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For the first time, four law students of diverse backgrounds have been named as Federal Magistrate Judges Association Fellows. They will intern with a federal magistrate judge this summer and receive a \$2,500 stipend, FMJA President Deborah Smith announced today.

The Federal Magistrate Judges Association (FMJA) created the fellowships this year, partnering with Just the Beginning, A Pipeline Organization (JTB). The purpose is to support and promote the placement of diverse and traditionally underrepresented law students in judicial internships with U.S. Magistrate Judges, Judge Smith said. Both the FMJA and JTB are working to help establish a legal profession in which lawyers and judges reflect the people they serve.

“We are pleased to announce the selection of our inaugural fellows: Marianna Nava from Roger Williams University School of Law, who will intern with Magistrate Judge Judith Dein in the District of Massachusetts; Monroe Thornton from Cumberland School of Law, who will intern with Magistrate Judge John England in the Northern District of Alabama; Devin Weber from Seton Hall University School of Law, who will intern Magistrate Judge James Cott in the Southern District of New York and Ellen Wiah from the University of Iowa College of Law, who will intern Magistrate Judge David Strawbridge in the District of Pennsylvania,” Judge Smith said.

JTB has worked with the Judicial Resources Committee of the U.S. Judicial Conference to establish the Summer Judicial Internship Diversity Project, to encourage diverse law students to consider careers in the judiciary. This year, 22 students were placed with U.S. Magistrate Judges by JTB. Four of those were selected to be FMJA Fellows, Judge Smith said. In addition to the stipends, the Fellows will have the opportunity to participate in programs designed to help students learn the various pathways to the judiciary and the broad duties of federal magistrate judges.

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