

Legal Integration Project at Nelson Mandela University

Who we are

The Legal Integration Project at Nelson Mandel University is a mentorship and training program that seeks to prepare law students with skills that will allow them to adapt easily when they enter the legal practice. The program targets penultimate and final year students studying their BCom Law, BA Law or LLB degree. Students volunteer to be a part of the program and they are selected to be a part of it based on their passion and willingness to engage in and participate in the program. The program takes place during the university's academic year and runs for a duration of 10 months. After the program, students are accredited by the university for participating in the program. This program began in 2019 and 60 students successfully completed it. In 2020, there are currently 63 students who are members of the program.

What we do

During the 10-month period that the program runs, the students take part in various activities. There are workshops that are held every fortnight which are compulsory for the students to attend. In these workshops the students are taught valuable skills such as drafting a CV and they are also sensitized on societal issues such as gender-based violence. These workshops foster personal development among the students and teach them how to apply the legal knowledge they have acquired to address issues that face them and the communities they live with. There are also community outreach initiatives where the students put together resources and give these to less privileged people. There is also the vacation work scheme where a number of students are given an opportunity to work for a law firm for a short period time during the university vacation period.

What we aim to achieve

We aim to provide a bridge between students who complete their studies and thereafter enter legal practice. We do this by providing them with basic training and skills which prepare them to apply the knowledge they acquire in academia to resolve legal issues. We also aim to equip students with the skills to address pressing legal issues within the society. We encourage our students to partner with one another and others to achieve set objectives and encourage the principle of Ubuntu. We empower students to give back to the community around them through engaging with them on legal issues and assisting the less privileged. We encourage our students to build useful connections with people in the legal practice because we believe that this is a good foundation upon which to build their careers. We believe that this program will set apart our graduates because they will have had an all-round experience when they enter into legal practice.