort, including myself, had never been on a law school campus. I didn't really know what to expect at any of the law schools, thinking they were just another building on a larger university's campus. Throughout the Fellowship, we had the opportunity to visit five law schools in the Greater Boston area: New England Law, Boston College Law School, Northeastern University School of Law, Suffolk University Law School, and Boston University School of Law.

Each the law schools we visited offered something unique that the others did not. New England Law has a small campus, it is small but mighty. It offers great financial aid and allows students to take classes part-time, giving them the ability to work full time while pursuing their JD. Many of my peers are interested in the program. BC Law had something the other law schools did not: a suburban campus feel. Located just outside of Boston, BC Law has a beautiful, secluded campus, allowing for a campus feel while being only minutes away from the major law firms in the Boston area. I really liked how BC focuses on corporate law, which is the type of law that I'm most interested in. Northeastern Law offers a great co-op program, which is unique. We learned about this program and how beneficial it is. It allows law students to work full-time for a semester to get the hands-on experience that is essential to a young lawyer. Suffolk Law has a beautiful building and was located right in downtown, being very accessible and in the heart of the city. Suffolk Law also had many programs, like night school and an accelerated JD program that some Fellows, including myself, are interested in. Finally, BU Law had a towering 17-story law school building, which looked old from the outside but felt brand new once you stepped inside. The admissions representative spent a long time discussing the joint degree programs that they offer, which caught my attention, in addition to discussing BU Law's very high bar exam passage rate.

Visiting these five law schools helped us identify what we wanted, and what to potentially steer clear of for our future legal education. I am extremely grateful for the Lindsay Fellowship. We had access to exclusive tours and presentations from admissions faculty at every school we visited during the program. This experience gave us a strong foundation for making informed decisions about where we could see ourselves as law students. Perhaps most importantly, the Fellowship allowed us to begin exploring law schools much earlier than we might have otherwise, giving us a significant head start in this crucial process. By demystifying law school and providing us early exposure to different options, the Lindsay Fellowship gave our cohort an invaluable advantage as we embark on our legal education and careers.



Lindsay Fellows & Professors @ NUSL



Visiting Colleges in the Greater Boston Area

Alexander Sandoval

As Nelson Fellows, we had the opportunity to visit different colleges. Thanks to our coordinators, they were able to schedule tours of different schools. The schools we visited this summer were Suffolk University, Brandeis University, Boston University and Northeastern University. The fellows want to pursue majors relating to law and become a lawyer as well. By exploring these schools, it gave us a good idea of the steps we must take to achieve this goal.

Suffolk University was a city-based experience and that's what I liked about it. I really liked how it was in the City of Boston which is important to me. Their buildings are very scattered around the city which is cool. We were able to go inside their dorm rooms, they're small but enough space for two people. I love that you can go to a different country and study there for 3 years or less after your freshman year, if you have a good GPA of course.

Brandeis University was a bit far from Boston. It's located in Waltham, with a beautiful open campus area. The buildings are pretty separated from each other. Brandeis is diverse and it's quiet compared to the other campuses we went to. The peace was nice, but I would rather be somewhere like Boston.

We also visited Boston University which is also in the city. What stood out to me was their unique buildings, for example their Jenga building. The building looks like it's all misplaced or looks like Jenga pieces. The BU Campus is also very nice for those who like to be in the city.

The last school we visited was Northeastern University. This campus also has a city environment but is a bit different from the others. Their buildings are very scattered but have close walking distance. Suffolk also has buildings scattered around the city but most of them are really scattered and far from each other. What I like about this school is their technology and engineering classes.

Out of all the colleges we visited Suffolk, BU, and Northeastern all have law schools which was important to us, since most of us want to go to law school. It helped us discover new options and new opportunities that come along with these schools. They all have their differences which is important for us. I really liked touring these schools and learning about what's so different from each other.



Nelson Fellows @ Suffolk University



Meeting Carmen Ortiz—Former U.S. Attorney *Cory Pleitez*

Being a Nelson Fellow has been one of the most transformative experiences of my life. Walking into the courthouse for the first day of the internship I had no idea what to expect, I can now say that this program surpassed all my expectations. Not only that, but it gave me clarity on what my calling is.

I did not walk into this opportunity wanting to be a lawyer, I knew I wanted to advocate and help people feel heard however I was unsure if there was a place for me to see that role fulfilled in the legal field. Especially considering I come from an immigrant family, working in a courthouse almost felt wrong. However after my second week we had a guest speaker, Carmen Ortiz. As soon as I heard her name I knew she was a fellow Latina and I was so excited to talk to someone who spoke like me and came from a similar background. I vividly remember her saying "There's not many people que hablan como nosotros." This translates to "There's not that many people that talk like us." Personally for me this perfectly describes how I have felt not only in the first weeks in this program but also in multiple settings in my life. A feeling of thinking in a different language and wanting to speak it but holding back.

Carmen spoke on her experience as the first female U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts. Hearing and seeing all of her successes not only as a woman but as a woman from an immigrant family was truly so motivating and inspiring. As soon as she came her voice elevated the room, her passion and strive towards helping victims and those whose voices struggle to be heard was not only moving but incredibly touching. It showed me that there is a place in the legal field for this type of advocacy.

The first guest speaker I found myself aspiring to be was Carmen. Without trying, she helped me find my place in this program and sparked an interest in me that I didn't know I was missing. A spark that I know I will keep and cherish forever because it keeps me feeling driven. I went up to her after her speech and was surprised to find myself emotional and unable to get many words out. Not only did this interaction stay on my mind the rest of the day, but also the rest of my fellowship experience. I know this interaction will forever be something I cherish and look back on.



Carmen Ortiz & Nelson Fellows



Meeting Stacey Borden *Stacey Twum-Barimah*

An enriching part of being a Nelson Fellow was the opportunity to meet and connect with individuals and trailblazers who have made a lasting impact on society. One of the most memorable speakers was Stacey Borden. Her story not only inspired me but also encouraged me. Stacey shared her experience of being incarcerated and shed light on the untold stories of the mistreatment women face behind bars. While Stacey was incarcerated, she met a woman who was sentenced to life in prison, despite the abuse she had endured from both her husband and daughter. Her freedom and rights were taken away in the blink of an eye. Stacey fought tirelessly to obtain justice for her friend. Stacey showed us that justice sometimes requires arduous efforts and audacity to fight to break the cycles of incarceration, even if that means standing outside a defense attorney's home in protest.

Following Stacey's release her incarceration experience led her to create New Beginnings, an organization that advocates for individuals affected by domestic and sexual violence and supports formerly incarcerated individuals as they reenter society. I see so much of myself in Stacey. Before meeting her, I was hesitant about pursuing my public policy ambitions, particularly my desire to advocate for Black Women. I often suppressed those thoughts believing I couldn't have real impact without being inside a courthouse. Stacey's journey showed me that advocacy isn't limited to a bench and gavel, it extends into the legislation that shapes lives every single day.

Inspired by Stacey's story, I stayed behind to ask her how I, an aspiring public policy analyst, can craft legislation to support incarcerated women without endless access to resources. Her story ignited a zeal in me, a drive to challenge the status quo and be a voice for those who are silenced. Society tends to overlook public policy and degrade its value and impact. Stacey's story and organization is a testament to what it takes to mend a broken system. She solidified my ambitions and empowered me to pursue a career in public policy. Stacey was the highlight of the many amazing guest speakers we met, not only did she leave a lasting impression on me, but she pushed me towards action.



Stacey, Joseph & Nelson Fellows



Law Firms & Building a Network

Ayan Mohamed

Networking is often scary; a new territory for students like us who often find it intimidating to speak with an unfamiliar person. The Lindsay Fellowship brought us out of our shells and into the never-ending world of networking! Throughout the Fellowship we had the opportunity to connect with practicing attorneys and legal professionals during law firm visits. These visits brought us outside of the John J. Moakley United States Courthouse, where we spent much of our internship. We met “Big Law” attorneys and had the chance to ask the questions we’ve always wondered about. We also had the opportunity to reunite with former Lindsay Fellows who continued their careers in different areas of the legal field. Throughout the summer, we visited Cetrulo LLP, Goodwin Procter, Goulston & Storrs, Mintz Levin, and WilmerHale. Each firm gave us exciting opportunities to learn about legal practice and the culture within a firm.

WilmerHale was the first law firm we visited. The beautiful views from the office were enough to leave us impressed, but the best part was the opportunity to speak with the attorneys and legal staff. Through our conversation we learned about WilmerHale’s history and its firm’s values, ones that aligned with many of our own. The partners shared their paths to partnership. Their transparency about the challenges, and growth along the way gave us a realistic and inspiring perspective on leadership in Big Law. Our conversations with junior and summer associates provided a view into the early stages of legal practice. They offered advice on transitioning out of law school to building confidence as a young attorney. Through these conversations, we came to understand WilmerHale’s values, not just as slogans on a website, but through principles actively carried out by its people.

Goodwin was another firm we visited. There, we had the opportunity to speak with Senior Counsel Wayne Budd, whose legacy in the legal profession is as impactful as it is inspiring. Mr. Budd spoke to us about the many dimensions of the legal profession and the impact of mentorship. He spoke candidly about his career, the importance of representation, the evolving nature of the law, and his relationship with both Judge David S. Nelson and Judge Reginald C. Lindsay. His reflections on leadership, service, and identity within the profession left lasting wisdom and a renewed sense of purpose. We also participated in a panel discussion with a range of attorneys and professionals at Goodwin. They offered insights into their respective roles and answered our questions with honesty and encouragement. This visit gave us a better understanding of the collaborative, mission-driven work of a leading law firm and reminded us of the ways we might shape our futures in the profession.

These visits deepened our understanding of legal practice, showcased diverse career paths, and inspired us to pursue our own careers in law with purpose, resilience, and a commitment to impactful contribution.



Wayne Budd & Fellows



Mock Trial Class with Jerry Howland

Kawther Naji

Our mock trial class became a place where I experienced tremendous growth. At first, I felt nervous and questioned whether I could meet the expectations. But within seconds, the warmth of the room became clear. Mr. Howland walked in and immediately set the tone: this was a space that welcomed everyone and valued every opinion.

We began each mock trial class by reflecting on our week and discussing current events. At a time when our judicial system is facing challenges, we found understanding in discussing our perspectives. Through these conversations, I began to see that we shared common values and were eager to learn the skills to represent them.

Although I had been an active leader in Model United Nations, mock trial was a completely different experience. In our first mock trial, Commonwealth vs. Goldilocks, I served on the defense team. I felt a connection to our defendant; working directly with Goldilocks helped me see the human side of the case rather than just the facts. Through this experience, I realized that my deepest respect for the law comes from humanity at its core. In addition, seeing the case from the defendant's perspective showed me how even strong arguments have weaknesses that we can challenge. I was assigned the closing statement which required me to fully understand and synthesize our arguments, anticipate the prosecution's points, and uphold the principles of justice: deterrence, respect for the law, and fairness in punishment.

On the day of the trial, I felt nervous and doubted my abilities, but Mr. Howland reminded me that my preparation would pay off. We grasped what Mr. Howland calls the three Ps: Preparation, Preparation, Preparation. "Take space and feel confident," he told me. And at that moment, the simulation felt real. I realized another side of justice: standing up for those who are disadvantaged and ensuring that they have a voice when others rush to criminalize them. To conclude, I learned that not everyone accused is guilty, they are innocent until proven guilty and deserve legal representation.

Preparing for the trial involved research, writing, and countless rehearsals. I learned to analyze evidence, construct arguments, and present them with clarity. In preparation for our final mock trial, Commonwealth vs. Stephanie Hardee, the process was easier because of our experience trying Goldilocks. I was on the prosecutor's team, providing evidence to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. I learned that justice isn't limited to one side. Both sides matter, and finding truth requires understanding them both.

MOCK TRIAL



Amelia—Opening Statement



Kawther—Cross Examination



Jah-marri—Witness



Alex—Direct Examination



Cory—Witness



Conor—Closing Statement



Working at the U.S. Federal Probation and Pretrial Services *Taleiyah Walker*

Before this experience, I walked into courtrooms thinking only about judges, lawyers, and verdicts. I never considered probation's role until I was placed with U.S. Federal Probation and Pretrial Services. Working with Kaileen in pretrial and Sean McAnnally in presentence showed me how much care, responsibility, and impact probation officers have—not just on paper, but in people's lives.

On my first day shadowing Kaileen, I watched her interview six defendants back-to-back with a single interpreter. Her patience, even in frustrating moments, showed me the depth of the work. It's not just forms and checkboxes—it's about asking the right questions, listening deeply, and seeing the person beyond the crime. Officers must consider background, family, mental health, employment, and living situations—gathering it all quickly but thoroughly so judges can make informed decisions. The work is fast-paced, intense, and deeply human, requiring genuine connection to give the judge a fuller picture.

With Sean in presentence, the pace didn't slow. Presentence reports carry real weight in sentencing, functioning as roadmaps for judges. I saw how Sean prepared, asked thoughtful follow-ups, and captured a person's life story—good, bad, and in-between. He explained charges, sentencing guidelines, and how categories are determined, even giving a presentation on the process. We also met Andrew, who taught us the "color" system for officer awareness, emphasizing the importance of living in "yellow"—relaxed but alert—for safety.

Probation is unique in the justice system because it sees the defendant as a whole person, not just a case file. Officers witness the trauma, the effort, the setbacks, and the hope. They're not only supervising sentences—they're helping people succeed, whether by connecting them to treatment, checking on employment, or simply offering encouragement. A sincere "I'm proud of you" can go a long way. The role is rewarding when someone turns their life around, but it's also emotionally heavy, with decisions that affect lives and families daily.

This placement opened my eyes to career paths I hadn't considered. I still want to be a lawyer, but now I see the value of working behind the scenes to help people change direction. Federal probation may not always create dramatic transformations, but it fosters small, meaningful changes that can lead to lasting impact. Being part of that feels important and deeply rewarding.



Johnna, Taleiyah, Annalia & Wellington



Federal Public Defender and United States Attorney Panels

Conor Smith

The Nelson Fellows were given the opportunity to speak to both the Federal Public Defender Office and the U.S. Attorney's Office. Bright and early on the first Friday of the program, the Nelson Fellows filed into the elevator, made our way to Courtroom 2, and sat in the Jury box. We faced a panel of experienced lawyers and employees from the FPDO. We listened closely to each of the guest speakers as they shared their life stories, legal careers, and offered advice to us. From the panel, I learned that a federal defender's job is to advocate on behalf of their clients and provide every person with an attorney. One attorney spoke with such pride in her job and shared an unforgettable story. She recounted a case she worked on defending a man who had been going through a difficult time. He broke into another man's house and kidnapped him. While the prosecution may only focus on the crime, it is the Federal Defender's job to humanize their defendants to the court and provide reasoning for the action. She described an emotional story of recognizing the man not for his crimes, but for the good he had in him. She was able to defend him and advocate for less time in prison. I enjoyed her story because it represents that side of the job, being a federal defender is finding the humanity in the accused.

Two weeks later, the Nelson Fellows made its way to the U.S. Attorney's Office. We quickly filed into the room and took our seats. Before this panel, my knowledge of the USAO was limited, but I learned that they work in many different areas. The first speaker worked in child protection, robberies, and drug cases; the second speaker focused on child exploitation; the third speaker worked in civil rights; and the last speaker we heard from worked in narcotics. They talked about working on behalf of the government in the pursuit of justice and the critical role they play in making the United States a safe place to live. I thought back to my time at the Federal Defender's Office and recognized the reason why we visited both the USAO and the FPDO. Both sides, the prosecution and the defense, have a duty to serve the public, but through different means. While they both work on behalf of the government, the USAO provides a sense of justice for the victims while the FPDO provides due process for those charged with a crime. Through these two panels, I learned about the importance of both sides in the pursuit of justice.



USAO Panelists & Fellows



Civil Rights Class with Jason Wise *Amelia Tunick-Staab*

One of my favorite parts of the program was Jason Wise's civil rights class. We explored the struggles Black people have faced throughout history and the ongoing fight for justice and equality. A particularly powerful lesson focused on the Little Rock Nine, who displayed immense courage when they attended an integrated school, despite facing intense hatred and violence, everything from racial slurs to physical attacks. Hearing their stories and learning about how they pushed through such adversity really made me reflect on what it truly means and looks like to stand up against racism.

Jason was an incredible teacher who made the class feel more like a conversation than a lecture. He fostered an environment of open dialogue, encouraging group discussions and debates that made the material more engaging. What I appreciated most was how he created a comfortable place where everyone felt valued, regardless of their level of confidence. He made it clear that every voice mattered and that our ideas were important, even if they weren't fully formed yet.

One activity that stood out was when Jason asked us to participate in an exercise where we drew characteristics from a hat and were asked to treat each other according to those traits. The twist was that we didn't know what characteristics we had drawn. This exercise allowed us to experience firsthand what it must have felt like during segregation, especially when discrimination was invisible but felt deeply. It was a powerful, interactive experience that helped me empathize with the struggles of people of color in the past.

We also learned about Jane Elliott's 1968 classroom experiment, where she divided students by eye color to show them what it felt like to be discriminated against after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This video left a lasting impact on all of us, clearly demonstrating how easily prejudice can be instilled at a very young age and the harm it can cause. We watched these third grade students go from all being friends to treating each other very poorly. One of the quotes from the video that stuck out to me was "the way they treated you, you felt like you didn't even want to try to do anything."

Throughout the class, Jason used videos, stories of civil rights trailblazers, and thought-provoking questions to keep us engaged and encourage deeper reflection. This class didn't just teach me history; it helped me understand how the past still shapes the world we live in today. It inspired me to stay involved in the fight for justice, keep learning, and speak up whenever I see inequality.



Jason & Nelson Fellows

LINDSAY GRADUATION



Wellington, Chief Judge Casper & Chambers



Taleiyah, Judge Kobick & Chambers



Alex, Judge Kelley & Judge Dein



Ayan & Chambers



Nolan & Judge Boal

NELSON GRADUATION



Judge Kelly, Amelia & Judge Dein



Safi, Judge Stearns & Chambers



Stacey, Chief Judge Casper & Chambers



Kawther, Judge Gorton & Chambers



2025 Nelson Fellows



MEET THE 2025 LINDSAY FELLOWS



Ophelia Brew

is a rising senior at Howard University, where she majors in Criminology with a minor in Philosophy. Ophelia was assigned to the Honorable Donald L. Cabell and was placed in the Federal Public Defender Office.



Alex Guzman Caceres

is a rising senior at Yale University, where she majors in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration with a Certificate in Human Rights. Alex was assigned to the Honorable Nathaniel M. Gorton and was placed in the Federal Public Defender Office.



Johnna Claude

is a rising senior at Centre College, where she majors in Psychology with a minor in International Studies. Johnna was assigned to the Honorable Richard G. Stearns and was placed in the U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office.



Wellington Matos

is a rising senior at Union College, where he double majors in Political Science and Sociology. Wellington was assigned to the Honorable Denise J. Casper and was placed in the U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office.



MEET THE 2025 LINDSAY FELLOWS



Ayan Mohamed

is a rising senior at Suffolk University, where she majors in political Science. Ayan was assigned to the Honorable Leo T. Sorokin and was placed in the U.S. Attorney's Office.



Nolan Murphy

is a rising senior junior at the University of Massachusetts Boston, where he majors in Management with a minor in Political Science. Nolan was assigned to the Honorable Jennifer C. Boal and was placed in the U.S. Attorney's Office.



Mark Tran

is a rising Junior at Columbia University, where he majors in Political Science with a minor in East Asian Studies. Mark was assigned to the Honorable William G. Young and was placed in the Federal Public Defender Office.



Taleiyah Walker

is a rising senior at Suffolk University, where she majors in Criminal Justice and pursues her Paralegal Certification. Taleiyah was assigned to the Honorable Julia E. Kobick and was placed in the U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office.



MEET THE 2025 NELSON FELLOWS



Safi Barry

is a rising junior at Winthrop High School. Safi was assigned to the Honorable Richard G. Stearns.



Jah-marri Bruce

is a rising senior at Cathedral High School. Jah-marri was assigned to the Honorable Brian E. Murphy.



Sedelia Emmanuel

is a rising junior at Boston Latin School. Sedelia was assigned to the Honorable Indira Talwani.



Susany Louis

is a rising senior at Newton North High School. Susany was assigned to the Honorable Paul G. Levenson

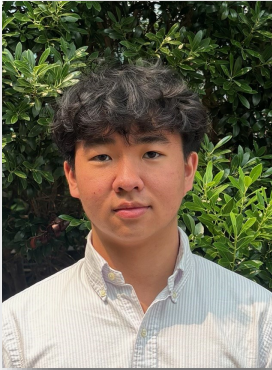


MEET THE 2025 NELSON FELLOWS



Kawther Naji

is a rising senior at University Park Campus School. Kawther was assigned to the Honorable Nathaniel M. Gorton.



Vinh Nguyen

is a rising junior at Boston Latin School. Vinh was assigned to the Honorable Leo T. Sorokin.



Cory Pleitez

is a rising senior at Northeast Vocational School. Cory was assigned to the Honorable Allison D. Burroughs.



Alexander Sandoval

is a rising senior at Chelsea High School. Alex was assigned to the Honorable Julia E. Kobick.



MEET THE 2025 NELSON FELLOWS



Conor Smith

is a rising senior at Boston Latin School. Conor was assigned to the Honorable Patti B. Saris.



Amelia Tunick-Staab

is a rising junior Boston Latin Academy. Amelia was assigned to the Honorable William G. Young.



Stacey Twum-Barimah

is a rising senior at the Abby Kelley Foster School. Stacey was assigned to the Honorable Denise J. Casper.