

# EXPAND YOUR LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL

## Apply for the CBA Presidential Fellows Program

By BRIDGET C. GALLAGHER

**THE PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWS PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN 2015**, with the objective of identifying young lawyers who demonstrate leadership potential, for the purpose of assisting them in developing their leadership skills and enhancing their involvement in a CBA section. These prestigious appointments are the result of a competitive application process that occurs annually, following the submission of all applications in the summer. The appointments are for a period of two years. Many of the past Fellows have gone on to hold CBA leadership positions, as well as other prestigious leadership positions in the legal community at large. Former Fellow Emily Gianquinto was nominated for the CBA vice president position for the 2023-2024 bar year. The application process is now underway and qualified applicants are encouraged to apply.

The program welcomed two new Fellows in the fall of 2022, Shanique D. Fenlator and Allison Kaas. Attorney Kaas is a deputy assistant state's attorney with the Division of Criminal Justice. She was already well-acquainted with the Connecticut judicial



**THE CBA HOSTED AN EVENT FOR CURRENT AND PAST CBA** presidential fellows, along with other bar leaders, “What Makes You Indispensable?—Managing Your Personal Brand to Elevate Your Career” this past April. During the program, globally acclaimed motivational speaker and author, Kaplan Mobray, provided a uniquely vibrant and energetic presentation to attendees, teaching them how to develop their branding as attorneys, build trust with others, stand out from the pack, and develop their leadership skills. Kaplan Mobray is pictured with current and past Presidential Fellows along with CBA leadership.

system when she accepted that position, as she served as a family relations officer for 12 years. Attorney Fenlator migrated from Jamaica, matriculated through Hartford Public Schools, and became a first-generation lawyer in 2011. Attorney Fenlator then began a career in personal injury defense and workers’ compensation and was recently nominated to be a Connecticut Workers’ Compensation Administrative Law judge.

Submit Your Application at [ctbar.org/Fellows](https://ctbar.org/Fellows)

The Committee seeks to promote active involvement of young lawyers, lawyers who no longer qualify for membership in the Young Lawyers Section, and diverse lawyers in the leadership and activities of the CBA. Special consideration is also given to lawyers in government service.

The Committee plans events and activities designed especially for the Fellows, including the current class of Fellows and past Fellows, geared toward the development of leadership skills. The appointment also introduces each Fellow to attorneys who are already actively involved in bar leadership.

Programming for the 2022–2023 bar year included a welcome dinner for the new Fellows and panel discussion at the Grassy Hills Country Club in Orange, an in-person presentation about personal branding by national speaker Kaplan Mobray, and a Zoom leadership presentation with four prominent leaders in the Connecticut legal community. Current Fellows are encouraged to engage with everyone who has gone through the program, creating a unique community for all participants.

The Fellows also serve on the executive committee of their selected section as ex-officio members and section leadership is encouraged to involve their Fellows in a section project in order to make the experience more meaningful. For instance, when Jennifer Shukla was a Fellow on the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section Executive Committee, the section was in the process of reviving the Resolution of Legal Fee Disputes Program, and managing old “legacy” cases that had been lingering for a long time. The section co-chairs asked Attorney Shukla for assistance on this project, and she demonstrated her leadership skills in assessing the status of the pending cases, identifying the work to be done to actively resume the program, and managing the many details needed to get the program back on track. She served as the chair for the Resolution of Legal Fee Disputes Program Committee during that period, and was instrumental in a successful re-launch of the program, which continues to actively accept new dispute submissions for mediation or arbitration. Attorney Shukla is currently the CBA’s director of access to justice initiatives.

Each Fellow will serve as a section ambassador to the Young Lawyers Section to promote membership and participation of other young lawyers, diverse lawyers, and lawyers transitioning to a new career, such as a change from private practice to public sector. Fellows also enjoy a waiver of all fees for section membership and attendance at section meetings.

To be considered for selection, applicants must (1) fall into one of the three designated categories (young, transitioning to a new position, or diverse), (2) have practiced in their listed practice area(s) for at least one year, (3) be younger than 40 years of age or have been admitted to the bar less than 10 years, and (4) have demonstrated leadership potential. Previous membership in the applicable section is not required. Special consideration is given to lawyers in governmental service.

## PRESIDENTIAL FELLOWS



*The 2022-2024 Presidential Fellows, Allison Kaas and Shanique Fenlator.*

### 2022-2024

Shanique Fenlator  
Allison Kaas

### 2021-2023

Aigné Goldsby  
Andres D.  
Jimenez-Frank  
Thomas Lambert  
Yamuna Menon  
Johnny Ross III  
Megan Wade

### 2020-2022

Jeffrey D.  
Bausch, Jr.  
Jenna Cutler  
Samim Jabarkhail  
Paige M.  
Vaillancourt

### 2019-2021

Sara J. Dickson  
Choity R. Khan  
Madiha M. Malik  
Gabriella I. Martin  
Je'Quana S. Orr  
Justyn P. Stokely  
Amanda C. Telesco

### 2018-2021

Claire Howard  
Kyle J. LaBuff  
Patricia Mwilwa  
Abena A. Sarpong  
Jennifer Shukla  
Thomas Wilkeson

### 2017-2019

Daniel R. Cooper  
Suphi A. Philip

### 2016-2018

Steven Allinson  
Tamar Bakhbava  
LaTisha Davis  
Danielle Edwards  
Karolyn Ryan  
Andrew Walter

### 2015-2017

Thamar  
Esperance-Smith  
Emily A.  
Gianquinto  
Cody Guarnieri  
Lucas Hernandez  
Susan Kirkeby  
Jessie Opinion  
Mark A. Riley

Prospective Fellows must complete an application and also submit two (2) letters of recommendation, a resume, and a cover letter describing why the applicant is interested in becoming a Fellow and how they plan to contribute to the section. Applications are reviewed and considered by the Presidential Fellows Selection Committee each fall. The 2023 application deadline is August 18, 2023. The application can be found on the CBA website at [ctbar.org/Fellows](http://ctbar.org/Fellows).

**Questions about the program can be directed to Bridget C. Gallagher, chair of the Presidential Fellows Committee, at [bgallagher@bpslawyers.com](mailto:bgallagher@bpslawyers.com). ■**

*Bridget C. Gallagher is a senior partner at Brown Paindiris & Scott LLP and current chair of the Presidential Fellows Committee. Attorney Gallagher practices in commercial and transactional law, as well as real estate and probate litigation.*