

## **SDNY Alumnae Create Scholarship In Memory Of RBG**

By **Xiumei Dong**

*Law360 (May 6, 2021, 8:38 PM EDT)* -- In honor of the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a group of female former assistant U.S. attorneys for the Southern District of New York launched a scholarship Thursday evening to help aspiring female lawyers advance in the legal profession.

The When There Are Nine Scholarship Project, organized in collaboration with the Federal Bar Foundation, will be open to all female students entering or currently enrolled in an accredited J.D. program in the U.S. Scholarship recipients will receive a minimum of \$10,000 each year while attending law school, as well as mentoring support from the alumni group of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York to help guide them as they enter the legal field.

"We have such privilege in being a part of a community of so many women in our profession that a lot of other people don't have," said Covington & Burling LLP partner Amanda Kramer, a former federal prosecutor who served at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York for 11 years. "So it builds on itself in part because we saw the strength of our community in real time as we experienced this together."

In an interview with Law360 Pulse, the project's steering committee members said the idea for the scholarship was born in September 2020, on the weekend that Justice Ginsburg died. After a series of emails discussing the impact Justice Ginsburg had on their lives, the group quickly decided to form the program to commemorate her legacy and help more women become lawyers.

"We were thinking it would be amazing if we could pay forward the benefit we all had from each other and from the framework that Justice Ginsburg had provided us with her advocacy when she was an attorney but also decisions on the bench and just for role modeling," said Carrie Cohen, a partner at Morrison & Foerster LLP and a former federal and state prosecutor in New York.

"[It would be amazing] if we could pay that forward to observe women law students and try not only to help them be able to go to law school but then also have successful careers and have access to the types of networks that do help you thrive as a woman lawyer in a very demanding profession," she added.

The committee has not yet decided how many students will receive the scholarship this year. The number will also vary from year to year depending on the level of funding and the number and quality of applicants.

"One aspiration that we've talked about, we all agree on and are hopeful for, is that we can have cohort classes that really number in size, whether it's two or three or whatever it is," said Rebecca Ricigliano, a partner at Crowell & Moring LLP and former federal prosecutor and first assistant attorney general of New Jersey. "Part of this is to create a community within the recipients so they can create their own communities, leveraging ours and the gifts that we give them ... but also creating that within themselves."

The scholarship project's steering committee has about 40 members, but the mentoring network includes all former prosecutors who served in the Southern District of New York.

"We have received an overwhelming interest from SDNY alumni who want to serve as mentors," Ricigliano said. "The mentors that the recipients will receive as part of that mentoring circle are separate from the committee members. There is an overwhelming desire for our alumni to support this project, and so many of them have already volunteered to serve as members or to give of their time for programming."

The project has also received pro bono support from law firms, including Covington & Burling LLP, Morrison & Foerster LLP, Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP and Crowell & Moring LLP on various organizational, intellectual property, tax, marketing and other matters.

--Editing by Alanna Weissman.