

# **Brown Rudnick Names First Ever 1L Social Mobility Diversity Fellow**

International law firm Brown Rudnick announced that it has named the first-ever 1L Social Mobility Diversity Fellow, W. Lydell Benson Jr.

In a release, the firm said the Fellowship is aimed at first-year law students who are also the first members of their family to graduate from college. The Fellowship provides the recipient with an opportunity for substantive work and professional development experience, as well as a significant scholarship.

Benson is a first-year law student at George Washington University Law School and will be working in Brown Rudnick's New York office as a summer associate.

"This Fellowship program really resonated with me and demonstrated a true commitment to diversity and providing opportunities to people of all backgrounds," Benson said. "When I was searching for opportunities, this Fellowship caught my eye not just because it was a great opportunity to get hands-on work experience with a prominent law firm, but also because it was the first time I had come across a law-firm diversity program targeting those who are the first in their family to graduate from college. I take a lot of pride in being the first in my family to graduate from college. My family and the people in my community are really proud of me, too."

The firm said the 1L Social Mobility Diversity Fellowship is a holistic program to support students during their time as a summer associate at Brown Rudnick and throughout the academic year. Benson will work on a wide variety of matters as an

integral member of client teams. He is also eligible to receive a scholarship of up to \$22,500, in addition to his summer associate compensation.

Once Benson returns to school in the fall, he will continue to have regular check-ins with Ari Joseph and his recruitment champion, partner Jeff Jonas. Brown Rudnick will arrange for Benson to attend firm events, holiday parties, networking events and professional development training throughout the year. The firm will also provide financial support for academic groups Benson is involved in at George Washington University Law School.

"As I am also the first in my family to graduate from college, I am particularly passionate about this Fellowship program," said Ari Joseph, Director of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity at Brown Rudnick. "The challenges that such an individual must overcome can be overwhelming, and are often overlooked or underestimated. This unique Fellowship is focused on the problem of social mobility and economic inequality, as well as diversity. It is truly a one-of-a-kind program and Lydell is the perfect choice for our first Fellow."

Benson will work alongside 10 other Brown Rudnick summer associates who come from law schools across the country: Richard Darst, Meghan McCafferty, Maureen Sweeney, Samuel Toomey, Korey Wilson, Yarelyn Mena, Ijeoma Ozoma, Erio Vignali, Matthew Lambros and Mona Goodarzi. Brown Rudnick's 2018 summer associate class begins May 21.

First-year law students can find more information about the 1L Social Mobility Diversity Fellowship [here](#). Questions should be referred to Brown Rudnick's Legal Recruitment Department at [recruiting@brownrudnick.com](mailto:recruiting@brownrudnick.com).