

The Application Process—Phase 1

The selection process begins with the online application. This phase of the process is designed to be simple and straightforward. It is our hope that the guidance below will help you complete your application thoroughly and quickly.

A complete Phase 1 application package will include the following components:

1. Contact Information

2. Demographic Information (optional)

3. Personal Statement (maximum 1500 words)

a. The personal statement is an opportunity to describe the uniqueness of your character, abilities, and life experience in your own voice: Who are you? What motivates you? What impact are you looking to make in the world? Your personal statement assists the selection committee in getting to know and understand you as a person. Your personal statement is also used to assess your writing proficiency. You should discuss those aspects of your background, experience, talents, achievements, and interests that you believe are important for us to know.

4. Essay (maximum 1500 words)

a. You must submit a response to the essay prompt below. In your essay, please articulate your understanding of and passion for racial justice, as well as your commitment to pursuing racial justice in the South. Please read the prompt carefully and limit your response accordingly. Your essay is essential to helping the selection committee understand what has motivated you to pursue this opportunity and the depth of your commitment to racial justice.

Since 1940, the mission of the NAACP LDF has been transformative—to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society. Through the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program, LDF continues to fulfill that mission through the creation of a cadre of highly trained, dedicated civil rights lawyers who will live and work in the South. American history is inextricably linked to the centuries- of explicit and structural racism in the South that has kept many Black Americans from achieving social, economic, and political mobility.

Please describe how you have engaged in efforts to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society by sharing a significant experience or set of experiences that moved you to act for a racial justice cause. In your response, please address the following points:

1. Why are you committed to work for racial justice on behalf of Black people in the southern United States? In what ways have you demonstrated your commitment through action? What has been the impact of your action(s)?
2. How will practicing law as a civil rights attorney help you amplify your efforts?

5. Transcript(s)

a. An unofficial transcript is acceptable and encouraged for the purposes of this application. However, keep in mind that an official transcript will be required if you are selected for an award. If you are selected, we will provide specific instructions for submitting official transcripts. Your transcript must be in English and must include all courses and grades received as well as the date of the undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) degree, if completed.

b. **NOTE:** Please redact, cover, or remove all Personal Identifying Information (PII) such as a Social Security number and date of birth.

c. Applicants who hold a degree from a non-U.S. institution that does not require coursework or issue transcripts must upload proof of their degree accompanied by an official letter from their institution including the following information:

- i. Statement that the institution does not require coursework for the degree
- ii. Applicant's dates of enrollment at the institution
- iii. Degree applicant received and date it was awarded

d. Transcripts sent via postal mail or e-mail will not be accepted.

e. Please note the following format and upload requirements:

- iv. File type: **.pdf only** (.jpeg, .png, or other formats will not be accepted)
- v. File size: as small as possible and **no larger than 4 MB**

6. Résumé (maximum 3 pages)

a. Your résumé should provide details about your employment history, internships, extra-curricular activities, community service, and hobbies. You should include comprehensive details about your experiences and include any awards and honors. Do not include high school information or activities unless they provide evidence of your sustained engagement in the fight for racial justice or evidence of your commitment to working in the South. You should explain any periods of time (after high school) that are not accounted for by your educational and employment history.

7. LSAT/GRE Report

a. You must submit an official LSAT score prior to the application deadline. The LSAT score is primarily collected for data purposes and will not be used as a deciding factor by the Selection Committee. MMSP is committed to conducting a holistic review of each candidate's application. In doing so, we avoid reducing you to a standardized test score and similar metrics by expanding the definition of merit to include leadership, community service, work experience, research experience, recommendations, and a demonstrated commitment to racial justice work that empowers Black people and Black communities.

b. **NOTE:** Some law schools accept the GRE in lieu of the LSAT. If you have taken the GRE and have been or expect to be admitted to law school based on your GRE score, an official GRE score must be submitted.

c. Please submit your LSAT or GRE score as a .pdf file to your application.

8. Letters of Recommendation (3)

a. Your application must include three (3) letters of recommendation, at least one of which should be from a professor, unless it has been more than five (5) years since you have obtained your undergraduate degree. Letters may also be from employers, pre-law advisors, and/or other professionals who have worked closely with you or know you well. If you do not have a letter from an academic professor, you may instead include an additional professional reference. Letters of recommendation from personal friends, clergy, medical doctors, and family members are not appropriate. Letters should contain substantive, comparative information about your abilities, activities, and personal qualities, including specific examples that illustrate these attributes. Letter writers should indicate their relationship to you within their letter. Letters are limited to no more than 2 pages and may be .pdf or .docx files. Please note that .doc files cannot be accepted.

9 Short Answer Questions

You must provide a written response to the question below. (maximum 500 words).

a. If selected as a Marshall-Motley Scholar, you are about to embark upon one of the most challenging and exciting periods in your life. We encourage you to think carefully about the commitment required. The centerpiece of the Marshall-Motley Scholars Program is a full law school scholarship for tuition, room, board, and incidentals for all three (3) years of law school, including summer internships and bar exam study, as well as a two-year (2) post-graduate fellowship. In return, Program participants must commit to practicing civil rights law in pursuit of racial justice in the South for eight (8) years following the conclusion of their fellowship. In total, the MMSP requires a 13-year commitment. Why do you believe that you are prepared to make such a substantial commitment at this point in your life?

Making a 13-year commitment can be daunting for anyone. A successful response will help the reader understand why the issue of racial justice is important to you, demonstrate your life-long commitment to ensuring equality for Black people, and communicate why you feel the South is important to you and the work you intend to do over the course of your legal career.

b. Please share any additional information about yourself you want us to know that we cannot learn from any other aspect of your application. (optional)

This question is your opportunity to share any additional information you would like us to know. Please note that this question is truly optional. No response is required.

10. Video (maximum 3 minutes)

a. You must submit a video response to the prompt below. This video will be your first opportunity to verbally articulate your passion for racial justice and your commitment to pursuing racial justice in the South. Please read the prompt carefully and limit your response accordingly. Your video is essential to helping the selection committee see you as a reflection of the values and aims of the Program.

i. The “Marshall-Motley Scholar” does not commit to racial justice because they are selected for our program. On the contrary, the Marshall-Motley Scholar is selected because they have demonstrated their commitment to pursuing racial justice in the South. Your response to this question will show how your personal mission is consistent with the mission of the Program and will help the reader understand your philosophy and approach to leadership.

With this understanding, please create a short video (maximum 3 minutes) that explains how are you currently living the life of a Marshall-Motley Scholar.

b. NOTE: You are not required to use the entire 3 minutes. Your video should be submitted in mp4 format or through the video feature on the online application platform. Also, here are a few tips to help you produce the best video possible.

- » Find a quiet, private, well-lit place, free from possible interruptions.
- » Ensure your background is free of clutter.
- » We want to see you! But, not too little and not too much. Make sure you frame yourself from an appropriate distance.
- » Use good lighting.
- » Stabilize your camera before you record. This will ensure that your viewers are not distracted by a shaky video. If using a smartphone, use a tripod or other stabilizing device instead of holding the phone in your hand.
- » Be sure your video has good sound quality before submitting.
- » Think about timing ahead of time. Feel free to script and rehearse your response to ensure that you do not exceed the time limit.

The Interview —Phase 2

The final phase of the selection process is an interview. No additional materials are required at this point. However, the interview is one of the most important aspects of the selection process. Each finalist will have an interview with a panel of current and former LDF attorneys, renowned civil rights attorneys, and leaders in the legal profession. Ideally, each finalist will interview in-person at one of LDF’s offices (travel and accommodations will be provided by the program). However, if necessary, we will conduct interviews virtually.