

## New Scholarship Honors Lifelong Work of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

*Former SDNY women AUSAs band together to launch project to advance the careers of women law students*

**New York – May 7, 2021:** A group of women lawyers who served as Assistant U.S. Attorneys in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York are launching a scholarship project to provide financial assistance and mentoring support to women law students.

The When There Are Nine Scholarship Project was created in partnership with the [Federal Bar Foundation](#), a New York-based tax-exempt organization, and was founded by a group of alumnae from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, following the passing of United States Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. The Project's mission is to honor the lifelong work of Justice Ginsburg by creating a scholarship, related programming, and mentorship that will advance equity and diversity within the legal profession and continue the late Justice's many efforts to expand career opportunities for women attorneys.

Eligible scholarship recipients include deserving women law students who embody the spirit reflected by Justice Ginsburg's achievements in the face of adversity. In addition to financial support, scholarship recipients will receive mentoring and career advice from a mentorship circle composed of SDNY alumnae.

"We want to honor Justice Ginsburg's legacy by helping women entering or in law school with financial difficulties. Women who may not see a path to success right now, but who, if given the chance and the same mentoring, support, and guidance we benefited from, would make superb lawyers," said [Rebecca Monck Ricigliano](#), a partner in Crowell & Moring's White Collar & Regulatory Enforcement Group, who spent nearly a decade at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York serving in various supervisory roles, and who serves on the Project's Steering Committee.

The idea for the Project was born the weekend that Justice Ginsburg passed away. Justice Ginsburg had been a role model for many of the women in the Southern District of New York's alumnae community who admired her deep intellect, work ethic, and commitment to family and friends. Over a series of emails about the profound impact Justice Ginsburg had on all their lives, alumnae discussed how they could celebrate and honor her legacy. Ricigliano had the idea of paying forward what they had gleaned from Justice Ginsburg's path to success and their own experiences supporting each other with a scholarship to help women become lawyers by providing financial support and a network of women attorneys to help guide scholarship recipients as they enter the legal profession. The group seized on the idea.

"Justice Ginsburg's passing happened during a dark time," said [Dani R. James](#), co-chair of the White Collar Defense and Investigations practice at Kramer Levin and a former federal prosecutor at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, who serves on the Project's Steering Committee. "I am proud of my fellow alumnae for not giving in to despair and instead drawing inspiration from her life to create this important initiative."

A Brooklyn native, Justice Ginsburg graduated first in her class from Columbia Law School while raising her young daughter and supporting her husband through his cancer treatment.

"Justice Ginsburg was a trailblazer and pioneering advocate for women's rights," said [Carrie H. Cohen](#), a partner at Morrison & Foerster LLP and a former federal prosecutor at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern

District of New York and the New York State Attorney General's Office, who serves on the Project's Steering Committee. "Justice Ginsburg repeatedly overcame the gender discrimination she would later spend the better part of her career seeking to eradicate in the courts, and her advocacy and the cases that she won and ruled on opened doors for so many women. This is our way of giving back to her and continuing her legacy."

"One of our earliest decisions was naming the Project. We drew inspiration from Justice Ginsburg's vision for true equality and equity for women, which is exemplified by her response to a recurring question about the number of women on the Supreme Court," said [Amanda Kramer](#), a partner in the White Collar Defense and Investigations Practice at Covington & Burling LLP, who served as a federal prosecutor at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York for 11 years, including in supervisory roles, and who serves on the Project's Steering Committee. "When asked 'when will there be enough' women on the Court, Justice Ginsburg answered, 'when there are nine.' Although her answer was shocking to some, she matter-of-factly and accurately pointed out that 'there'd been nine men, and nobody's ever raised a question about that.'"

"This is more than just a scholarship fund. Our hope is to sponsor these young women and ensure that they get internships and jobs that will expose them to the highest level of the law—public service," said [Jessica Ortiz](#), a partner at MoloLamken and a former federal prosecutor and chief of the Narcotics Unit at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, who oversees the Project's Selection Committee.

"By promoting diversity in the legal profession and mentorship between generations of lawyers, as well as by honoring the late Justice Ginsburg who served for many years as Circuit Justice, the scholarship fits well with the mission and goals of the Federal Bar Foundation and Federal Bar Council," said John "Sean" Coffey, president of the Foundation and a partner at Kramer Levin. "We were honored to be able to support the alumnae of the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York by providing organizational support for this meaningful endeavor, as this group of lawyers is such an important part of the legal community we serve."

The Project is very grateful for the wise counsel of many educational experts (each of whom provided valuable insight to the Project), and also wishes to acknowledge the generous professional contributions of The Pensery (which designed the Project's logo *pro bono*), Crowell & Moring LLP, Covington & Burling LLP, and Morrison & Foerster LLP (which each provided *pro bono* legal counsel to assist the Project with various organizational, intellectual property, and tax matters), Skadden Arps, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP and Crowell & Moring LLP (which provided *pro bono* IT, marketing, and PR support).

### **About the When There Are Nine Scholarship Project**

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For more information on the When There Are Nine Scholarship Project, visit [here](#). The Project is funded exclusively by charitable contributions. Donations to the Project can be made [here](#).

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