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Cardozo Welcomes Members of the Class of 2023



Cardozo's May Class of 2023 began their law school journey this week with 49 students, Cardozo's first class to start law school remotely.

The students attended a Virtual Orientation May 18, which included an inspirational talk from Dean Melanie Leslie, and a warm welcome from Dean of Admissions David Martinidez. "You are about to have a great adventure," said Dean Leslie. "I want you to leave Cardozo as leaders. At Cardozo, we pride ourselves on educating lawyers who become leaders."

Dean Martinidez told the group, "I want you to remember that each of you in your own way has already accomplished so much. Don't forget that we are here to support and advise you through your challenges and cheer your accomplishments."

Each student had the opportunity to introduce themselves to their classmates and give brief remarks about their background. In keeping with tradition, Dean Leslie asked them not to view each other as competitors but as collaborators and future colleagues. "You will form close ties that will carry you through your careers," said the dean.

Martinidez spoke of the diversity and unique accomplishments of the class. "Among you are former dance teachers including a ballet instructor, a teacher for a Hispanic dance company, a Sunday school teacher and a math tutor at a community college...you've also held jobs in the legal profession, legal assistants for both small and large firms in areas including immigration, bankruptcy and corporate law," he said. "Many of you have dedicated yourselves to public service, helped clean out homes after Hurricane Sandy; packaged supply bags and delivered them for women in domestic violence shelters and for the homeless and several others of you work with children with special needs."

In addition to students from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, the May class has members who hail from five other states including Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Utah, and Puerto Rico, and who graduated from 35 different colleges and universities.

The students will take 10 credits during this first semester, including the introductory class *Elements of Law* with Professor Leslie Newman, *Contracts* with Professor Peter Goodrich and *Constitutional Law* with Professor Michelle Adams.

As part of Orientation, the students participated in a Zoom room "Virtual Cafe" to allow them time to get to socialize virtually, in an effort to create connections which normally would be made in person during breaks in Cardozo's lobby or third floor lounge. There are also Virtual Study Groups, where students can go in and study with others.

Fourteen rising 3L students are helping run other fun activities including an online trivia game which occurred earlier this week, and they are also serving as mentors, for small groups of students. The 3Ls are also providing valuable information about being a 1L and about how to be successful remote learners, until the time everyone is back together in the building.