

Bennett G. Hornstein Memorial Scholarship

2023 – Nneka L. Jones, Creighton University School of Law and Lionel Dalmeida, University of Nebraska College of Law

The Bennett G. Hornstein Memorial Scholarship for aspiring or current law students has been awarded to both Nneka L. Jones and Lionel Dalmeida for the 2023-2024 academic year. Both will receive \$5,000 awards. The Hornstein family chose to make two awards this year in honor of their late mother, Nancy Hornstein who died on May 24, 2023. Nobody exemplified Bennett's interest in helping others in need more than Nancy. She would often stop by the Jewish Federation without notice and drop off a check or cash to contribute to the scholarship fund when she was thinking about Bennett.

Nneka Jones graduated from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, majoring in Political Science with a minor in Business Management. While at Agnes Scott College, her potential for leadership and as a change agent were recognized by several honors: a Posse Leadership Scholarship; a Comcast Leaders & Achievers Award; the Tiara M. Parks Raising Hope Scholarship; the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation Scholarship; and a Spark the Change Scholarship.

Nneka entered Creighton University School of Law as a Dean's Fellow with both a Frances M. Ryan Diversity Scholarship and Megan M. Hottman Scholarship. She is a member of the Black Law Student Association and Student Bar Association, and recently joined the Creighton Law Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee as one of its founding members. She will graduate from Creighton University School of Law in May 2025.

Jones spent the summer of 2019 as an intern to Matt Westmoreland, Councilmember of the Atlanta City Council where she drafted ceremonial documents, assisted with the planning of major events, and conducted needed research to draft legislation. He shared "Nneka brought incredible energy, enthusiasm, intellect, and commitment and quickly established herself as a thought and action-leader. In addition, two of her strongest attributes are her willingness to perform community service and her commitment to helping her peers succeed." In 2020, Jones interned for Alderwoman Susan Sadlowski Garza, City of Chicago, 10th Ward Public Service Office and created the first "Contactless Voter Registration" drive in Chicago and organized outreach efforts for over 300 households to increase awareness of upcoming elections and their importance.

As the only child of a single mother growing up in Chicago, Nneka witnessed and experienced many inequities and injustices. These have fueled her undaunted faith, confidence in the legal system, and determination to work on behalf of underserved populations. She aspires to help rebuild the educational system through legal advocacy so that a child's zip code or economic status will no longer determine their success. She is confident her legal education and career will help her challenge legislation and propose remedies to protect student interests and dismantle barriers that have kept diverse and low-income students from attaining an equitable education and achieving social mobility.

Lionel Dalmeida graduated from the University of Nebraska Omaha, majoring in Business Administration with a minor in Marketing. While at UNO, he was a member of the Collegiate Entrepreneur Organization and mentored with Peer Success.

Lionel entered the University of Nebraska Lincoln College of Law and quickly made his mark as a natural leader, driven to make a difference in the community. He serves as Vice President of both the Multi-Cultural Legal Society and the Black Law Students Association. He will graduate from the University of Nebraska College of Law in May 2024.

In September 2022, Dalmeida was selected to serve as the Schmid Research Fellowship Program by Stefanie Pearlman, Interim Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Professor, Schmid Law Library. She shared that she was so impressed with his leadership, passion, and intelligence she selected him for this role. He works with the College of Law in its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and has the potential to positively impact future generations of attorneys graduating from the School of Law.

Growing up as a young Togolese immigrant, Lionel experienced first-hand the struggles his family faced navigating a system that wasn't designed for their success. From his father, he was given a sense of purpose and the determination to make a difference in the world. He chose a career in law to gather and hone the skills and knowledge needed to help other black people succeed in business. Having seen how black entrepreneurs are often excluded from opportunities and resources, Lionel will focus on business law and entrepreneurship.

Prior to law school, Dalmeida had the opportunity to help young black people while at the Hope Center. His work there focused on developing new life and work skills, such as interviewing and customer service, and connecting with long-term employment opportunities as well as building business plans. This experience reinforced his belief that education, mentorship, and support can be transformative tools to help overcome adversity. He has shared that his experience at the Hope Center fueled his determination to make a difference in the lives of marginalized communities. He is committed to helping black entrepreneurs succeed by leveling the playing field and supporting impoverished black youth to develop the skills and confidence needed to succeed. "Everyone deserves access to opportunities and resources that can help them thrive."

Both Nneka Jones and Lionel Dalmeida embody the qualities that Bennet G. Hornstein exemplified: a high standard of academic achievement, an adventurous spirit, and a desire to take on an active role in service to the community. Applicants must also be attending law school at the University of Nebraska or Creighton University.

The late Bennett Hornstein, assistant Douglas County public defender for 20 years, was a passionate advocate of the rights of those who could not afford a lawyer. After his battle with cancer and untimely death at the age of 46, his family established the Bennett G. Hornstein Endowment Fund in partnership with the Jewish Federation of Omaha

Foundation. This fund provides an annual scholarship for a law student who will carry on Hornstein's commitment to working for those members of society whom no one else wants to help.

For more information about the annual Bennett G. Hornstein Memorial Scholarship, please visit the Jewish Federation of Omaha Foundation website www.jfofoundation.org. Scholarship applications are accepted each year, per instructions on the website.

The Foundation welcomes donations to the Bennett G. Hornstein Endowment Fund in support of the scholarship. Donations may be made via the Foundation's website, www.jfofoundation.org, or by mail to: Jewish Federation of Omaha Foundation, 333 South 132nd Street, Omaha, NE 68154. For more information, call the Foundation at 402.334.6551.