

## 2019 Partnership Award Submissions

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### **Title**

Project Destination

### **Bar Association**

State Bar of South Dakota, Young Lawyers Section

### **Contact**

Nathan Chicoine

President-Elect

(605) 342-2814

[nathan@demjen.com](mailto:nathan@demjen.com)

### **Program Description**

Project Destination strives to recruit Native American students to the legal profession. It is implemented by the South Dakota Young Lawyers Section ("SD YLS"), whose purpose is to promote the advancement of young lawyers and encourage their interest and participation in the activities of the state bar. Specifically, SD YLS endeavors to engage in and conduct education and related programs of interest and value to young lawyers and the general public, to help improve the image of the legal profession and advance the role of the legal profession in serving the public, and to attempt to inform, educate, and assist young lawyers of The State Bar of South Dakota in all matters pertaining to the practice of law, among others.

Project Destination was designed because our state bar has identified a grave disparity among Native Americans in South Dakota, and we value the importance of diversity and inclusion. South Dakota is home to more than 850,000 residents and 9 federally recognized tribes. Of the total state population, Native Americans comprise approximately 10% of our population. Despite the strength of this figure, the Native American population is all but absent from the professional world.

In implementing this project, our objectives were to: (1) educate students about the legal community; (2) provide exposure and interaction; (3) encourage and facilitate the law school admissions process; (4) provide a pipeline from college to law school and from law school to the profession; and (5) develop ties to the Native American community. Project Destination has targeted schools in Indian Country with students ranging from 6th grade to 12th grade and post-secondary programs focusing on Native American studies. Panels consisting of young lawyers travel to tribal schools and answer questions ranging from college to law practice. Specifically, panelists address law school, the application process, financial aid experiences, locating resources, areas of practice, and the law's dedication to the community. The role of the panelist, while critical, requires nothing more than attendance, engagement, and hopefully inspiration.

Following the implementation of Project Destination, it is safe to say we have succeeded in accomplishing some of our goals. We have hosted panels in Indian Country for 3 years. We have spoken with hundreds of students. We have established relationships with schools that have invited us to return in following years for additional panel discussions. We have distributed educational materials to interested students about the LSAT, law school and the legal profession. If we portray a positive image of the profession, educate tribal members in the legal system, and if we only inspire one student to consider the practice of law as a career, we will have improved our profession and met some of our goals.

### **Members**

336 young lawyers members; 3,000 bar association members

### **Program Budget**

\$1,000

## **2019 Partnership Award Submissions**

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### **Program Funding Source**

South Dakota State Bar Association, through collection of dues

### **Other Resources**

Panelists volunteer time and travel expenses.

### **Number of People Served/Impacted by this Program**

200+

### **Number of People Involved in Planning and Implementing this Program**

25

### **Other "Partners" Who Have Supported Your Effort**

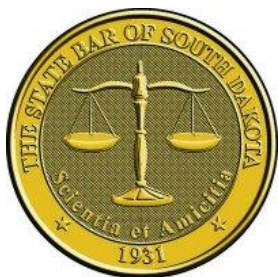
- South Dakota State Bar Indian Law Committee
- Red Cloud Indian School
- Flandreau Indian School
- Pierre Indian Learning Center
- Black Hills State University
- South Dakota State University
- University of South Dakota

### **Could Another Bar Association Easily Replicate this Program? If So, How?**

Yes, another state bar association could solicit participation from tribal schools and implement panel discussions by recruiting bar members. Sample letters are attached.

### **What Suggestions or Recommendations Would You Offer to Others Who Might Undertake a Similar Program?**

Others should establish the importance of diversity in their bar and whether there is a need to increase Native American representation in the profession. It is important to go to Indian Country to implement such a program.



## YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION STATE BAR OF SOUTH DAKOTA

December 22, 2017

### PRESIDENT

ABIGAIL HOWARD  
520 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, #330  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605) 692-8606

ahoward@brookingscountysd.gov

### VICE PRESIDENT

TAMARA NASH  
317 N. Main Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104  
(605) 367-5880

Tamara.Nash@state.sd.us

### SECRETARY/TREASURER

NATHAN CHICOINE  
506 Sixth Street  
Rapid City, SD 57709  
(605) 342-1078  
nchicoine@gpna.com

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1200 University St. Unit 9003  
Spearfish, SD 57799

Greetings!

I represent the South Dakota Young Lawyers Section. We proudly serve the members of the State Bar (other lawyers) and all the members of our South Dakota community. Through our work, we have fostered a strong commitment to public service. One of our prized public service projects is Project Destination; this program embodies the goal of recruiting Native American students into the practice of law. This program began last year when we visited three schools in March 2018. We spoke with approximately 100 students ages 5<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This year we plan to continue our success!

Project Destination's design is a relaxed, but moderated panel. Panelists consist of diverse attorneys who come from all backgrounds and all practice areas. The panel strives to inform students about the law school experience, application process, financial aid experiences, the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and the practice of law. However, this panel is not only for students interested in law! Panelists will also talk about their experiences with high school, college, extracurricular activities, and their work in the community.

We have identified your school as a perfect partner for Project Destination! We would love to come to your school during the months of March or April 2018 and share our stories with your students. Your role, while critical, will not require anything more than your commitment to allow us to use school space and speak with students. In consideration of time, please let me know by **Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>** if you are able to participate. From there, we can discuss scheduling to ensure we accommodate your school's spring academic schedule. Also, please forward this request to anyone you know who may be interested in participating!

We are incredibly excited about the prospect of meeting your students! Thank you in advance for your commitment to this initiative! We look forward to working with you!

Please contact myself if you have any questions about the Young Lawyers Section or Project Destination. I am available any time by email to [NChicoine@gpna.com](mailto:NChicoine@gpna.com) or directly at 605-719-3490.

Best Regards,

Nathan R. Chicoine  
South Dakota Young Lawyers Section

March 17, 2017

Greetings!

As you may know, the Young Lawyers Section has a strong commitment to public service. We have dedicated much of our year to developing new service projects and strengthening the projects we have been committed to for years. This bar year we have implemented some wonderful projects and we plan to continue. Public service is essential to educating members, strengthening our communities, and encouraging attorneys from all backgrounds to get involved.

With that said, we are incredibly excited to share with you the details of one of our new programs. This year we have launched ***Project Destination***, which embodies the goal of recruiting Native American students for the practice of law. The project will build on the phenomenal work already being done by State Bar leadership and Seth Pearman and the Indian Law Committee. Project Destination's design will be a moderated panel. Panelist will answer questions on anything relating to law school or law practice. Specifically, we will strive to generally field questions about law school, the application process, financial aid experiences, locating resources, areas of practice, and the law's dedication to the community.

The Board has identified you as someone who would be perfect for participating! We would love for you to share your insight and experience with the many students (mostly high school-aged) in attendance. We will be modeling the structure of Project Destination after a widely-successful national program used by the ABA Young Lawyers Division (YLD) called *What Do Lawyers Do*. Your role, while critical, will not require anything more than your commitment to attend, engage, and hopefully inspire.

We have recently secured three schools willing to participate in Project Destination, the schools and applicable information can be found below:

**Wednesday, March 22, 2017**

**Little Wound School** (Pine Ridge Reservation)  
101 Main Street, Kyle SD 57752  
Panel from 1:00-2:00p.m.

**Red Cloud Indian School** (Pine Ridge Reservation)  
100 Mission Drive, Pine Ridge, SD 57770  
Panel from 3:00-5:00p.m

**Thursday, March 23, 2017**

**St. Francis Indian School** (Rosebud Reservation)  
502 E. Warrior Drive, St. Francis, SD 57572  
Panel from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

If you can attend one or all of the events we would be honored to have you! I understand the late notice of our request. However, we only recently secured these opportunities.

In consideration of time, please let me know by **Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>** if you are able to participate. Also, please forward this request to anyone you know who may be interested in participating! We encourage a strong showing from the Bar and a diverse representation of attorneys *and* practice areas.

Thank you in advance for your commitment to this initiative! We look forward to working with you!

Please contact myself if you have any questions or concerns, I am available *any time*. ([Tamara.Nash@state.sd.us](mailto:Tamara.Nash@state.sd.us) or personal cell: xxx-xxx-xxxx).

Best Regards,

**/s/ Tamara P. Nash**  
Tamara P. Nash  
Secretary/Treasurer

March 20, 2017

Thank you for your time and commitment to help with *Project Destination*.

As you know, this program embodies the goal of recruiting Native American students for the practice of law. The project will build on the phenomenal work already being done by our State Bar.

Project Destination's design will be a moderated panel. Panelist will answer questions on anything relating to law school or law practice. Specifically, we will strive to generally field questions about law school, the application process, financial aid experiences, locating resources, areas of practice, and the law's dedication to the community. Your role will not require anything more than your commitment to attend, engage, and hopefully inspire.

You have volunteered for **Monday, March 27, 2017**, at Flandreau Indian School (Flandreau Reservation) **1132 N. Crescent Street, Flandreau, SD 57028**. The panel will meet at the school and the presentation will begin at 6:00p.m.

Your panel will be moderated by a Young Lawyers Board Officer. The panel will be comprised of:

1. Allison Ramsdell; United States Attorney's Office, Civil Rights and Civil AUSA
2. Brittany McKnight; Brookings County, Deputy State's Attorney
3. Ryan McNight; South Dakota State University, Instructor
4. Teree Nesvold; Brookings County, Deputy States Attorney
5. Jason Unger; Unger Law Office

I have attached a copy of the canned discussion questions the moderator will ask. Also note, the audience is free to ask questions of the panel as well!

We are incredibly excited to have you participate in this program! Public service is essential and your commitment is appreciated!

Please contact myself if you have any questions or concerns, I am available *any time*. ([Tamara.Nash@state.sd.us](mailto:Tamara.Nash@state.sd.us) or personal cell: xxx-xxx-xxxx).

See you there!

Tamara P. Nash

Best Regards,  
/s/ Tamara P. Nash

January 3, 2019

Urla Marcus ([Urla.Marcus@bhsu.edu](mailto:Urla.Marcus@bhsu.edu))  
Black Hills State University  
Center for American Indian Studies  
1200 University St. Unit 9083  
Spearfish, SD 57799-9083

Greetings!

I represent the South Dakota Young Lawyers Section. We proudly serve the licensed attorneys of South Dakota and all the members of our South Dakota community. Through our work, we have fostered a strong commitment to public service. One of our prized public service projects is Project Destination – a program that endeavors to recruit Native American students into the practice of law by visiting schools to discuss life as a lawyer. We have been engaged in this program for a few years now and spoken with hundreds of students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade through post-secondary students. Last spring, we had a productive visit at BHSU with an American Indian Studies class. This year we plan to continue our success!

Project Destination's design is a relaxed, but moderated panel. Panelists consist of diverse attorneys who come from all areas of practice. The panel strives to inform students about the law school experience, application process, financial aid experiences, the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and the practice of law. We will also purchase and award some students with materials relating to law school admissions preparation.

We would like to again partner with your school for Project Destination. We would love to visit during the Spring semester of 2019 to share our stories with your students. Your role, while critical, will not require anything more than your commitment to allow us to use school space and speak with students. In consideration of time, please let me know by **Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup>** if you are able to participate. Also, please forward this request to anyone you know who may be interested in participating.

We are incredibly excited about the prospect of meeting your students! Thank you in advance for your commitment to this initiative. We look forward to working with you. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Young Lawyers Section or Project Destination. I am available by email to [Nathan@demjen.com](mailto:Nathan@demjen.com) or 605-342-2814.

Best Regards,

*/s/ Nathan Chicoine*

Nathan R. Chicoine  
South Dakota Young Lawyers Section

## **Project Destination – Canned Panel Questions**

1. Please describe your current job in detail. Include (a) explain what you do; (b) where you work; (c) who you work for; and (d) explain a brief overview of your daily work?
2. When did you decide you wanted to be a lawyer, and why?
3. What do you like most about being a lawyer?
4. What do you like least about being a lawyer?
5. What high school classes helped you prepare for law school? Why?
6. What high school activities helped you develop “lawyering” skills (ie: debate, mock trial, speech, athletics, etc)? How did they help?
7. What is college like? (classes, activities, independence, etc)
8. What was your college major? How did you decide your major?
9. What college classes helped you prepare for law school? Why?
10. What college activities helped you prepare for law school? Why?
11. What is one class that you never took, that you would suggest a student who wants to attend law school take? Why?
12. What type of volunteering/community involvement do you participate in? (or did you participate in?)
13. What did you learn from your experience?
14. What is law school like? (classes, activities, how long, tests, etc)
15. Can you generally describe how someone gets into law school (what is the process)?
16. What is the LSAT? Why is it important?
17. Are you automatically a lawyer after graduating law school? What else do you have to do?
18. In your opinion, what is one skill a person should learn to become a lawyer? How do lawyers use that skill?



19. After someone graduates law school, what kind of jobs can they have?  
(describe different types of practice settings in which a lawyer can work –  
*emphasis on jobs that don't require license*)

20. What are some examples of other careers in the legal community?  
(Victim/witness assistance, paralegal, court reporter, IT/Litigation Support, etc).

21. What do those jobs require?

22. What one piece of advice do you have for students? (relating to anything)