



# Annual Report 2023

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As we reflect on the past year at AccessLex Institute, we find ourselves celebrating a significant milestone – our **40th year of service to law students and law schools**. And while the organization has continually adapted in the ever-evolving landscape, our commitment to increasing access to legal education, improving its affordability, and enhancing its value remains unwavering.

The realization of our charitable mission comes to life on the pages that follow – yet those only scratch the surface of what we do to empower the next generation of lawyers. But despite the size and scope of our activities, it is important for us, as AccessLex leaders, to remember that **we are in the business of positively impacting the lives of real people in real ways**.

We can provide you with data showcasing the tens of thousands of law students who have benefited from our Law School Scholarship Databank, enhanced their financial capabilities through our MAX financial education curriculum, or who have utilized our free Ask EDNA! resources. But what truly drives our work are the personal stories, like the heartfelt thank you notes from students who have overcome challenges with our assistance. Their success ripples through families and society at large, illustrating the profound impact of our mission.

As you may know, AccessLex uses a diverse set of tools, including research, grantmaking, policy advocacy, and public education, to advance our mission. In this letter, **we are excited to highlight two of our newer programs that work to promote academic success and first-time bar passage**: JDEdge by AccessLex<sup>SM</sup> and Helix Bar Review by AccessLex<sup>SM</sup>.

JDEdge, launched in the summer of 2023, exemplifies our ability to identify needs and swiftly deliver high-quality solutions. **In its inaugural year, more than 50 law schools adopted JDEdge**, providing incoming students with a solid foundation and the confidence for a successful 1L experience beginning on day one, all at no cost to the school or student.

At the other end of the legal education journey, we offer Helix Bar Review, a comprehensive program that equips law school graduates with everything they need to pass the bar exam. Utilizing modern learning science, cutting-edge technology, and input from legal and learning experts, **Helix sets a new standard for bar preparation programs**. Its impressive results, including high pass rates and user satisfaction, position Helix as the best bar review program available today.

But AccessLex is much more than a premier resource for our stakeholders. We also leverage our role as a **trusted public policy voice** to influence positive directions for our constituents in response to larger trends impacting legal education.

One notable example is our response to the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision eliminating affirmative action in higher education admissions. We immediately denounced the ruling as anathema to our commitment to fostering racial and ethnic diversity in law schools and as an action that will have an immediate negative impact, citing our own recently released empirical research on the matter. Of course, our work doesn't end there – **we will continue our efforts to equip law schools with tools, programs, and research to help them increase the diversity of their student bodies** that do not run afoul of the ruling, while applying our resources to publicly champion the value of diversity in law schools.

In addition, the U.S. Supreme Court also struck down a plan this summer that would have forgiven up to \$10,000 (and in some cases, \$20,000) of student loans for all current borrowers. While this plan had its merits, larger issues within the student loan system persist. But, as it happens, **AccessLex has long advocated for reducing the student loan burden on law students** through various initiatives and policy efforts, including pushing for reduced interest rates and fees to eliminate profit to the federal government, strengthening and simplifying existing income-based repayment and loan forgiveness programs, pursuing bankruptcy discharge reform, and creating an objective and empirical basis supporting the value of the continuation of federal GradPLUS loans.

We thank you for your interest and support. And we hope that our 2023 Annual Report helps you see AccessLex as we do – as an organization deeply committed to its mission with a four-decade track record which has the reason, resources, and resolve to continue to be a leader in legal education for decades to come.



CHRISTOPHER P.  
CHAPMAN

President and Chief  
Executive Officer  
AccessLex Institute



ROBERT K.  
RASMUSSEN

Chair, Board of Directors  
AccessLex Institute

# AccessLex Supports...

As advocates, researchers, and supporters of higher education, we must be nimble in reacting to and understanding the issues that impact today's students and tomorrow's leaders. 2023 was no exception, which resulted in proposed legislation, changing priorities, and new programs that will have a lasting impact on legal education and the students we serve.

Our work in executing our mission and embodying our vision for the future ensures we are forging the path, as leaders, toward improving legal and higher education. And our Center for Legal Education Excellence<sup>®</sup> and Center for Education and Financial Capability<sup>®</sup> do just that.



## Legislation and Regulations

AccessLex Institute provided support, commentary, and suggestions on various initiatives and proposed legislation throughout the calendar year. After sustained advocacy from AccessLex over the last several years, the Department of Education (ED) released guidance indicating that beginning in academic year 2024-25, **emergency aid will no longer count as estimated financial assistance**, eliminating an illogical and unnecessary road block to emergency aid for the most needy students.

We endorsed the **Student Loan Tax Elimination Act**, which would eliminate origination fees on federal student loans, and asked Congress to **increase funding for federal programs** upon which Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other minority serving institutions are reliant.

Leading up to the launch of the new **Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) income-driven repayment plan**, AccessLex submitted comments to ED with suggestions for improvements to the plan. Our proposals which were incorporated include eliminating unpaid monthly interest, streamlining the total number of payment plans, and counting payments made prior to consolidation. We also created **resources to help students, recent graduates, and administrators understand the new plan** and examine options for repayment, including an infographic and one-pager, blog post, social media content, and an update to the AccessLex Student Loan Calculator.

With the **resumption of student loan payments** after an almost four-year pause, we ensured that borrowers returning to or beginning loan repayment were well informed and ready through a new webinar series, blog posts, and a webpage dedicated to free repayment resources, tools, and updates.

## Advocacy

Each year, the policy team at AccessLex Institute creates updated state data sheets to support graduate and professional education advocacy across the country. Using the most current enrollment and student aid data, these resources serve as a tool to help students and professionals alike #MakeTheCase for higher education with their members of Congress. Also available for free as part of the #MakeTheCase campaign resources are fact sheets, advocacy guides, and tools for communicating with U.S. Senators and Representatives.

# Preparing for NextGen...



In May 2023, the Center for Legal Education Excellence® launched its **Building Bar Skills Initiative**, bringing to bear its research and program development expertise to prepare member law schools for the NextGen bar exam.

Since July, teams of doctrinal and skills **faculty from five different law schools have been developing and testing innovative curriculum units** that cultivate the skills tested on the NextGen bar exam. Each team is developing a series of easily adapted modules for use in the doctrinal classroom. These modules will provide doctrinal faculty with classroom-tested instruments that utilize formative assessments to illustrate and impart NextGen bar exam skills.

## – 2024 AccessLex – Building Bar Skills Conference

In April 2024, AccessLex will host a **Building Bar Skills Conference**. This convening will educate and equip law school professionals charged with navigating the next generation of bar exams. Attendees will learn first-hand lessons and techniques from the faculty-authors of the Building Bar Skills modules. Experts and peer professionals will provide insight and guidance on leading faculty, students, and other law school stakeholders through the impending changes of the bar exam. Finally, this Conference will showcase existing (and announce future) tools and programs to achieve the goals of the Building Bar Skills Initiative.

# AccessLex *Discovers...*

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“ Our mission is to improve access, increase affordability, and enhance the value of legal education. Our research serves our mission. ”



## AccessLex Legal Education Data Deck

AccessLex prepares the Legal Education Data Deck for the use of the legal education community, policymakers, and others interested in the latest law student **trends organized around our three driving principles: access, affordability, and value.** The Data Deck is a living document that is updated periodically. Highlights from the forthcoming edition include:

- **Nearly half of law students enroll with debt remaining from their undergraduate education.**
- Among law students in 2019-2020, **22 percent were first-generation college students** and 37 percent were former Pell Grant recipients.
- The **proportion of J.D. recipients who borrowed for law school increased** by five percentage points between 2016 and 2020.
- Compared to other 2020 graduate degree recipients, **law graduates borrowed, on average, less for their undergraduate but more for their graduate education.** The amount law students borrowed for graduate school exceeded all other graduate and professional degree recipients except those in medicine and other health professions, such as dentistry.
- The median salary for employed class of 2022 J.D. graduates increased to \$85,000 over \$80,000 for the previous 2021 graduating class. However, when adjusted for inflation, **median salaries declined from \$89,600 to \$87,600 between 2021 and 2022.**
- In 2022, **75 percent of all first-time exam takers from ABA-approved law schools passed the bar.**

## Affirmative Action Research and Advocacy

*Can We Afford to Throw Grutter Out Before Its Expiration Date?:* Through this study, AccessLex examined **how racial and ethnic diversity on law school campuses is associated with retention rates, student grades, and bar passage outcomes** among underrepresented students of color.

Findings indicate that:

- **Greater campus diversity at U.S. law schools is associated with lower student attrition** for underrepresented students of color. The magnitude of the effect increases as institutional selectivity decreases.
  - At a school with below average selectivity, an increase in diversity from the minimum measurement to the maximum predicts a drop in attrition of three percentage points, from nine percent to six percent.
- **Greater campus diversity is associated with slightly higher GPAs** and higher predicted likelihood of bar passage for law students of color.
  - For example, a typical increase in the diversity index of a school is associated with a two percentage point increase in predicted probability of first-time bar passage among Black students, from 58 percent to 60 percent, and a three percentage point increase among Hispanic/Latine students, from 68 percent to 71 percent.

These findings demonstrate the importance of establishing race-neutral admissions criteria that are legally permissible and effectively advance campus diversity goals — thereby fostering a more welcoming educational environment for diverse students.

*Freedom is Not Enough:* In light of the recent Supreme Court decision ending the use race/ethnicity as a factor in holistic admission decisions, this study examines **how state-level affirmative action bans affected the J.D. completion of underrepresented law students of color** at public institutions.

The study finds that states adopting affirmative action bans saw an overall decrease in J.D. completion among underrepresented people of color, ranging from an average of a four percentage point decline one year after a ban to a 12 percentage point average decline six years after a ban.

The report's findings demonstrate the important role that race-conscious affirmative action policies have had in diversifying law school campuses to date and, in turn, yielding the educational benefits that flow from that diversity. **We expect that the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Grutter is likely to have a similar effect on a national level.** Unless significant efforts are made to find lawful means to maintain and increase racial and ethnic diversity in legal education, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* is likely to decrease the already disproportionately low number of Black, Hispanic/Latine, Native American, and Pacific Islander lawyers.



## AccessLex and Gallup Report: *Law School in Pandemic, Ungrouped: How Online J.D. Experiences Varied Across Students*

In partnership with Gallup, AccessLex released the third and final report in the *Law School in a Pandemic* series. The report explores **students' perceptions while attending law school during the pandemic** and how those perceptions differed based on various characteristics such as race/ethnicity, age, enrollment status, caregiver status, and law school tier. Findings indicate that:

- Part-time students, caregivers, students ages 30 and older, and those attending tier-four (T4) ranked law schools were **more receptive to online J.D. courses** compared to their counterparts.
- Underrepresented students of color were more likely to perceive that online courses allowed them more **flexibility to gain legal work experience** and work to earn money but less likely to report easy access to career services and to agree their J.D. program is worth the cost, as compared to their White and Asian peers.

To ensure online J.D. experiences are of equitable value to students, **the report recommends that law schools should:**

- Continue to design distance learning opportunities with students in mind;
- Promote and push online supports that add value, such as accessible job search assistance; and,
- Identify and remove barriers to full and stimulating participation in online J.D. courses.

## Bar Exam Success Analyses Initiative

AccessLex is committed to supporting student and bar exam success for all aspiring lawyers. To that end, the Center for Legal Education Excellence® offers free assessments to its member law schools examining the **extent to which their students' academic performance, before and during law school, predicts their likelihood of first-time bar exam passage**. These analyses are designed to help participating institutions build empirical evidence of what works in fostering academic success and bar passage and most effectively target interventions toward those efforts. **AccessLex is proud to have served nearly 20 law schools through this initiative** to-date.





# AccessLex Grants...

AccessLex currently administers four active grant programs: **Bar Success (Intervention and Research strands)**, **Directed, Diversity Pathway Intervention**, and **Barriers and Interventions**. AccessLex also administers active grants for two programs that are being phased out: Financial Education Research and Unsolicited.

GRANT	PURPOSE	TYPE	DATE AWARDED	AMOUNT
Willamette University	Assessing the Impact of Cohort Structure on First-Time Bar Pass Rates	Bar Success Intervention	January 2023	\$233,287.00
University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law	The "Law as Influence, Law as Change"	Diversity Pathway Intervention	January 2023	\$215,832.00
Golden Gate University	Barriers and Intervention Program	Barriers and Interventions	January 2023	\$10,000.00
Dillard University	Legal Education Advancing Diversity (L.E.A.D)	Directed	February 2023	\$300,200.00
City University of New York School of Law	City University of New York School of Law Barriers and Interventions Grant	Barriers and Interventions	March 2023	\$25,000.00
University of Miami	The Relationship Between Curriculum Selections and Bar Exam Sub-scores	Bar Success Research	March 2023	\$300,000.00
Michigan State University College of Law	Michigan State University College of Law Pathway to the Legal Profession Program (MSUCOL PLPP)	Diversity Pathway Intervention	April 2023	\$300,000.00
D.C. School of Law Foundation	Bar Exam Stipend and Training Program ("The BEST Program")	Directed	April 2023	\$160,000.00
Northern Illinois University College of Law	Northern Illinois University College of Law Diversity Scholars Program	Directed	May 2023	\$142,000.00
The Law College Association of the University of Arizona (LCA) on behalf of the James E. Rogers College of Law	JD-Next	Directed	June 2023	\$250,000.00

**Total: \$1,936,319.00**

In total, AccessLex made grants in the amount of **\$1.9 million** in 2023 and has awarded **\$21 million across 158 programs since 2014.**

# PLEDGE

## Fellowship



Building on the great success of last year's program, the **Professionals in Legal Education Developing Greater Equity (PLEDGE) Initiative** relaunched for 2023-24. The Initiative, created through a partnership between AccessLex Institute and the Southern Education Foundation, is an effort to **increase knowledge and skills related to using empirical research methods** to design, administer, and assess student success programs. This year's iteration consisted of the **PLEDGE Bootcamp** and the **PLEDGE Fellowship**.

The **PLEDGE Bootcamp**, a two-day, in-person training session focused on building knowledge and skills related to conducting and interpreting high-quality empirical research, was held in April at **American University Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C.**

The **PLEDGE Fellowship** is a 14-month professional development program in which three teams of two Fellows will complete a Capstone or empirical assessment of a law student-facing initiative, while focusing on **admission and access, academic performance, or bar exam performance**. Fellowship teams receive funding and support premised on enhancing the feasibility and quality of their work.

### 2023-24 PLEDGE Fellows:

Indiana University Maurer School of Law

- Aviva Orenstein
- Katherine A. Beck

Saint Louis University School of Law

- Belinda Dantley
- Jean Pierre Bonnet-Laboy

Wayne State University Law School

- Michelle D. Taylor
- Tierney Eaton Hoffman

# AASE

## Faculty Scholarship Grant

Commencing in 2021, this annual partnership with the Association for Academic Support Educators (AASE) has **sponsored 15 Scholars from the academic success and bar prep areas to pursue and develop new scholarship** in the field. Unlike their faculty peers, most academic support and bar preparation staff are not eligible for funds or time devoted to research; therefore, the grant program serves to support the professional development of Scholar participants and encourages upward career trajectory.

The results of this partnership with AASE are illustrated at the AASE Annual Conference, where for the past three years AccessLex | AASE Faculty Scholars have presented their research. Moreover, the impact of the Scholars' work has been recognized in the field, with **two articles accepted for law review publication** and a third poised for acceptance.

- Who Watches the Watchmen? Using the Law Governing Lawyers to Identify the Applicant Duty Gap and Hold Bar Examiner Gatekeepers Accountable – Ashley London
- Building Belonging: Proven Methods to Decrease Attrition and Best Serve Law Students – Leila Lawlor



# LexScholars

by AccessLex®

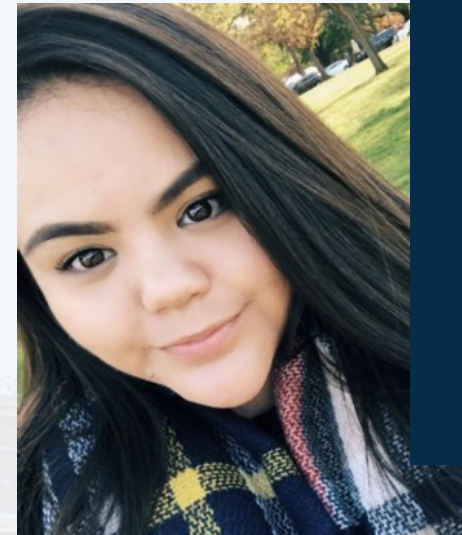
Providing the necessary tools to aspiring lawyers from underrepresented racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds who may be unlikely to gain admission to law school is an integral part of AccessLex Institute's effort to increase diversity in the legal profession.

In order to put aspiring lawyers in the position to gain acceptance into law school and also thrive in their new environment, AccessLex created **LexScholars**. This initiative aims to increase law school diversity by providing aspiring lawyers the resources and guidance they require to pursue their goal of attending law school. LexScholars consists of two components, **LexPreLaw** and **LexPostBacc**.

**LexPreLaw** provides prospective law students, in the early stages of pursuing their legal education, with **instructor-led LSAT prep, admission counseling, financial education, and engagement opportunities** to help increase their chances of law school acceptance. This year, through our cohort-based model, LexPreLaw enrolled 160 aspiring lawyers who already possess or will obtain a bachelor's degree by August 2024 and who plan to seek law school admission for the fall 2024 entering class.

**LexPostBacc**, now in its second year, is our deferred admission program that is directly focused on preparing aspiring law students who may need additional preparation for and exposure to the academic subjects and rigors of law school before they proceed in their legal education. Scholars are exposed to a rigorous, **one-year law school prep curriculum** focusing on LSAT preparation, building analytical and critical thinking skills, and financial education and literacy. After successfully completing the program curriculum, Scholars will be offered deferred fall 2024 admission and a scholarship to the law school that referred them.

During year one of LexPostBacc, 79 Scholars began the program and 54 successfully completed the curriculum. Of those 54, **46 are currently enrolled as first year students at 22 law schools**. All of the Scholars who enrolled in law school are members of underrepresented racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, with 32 Scholars coming from both underrepresented racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. **The current cohort (2023-24) of 91 Scholars was referred by 30 law schools**. Ninety-nine percent of Scholars are members of an underrepresented racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, and 55 Scholars come from both underrepresented racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.



*"The daunting law school application process and LSAT preparation became attainable with LexPreLaw by AccessLex. As I reflect on my application process, having the resources and support provided to me by LexPreLaw undoubtedly led to my acceptance to multiple law schools. The feedback and information provided only sets up every participant for success."*

**CAROL BELTRAN DEL RIO, '27**  
Widener University Delaware Law School

*"Words cannot express how grateful I am to have been a participant of the LexPreLaw program. I have gained so much knowledge of conquering the LSAT, creating effective drafts for admissions, and being able to learn the process of applying to law schools. If becoming a lawyer is you, then LexPreLaw is just for you!"*

**KERYSSA FONVILLE, '27**  
Appalachian School of Law



*"As a first-generation college student, the law school application process was a daunting and intimidating one for me. The free Kaplan LSAT preparatory course I received through being a part of LexPreLaw by AccessLex significantly aided in my preparation for the LSAT and allowed me to feel confident in my abilities on test day. AccessLex also provided me with advice and support which was instrumental to my success throughout the application process and ultimately helped me to feel capable as I embarked on my law school journey."*

**KIMBERLY WILSON, '27**  
University of Illinois College of Law



## Did You Know?

Substantively, Helix does more to connect the dots between knowledge of the law (*what the law is*) and application of the law to bar exam fact patterns. We don't just give users a series of treatises on the law and a pile of practice questions — leaving them on their own to link the two. Instead, we've organized our substantive materials to walk students through the common ways that the bar exam frames questions, providing lots of lists and checklists along the way to help them form disciplined approaches to tackling the most challenging legal analyses. And we've integrated example fact patterns throughout our materials to help students contextualize the legal rules — and what kinds of facts trigger those rules.

Helix Bar Review outlines cover everything in the National Conference of Bar Examiner's (NCBE) subject-matter outlines, with greater emphasis on those areas that are more frequently tested and, in the experience of our experts, are more challenging for students. If there's a simple rule to remember in order to answer a bar exam question on a topic, the Helix outline will just state the rule. But where there's a complex set of rules that must all be addressed in a particular sequence to answer a bar exam question on a topic, our materials magnify the analysis step-by-step, often including checklists of elements or factors at each step.

Not all legal topics are equally tested on the bar exam, and not all legal topics are equally complex. Helix highlights the differences through the structures of the outlines — operationalizing the law for the bar exam.

**Helix Bar Review by AccessLex™ is the only organization in the field that has a charitable mission-based reason to do this work, the resources to do it right** (with no shortcuts), **and the resolve** — demonstrated by its proven commitment to empowering the next generation of lawyers over the last four decades — **to be here for our law schools and their students for the long term.**

## California and Florida ... Welcome to Helix!

With more responsibilities and distractions than ever before, law students everywhere need the highest quality bar prep created for how they live and think today. With this year's launch of our Helix California and Helix Florida comprehensive bar preparation courses, Helix brought its modern learning approach and **every leading-edge, student-first feature to those studying for the California and Florida bar exams.**

*So, what else have we been up to?*

## Helix NextGen<sup>SM</sup>

While some details of the upcoming NextGen bar exam are still being finalized by the National Conference of Bar Examiners, the NCBE has established that UBE jurisdictions will begin transitioning to the NextGen bar exam in 2026. And Helix will be more than ready!

Having already embarked on the creation of materials and programming for Helix NextGen, our comprehensive course for the new exam, we are employing the same dedication and precision that we apply to our existing comprehensive bar review courses. This development involves a commitment to integrating principles from learning science into the course's design and delivery, ensuring that students remain actively engaged and make steady progress. We are particularly focused on driving ample practice opportunities within each aspect of the new exam, while also prioritizing the essential content knowledge required for success.

In addition, AccessLex Institute launched its Building Bar Skills Initiative this year with the sole purpose of preparing its member law schools for the NextGen bar exam. Spearheaded by the AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence®, this initiative represents a significant research and development investment into future methods of bar preparation. Central to this initiative is the work of the Building Bar Skills Initiative's Module Building Teams. Drawn from five different law schools and comprised of doctrinal and skills faculty, these teams are developing and testing innovative curriculum units designed to impart the skills tested on the NextGen bar exam — for use in doctrinal courses.

# In-School Programming

Helix In-School Programming is developed with the same philosophy and approach as our bar preparation courses. We create curricula and activities to help students target key skills and content, keep them engaged, and infuse the experience with a sustained opportunity to learn and grow.

Whether a law school wants to ensure that every student has access to a comprehensive bar review course post-graduation, is seeking a 3L pre-bar course or classroom materials to support academic and/or bar success programming needs, requires grading services or retaker programming, or simply wants additional data analysis — **Helix works to craft a custom solution.**

Every member of the In-School Programming and the Helix Customer teams hails from ABA-accredited law schools, with years of experience supporting students' academic and bar success. As with all AccessLex programs and resources, our sole purpose with the Helix suite is to help students succeed — whether on the bar exam or in the classroom.

## *In-School Programming through Helix Bar Review is:*

- **Skills-Focused:** Our primary focus is helping students develop the skills they need to tackle the bar exam — including crafting a strategic approach for each exam segment and honing their skills for self-assessment and self-regulation. The goal is continuous improvement. By teaching students the importance of cultivating a growth mindset, they build the confidence and resilience essential for success in law school, on the bar exam, and in their future legal careers.
- **Centered on the Whole Student:** It's about the bar exam, but it's not only about the bar exam. We provide access to hundreds of free resources to comprehensively support the whole law student. Through our dedicated portal, Ask EDNA!® – *the Education Network at AccessLex*, we offer lessons on critical topics such as time management, stress management, Character and Fitness, the licensing process, financing the legal education journey, and so much more.
- **Research-Based:** As part of AccessLex Institute, Helix integrates the latest legal education and bar study research into all its programming. And our Center for Legal Education Excellence® can conduct research on your unique student body through our free Bar Exam Success Analyses.
- **Nonprofit:** Helix is the only national nonprofit bar review provider. Our singular goal is to support law students and law schools — not shareholders. This distinctive mission empowers us to deliver programming to you and your students at cost, while maintaining an unwavering focus on educational value. Not on profits.

At the core of the Helix Bar Review philosophy lies the belief that **every assignment presents an opportunity to learn.** Our approach to feedback is steeped in a growth mindset, aligning with our mission of continual improvement. Students do not take the bar exam until exam day. Until then, every effort undertaken serves their growth.

# Proven Results

“Helix’s short videos and condensed essentials book was just what I needed out of a study program. I was able to keep my focus for those long subject areas while actively retaining the information. I was a little skeptical of the program because it was free to Syracuse students, but **I am glad I took a chance because Helix prepared me above and beyond what I needed for the bar. 10 out of 10!**”

“Helix is a well-crafted, modern approach to the bar exam. Multiple study methods break up the bar prep monotony. The instructors are top-notch, and the short lecture lengths were far superior to other bar prep companies. **I felt well-prepared and confident walking into the exam after completing this program. And, I passed!**”

“Helix made bar prep interactive, attention-grabbing, and even a little bit fun! You can tell that the program was made with online, remote study in mind, and that structure was hugely beneficial for me. **If I had to do bar prep all over again, I would choose Helix every time.**”

“I had the **top score in Arkansas for the February 2023 bar exam** using Helix. Not only is Helix a good program, but it's also nonprofit and affordable, unlike other programs. As such, they're focused on making the practice of law accessible instead of turning a profit. Helix provided top notch bar preparation, and I wouldn't have succeeded like I did without their help. **I wholeheartedly recommend the program.**”

“I have always struggled with standardized testing, but **thanks to Helix, I passed the bar with a high enough score to practice in any UBE jurisdiction.** The lectures are broken up into bite sized pieces which made it a lot easier to take in the information. Their dashboard also told me how I was doing, which really motivated me to keep pushing.”

### **Chiara Carni, '22**

Syracuse University  
College of Law

### **Bryce Neary, '22**

Seattle University  
School of Law

### **Marley Mullery, '22**

Notre Dame  
Law School

### **Colton Longford, '22**

University of Arkansas  
School of Law

### **Owen Braley, '22**

Boston College  
Law School



All students need an edge, especially those just beginning their legal education. That's why in 2023, AccessLex introduced **JEDGE by AccessLex<sup>SM</sup>**, a fully online asynchronous program, designed specifically for rising 1Ls. In its pilot year, 55 law schools participated in this free program made available to AccessLex member law schools.

Launched on July 1, nearly 5,000 students completed over 27,000 lessons and a combined 90,000+ tasks in the JEDGE course, including lessons, assignments, videos, live webinars, and more. While many schools heartily recommended JEDGE to their incoming students, others incorporated JEDGE into their orientation programming or utilized JEDGE as part of their required first-semester academic skills curriculum. Given its impressive success, JEDGE is now accessible year-round to support incoming spring/summer cohorts of students and to assist academic success faculty as they guide students who may be facing challenges.

With approximately 20 hours of content, JEDGE takes a multi-format approach — including interactive online lessons, videos, webinars, and live workshops — delivered in concise and easy to understand Modules:

**Module One: Introduction to Law School** — Lessons on time management during law school, where to go for help within the law school community, an overview of the judicial system, and some important legal terminology.

**Module Two: Preparing for Class** — How to prepare for and get the most out of the class experience, as well how to make sure the learning sticks. Lessons include case reading and briefing, the Socratic method, notetaking, rule synthesis, and creating study materials.

**Module Three: Preparing for Exams** — Lessons on writing for law school exams, effective study and memorization techniques, and the importance of taking practice exams. Learn how to prepare for – and take – a practice exam and participate in a live exam review session.

**Module Four: Preparing for Law Practice** — Lessons on licensure, Character and Fitness, stress management, professional expectations, landing your first legal job, and funding the bar exam experience.

**Module Five: Moving Forward** — The final module focuses on many of the skills required for well-being in law school: mindset, professional planning, and reflection – just to name a few.

**JEDGE has received outstanding feedback from students and faculty. Here are just a few quotes from our students:**

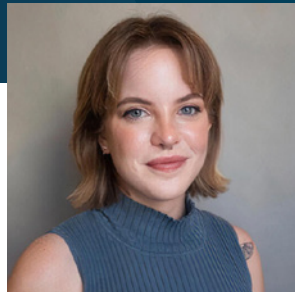
“JEDGE was AMAZING, and I am so glad I did it. I feel so much more confident going into law school than I did before starting JEDGE.”

“I’m someone who learned a great deal from this course. I am not someone who comes from a legal background, or even close relatives that could help explain the nuances of law school. Truly, every single presentation gave me something I did not know prior.”

“I feel much more prepared and motivated to start law school now. I loved this course.”

“I feel like I am more prepared for law school. JEDGE got me in the habit of learning again!”

# Championing Our Champions



“My favorite part about being an AccessLex Champion is that I am able to be part of **the movement to make law school more accessible!** The tools and resources that AccessLex provides help myself and my fellow law students to navigate and make it through law school. I really enjoy being able to help my classmates access those resources!”

**Christina Danielson, '24**

University of Illinois Chicago  
School of Law



“My favorite part of being a Champion is talking to my law school peers and letting them know about all the resources that AccessLex has to offer and how much **AccessLex cares and invests in our education** so we can all be successful.”

**Jose Gutierrez Umana, '24**

University of Baltimore  
School of Law



“My favorite part of being an AccessLex Champion is that I have the opportunity to spread the news about an affordable alternative to other “major” bar prep providers. As a student interested in public interest lawyering, I feel passionate about their mission to also help students manage their financial situation while in law school. I can contribute towards my work on my own schedule, and collaborate with other Champions.”

**Ryan Trismen, '24**

Northeastern University  
School of Law

## Championing Access, Affordability, and Value

The core principles that underpin AccessLex Institute's mission are actively represented by our network of almost 400 AccessLex Champions in law schools across the nation. These AccessLex Champions are current law students who eagerly share their experiences with AccessLex programs and resources, including the MAX by AccessLex® personal finance program, the AccessLex Law School Scholarship Databank, the AccessLex Student Loan Calculator, and the Helix Bar Review by AccessLex<sup>SM</sup> product suite. They share this valuable information not only with their peers but also with faculty and administrators.

These dedicated Champions work tirelessly to create opportunities for their fellow students on campus, supporting their success in law school and in the legal profession. This support includes organizing simulated MPRE experiences to prepare for the initial step toward licensure, hosting workshops on financial planning, covering topics from student loan repayment to investment planning, and reaching out to incoming 1Ls during orientation and activity fairs. They also share academic and financial success resources through Ask EDNA!® — the Education Network at AccessLex.

In recognition of their outstanding contributions, AccessLex Champions are rewarded with a Helix Bar Review course to aid in their bar exam preparations. As they continue to champion AccessLex during their time in law school, we are even more thrilled to support them as they navigate this final professional hurdle. We absolutely love receiving emails like this:

*“I passed the bar exam! Thank you for Helix bar prep!  
Thank you for the opportunity to be a Champion!  
Thank you for your support, help, and time!”*

**Brenda Hurford, '23**

University of Baltimore School of Law

# AccessLex Institute Honored at HBCU Pre-Law Awards Ceremony

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AccessLex was named **Sponsor of the Decade** and received the **HBCU Outreach and Empowerment Award** at the National Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Pre-Law Summit 10th Annual Anniversary Awards Ceremony this September. Held in Washington, D.C., the ceremony was part of the National HBCU Pre-Law Summit and Law Expo, the nation's only major national pre-law event created especially for HBCU students and alumni interested in attending law school and pursuing a career in the legal profession.

Aaron N. Taylor, SVP, Executive Director, Center for Legal Education Excellence® received the **Pre-Law Advocate Award**, and Teria Thornton, Director of Pre-Law and Diversity Initiatives, was named one of the **Commitment to the Cause** honorees.

AccessLex Institute's support of the HBCU Pre-Law Summit is in direct congruence with our mission of fostering access to quality legal education.

THE PERSONAL FINANCE PROGRAM FOR LAW STUDENTS

# MAX

by AccessLex®

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MAX by AccessLex® is the go-to resource for online personal finance education, exclusively for law students! Offered free of charge to AccessLex Institute's member law schools and their students, MAX provides quick and easy to understand lessons, in-person and online learning options, one-on-one financial coaching from Accredited Financial Counselors, and thousands in scholarship incentives each year. From paying for law school to investing for retirement – and every step in between – MAX provides support students can count on along their entire law school journey.



# MAX BY THE NUMBERS



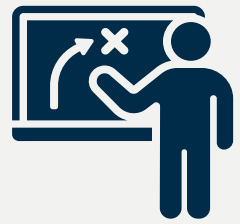
# 188

Law schools participate in MAX by AccessLex®

# NEARLY 80,000



Law students have participated in the MAX program since its inception in 2017



# OVER 2,300

coaching sessions were held during the 2022-23 academic year

# \$380,000

in scholarships awarded each academic year



# \$2.2 MILLION

in scholarships awarded since 2017



# MEET SOME OF OUR WINNERS:



“AccessLex [offers] the tools to begin tackling your finances while balancing a busy law school schedule through webinars, short courses, the opportunity to meet with a financial coach, and more. These resources tremendously help alleviate the stress of financial planning not only for life during law school, but also for life after law school. I am beyond grateful to have been awarded the first MAX by AccessLex® Hannah R. Arterian Memorial Scholarship and for AccessLex Institute’s help in achieving my career goals. Thank you to AccessLex for all it does to empower the next generation of lawyers and for being an invaluable resource to law students!”

**ERIC GROSS, '25**

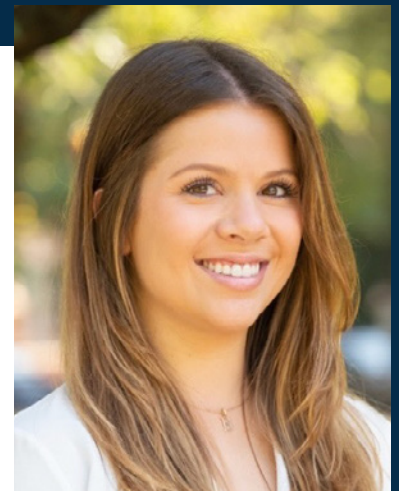
University of Minnesota Law School

*Inaugural Winner of the \$50,000 Hannah R. Arterian Memorial Scholarship*

“As a first-generation law student, it has been truly amazing to have AccessLex Institute as a resource to achieve financial literacy. Not only does AccessLex provide great resources to learn about how best to manage finances during law school, but they also offer resources to start planning for life beyond law school. I am so grateful to my school for introducing me to AccessLex, and even more grateful to AccessLex for helping me achieve my goal of becoming a lawyer. The MAX by AccessLex® webinars are hands-on and will remain applicable for the rest of my life. I only wish I had found AccessLex sooner!”

**ISABELLA FIELD, '24**

Loyola University  
Chicago School of Law



“As a first-generation law student going into public interest law, my finances and the amount of debt that I have accumulated have been my biggest concerns throughout law school. MAX by AccessLex® has allowed me to alleviate those concerns. The courses are short to fit into a busy law school schedule while still giving me all the practical information I need to tackle my finances! The webinars have taught me everything from student loan repayment plans and investing to negotiating salary and benefits. I cannot express how grateful I am for the MAX program and this scholarship!”

**KELLIE WARREN, '23**

University of Oregon  
School of Law

# Tools to Build a Financially Informed Law Student

The Accredited Financial Counselors at the AccessLex Center for Education and Financial Capability® provide a comprehensive range of complimentary services, tools, and platforms designed to assist prospective, current, and former law students in effectively handling their finances, attaining their financial objectives, and achieving their goals.

Law students can access hundreds of free resources on **Ask EDNA!® – The Education Network at AccessLex**. From MAX by AccessLex® and other financial education resources and tools, to Student Success and Bar Success information, and so much more, AskEDNA.org is the place to go for insight and information at every step of the law school journey. Aspiring law students can also access MAX Pre-Law inside Ask EDNA! for expert advice on choosing, applying, and paying for law school. **Lessons. Tools. Resources. Online Events. Financial Counseling. Answers — just Ask EDNA!**

## AccessLex® LAW SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP DATABANK

The **AccessLex Law School Scholarship Databank** is home to nearly 900 curated and vetted scholarships and writing competitions specific to the law school journey totaling more than \$3 million in aid. With a variety of search options, students can easily browse funding opportunities that can help offset the cost of a legal education.

## AccessLex® STUDENT LOAN CALCULATOR

Newly updated for the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) income-driven repayment plan, the free **AccessLex Student Loan Calculator** can help aspiring lawyers, current law students, and graduates estimate student loan payments, compare repayment plans, learn more about consolidation and refinancing, and estimate the impact of programs like Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

## AccessConnex by AccessLex™

In addition to MAX Coaching for students at participating law schools, the team of Accredited Financial Counselors offers free financial counseling to aspiring lawyers, current students, and recent grads via **AccessConnex by AccessLex<sup>SM</sup>**.

# AccessLex Tools, Resources, and Programs



	<p>A free student loan helpline.</p>
	<p>Identify pathway programs for successful admission into law school.</p>
	<p>The leading research in legal education today.</p>
	<p>Analyze, research, and compare law schools.</p>
	<p>Experience the entire law school journey on one powerhouse platform.</p>
	<p>The only national nonprofit bar review.</p>
	<p>Sharpen your skills for law school.</p>

	<p>Over 800 scholarships and writing competitions — all in one place.</p>
	<p>A pathway initiative to increase law school diversity.</p>
	<p>Make your voice heard in Washington.</p>
	<p>Maximize your financial future.</p>
	<p>Prepare for law school.</p>
	<p>Crunch your numbers. Know your options.</p>
	<p>Find the right law school for you.</p>

# LEADERSHIP

# AccessLex INSTITUTE

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAWYERS

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Senior Vice President, Executive Director  
AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence®

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EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAWYERS®

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AccessLex Institute®, in partnership with its nearly 200 nonprofit and state-affiliated ABA-approved member law schools, has been committed to improving access to legal education and to maximizing the affordability and value of a law degree since 1983. The AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence® advocates for policies that make legal education work better for students and society alike and conducts research on the most critical issues facing legal education today. The AccessLex Center for Education and Financial Capability® offers on-campus and online financial education programming and resources to help students confidently manage their finances on their way to achieving personal and professional success. AccessLex Institute is headquartered in West Chester, PA.

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