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Law firms give \$5K diversity scholarship

They will also hire minority law students for the summer

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Two local law firms are teaming up with their clients and minority bar associations to create new diversity scholarships that also provide summer jobs – and possible post-graduation appointments.

Philadelphia's Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young and Archer & Greiner in Haddonfield, N.J., will begin the program next summer.

Stradley Ronon is teaming with the Barristers' Association – the affinity trade association for local black lawyers – and clients Campbell Soup and InterDigital to offer two qualified second-year law student Barristers' members a \$5,000 scholarship and a paid nine-week position next summer.

Archer & Greiner's program is similar, with the firm joining up with the Asian Pacific Bar Association of Pennsylvania and AmerisourceBergen for their scholarship. It will be taking one student from the Asian Pacific Bar for the summer.

The chosen students get a summer associate position, the ability to split their summer between a firm and an in-house position, a shot at full-time employment and a \$5,000 scholarship while the firms earn a chance to diversify their talent pool and enhance relations with their clients.

The chosen summer associates will spend five weeks at the law firms and four with the corporate partners.

The program was the brainchild of Archer & Greiner partner Phil Cha, who approached his colleague from the Asian Pacific American Bar, Stradley Ronon partner Deborah Hong. Stradley Ronon Chairman William Sasso and Archer Chairman Jim Carll



MARNIE BURKHART

Deborah Hong

soon agreed to fund the scholarships.

"We wanted to get the companies on board because we thought [the selected students] would get the best experience that way," Sasso said. "But we'll handle the costs. We don't want to pass it along to our clients."

Hong said while the firms will be working with the Barrister's Association and Asian Pacific American Bar this year, they will seek to include the Hispanic Bar Association of Pennsylvania in 2018.

The partners in the scholarship program will team up to weed through applicants and select winners. At Stradley, for example, the selection committee includes Hong, InterDigital General Counsel Jannie Lau, Campbell's Senior Labor and Employment Counsel Jennifer Nocito and Barrister's Immediate Past President Shabrei Parker.



MARNIE BURKHART

William Sasso

The scholarships will supplement the two firms' participation in the Philadelphia Diversity Law Group, a consortium of local legal employers formed in 2003 in an effort to improve minority recruitment and retention numbers at local law firms. The program has grown from 12 employers to more than 25 since its inception.

Unlike the scholarship program, PDLG takes students after their first year of law school, which means they will not receive job offers after completing their summer position.

**STRADLEY
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