

Scholar Mentor Guide

Summer 2026



"It is an outstanding program that connects the legal community with diverse, future community leaders. I'm inspired by the students' enthusiasm for the law and their eagerness to learn,"

Sherri Wattenbarger, U.S. Department of Justice Office of The U.S. Trustee, SLA Mentor

Who We Are

Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation (KCMBF), in partnership with local education non-profit organization The Partnership for Regional Educational Preparation-Kansas City (PREP-KC), created Student Law Academy (SLA) in 2019.

Our Mission

Student Law Academy aspires to serve as a future pipeline to diversify Kansas City's legal community. Its mission is to provide metro high school students in historically marginalized districts with meaningful exposure to careers in

the legal profession and a broad overview of the judicial system.

What We Do

Student Law Academy collaborates with local law firms, courts, and other legal entities to provide a dynamic summer curriculum for scholars. Student Law Academy works within PREP-KC's six school districts and three charter schools to select juniors and seniors in high school as Student Law Academy scholars.

“This is such a great opportunity for students and the volunteers. It is important for attorneys to continue to be involved in the communities that we practice in and give back,”

Tamara Veit, *McElligott, Ewan & Hall, PC*, KCMBF
President and SLA Mentor.



Mentors

A mentor plays a vital role in supporting their assigned SLA scholar. Mentors provide professional and academic guidance, as well as offering a stable presence throughout the program. Mentors will meet over lunch with their matched SLA scholar each Monday. We need mentors for both segments, and you may choose which segment you wish to mentor!

Legal Pathway

New SLA Scholars for this summer will meet in person for three educational sessions each morning from June 1 to June 26, 2026 (excluding June 19 in observance of Juneteenth). The SLA Legal Pathway plans to provide new SLA Scholars with in-person morning educational sessions. During those sessions, Scholars will attend three presentations from local law professionals on a variety of topics, such as Imposter Syndrome, Family Law, Legislation 101, and the Benefits of Government Practice, to name a few. The Legal Pathway continues the SLA tradition of providing exposure to careers in the legal field and an overview of the legal system to juniors and seniors within PREP-KC's partner school districts.

Mandatory dates for the SLA Legal Pathway are as follows, all of which are located at KCMBF Headquarters.

Weekly Mentor/Scholar Lunch

Monday, June 1, 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Monday, June 8, 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Monday, June 15, 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Monday, June 22, 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Scholar Graduation & Reception

Friday, June 26, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

SLA Job Shadow

We are thrilled to continue this segment to Student Law Academy to provide returning Student Law Academy Graduates with an in-person rotational internship opportunity and mock trial experience. These returning Scholars, having already completed the Legal Pathway, will be placed at different law firms, courts, and government entities to job shadow legal professionals within a different office each week. Each Scholar will be assigned a Mentor to help them prepare for their job shadow opportunities and to assist them in building a portfolio to ready them for future career opportunities. Mentors will play a vital role in assisting with interview skills, resume-building, and college and career preparation. Materials will be provided as a guide.



Mandatory dates for the SLA Job Shadow, all of which are located at KCMBA Headquarters.

Weekly Mentor/Scholar Lunch

Monday, July 6, 12:00 - 1:00 PM at KCMBA

Monday, July 13, 12:00 - 1:00 PM at KCMBA

Monday, July 20, 12:00 - 1:00 PM at KCMBA

Mock Trial & Ice Cream Social

Friday, July 24, 1:00 - 5:00 PM

We understand unexpected conflicts may arise in your schedule. If you are unable to attend all program dates, you are responsible for identifying and confirming a substitute mentor and communicating any changes with KCMBA staff. Please contact info@kcmbf.org if you have any questions or conflicts.

Schedule Details

Volunteer Orientation will include expectations for mentors, and recommendations from prior-year mentors on how to best connect with your mentee, followed by a networking opportunity to connect with fellow volunteers.

Mentor/Scholar Lunches are allotted for one hour, held on Mondays. Meet with your scholar and help prepare them for their weekly activities. We encourage you to ask your mentee which sessions or job shadows they have enjoyed or are looking forward to. To encourage collaboration and discussion, you may be placed at a table with other mentor/mentee pairs for lunch.

SLA Graduation will celebrate the graduating class of 2026, featuring a keynote speaker.

SLA Mock Trial & Ice Cream Social will allow SLA Job Shadow Scholars to demonstrate their skills learned during the program to present a mock trial. Following the mock trial, all volunteers, participants, and alumni will gather for a fun Ice Cream Social.

Become A Mentor!

To apply to become a Student Law Academy Mentor, please visit kcmbf.org to fill out the Mentor Application or email info@kcmbf.org. Student Law Academy Scholars will be selected in mid-April. If you are selected as a Mentor, please expect an email with your Scholar's information in May.

In Mentor/Scholar Lunches, talk about classes or majors that are helpful for a law degree.

Encourage your Scholar to build additional professional connections, discussing networking.

Explore the importance of reference letters for college and how to leverage their Student Law Academy experience.

Explore topics not covered by the program, such as how a bill becomes a law, what a citizen can do to enact change in their community, or how other states select their judges.

Assign your Scholar a current events article or podcast episode, then discuss together.

Ask your Scholar what made them want to explore being a lawyer or working in the legal industry?

If you have a hearing or conference in person or via Zoom, ask your Scholar if they would like to observe (with the advance permission of the Judge and others on the meeting/call).

**“If we can encourage just one kid each year,
it's worth it in my mind,”**

Courtney Stout, *Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner*,
SLA Committee Member.

