

Roger Williams University

DOCS@RWU

Life of the Law School (1993-)

Archives & Law School History

4-16-2024

Law School News: Leadership And Vision: Jonte T. McKenzie L'24

Michelle Choate

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life



Part of the [Legal Education Commons](#), and the [Legal Profession Commons](#)

Law School News: Leadership and Vision: Jonté T. McKenzie L'24

April 16, 2024

Michelle Choate



Jonté T. McKenzie L'24

Jonté McKenzie is a firm believer in making the most of any situation he's in, in getting involved with things he believes in, and creating a sense of community. Over the course of his three years at RWU Law, he has served as the Student Bar Association (SBA) president and vice president of the Black Law Student Association (BLSA). He's also been involved in the Latino Law Student Association (LLSA), the Multi-Cultural Law Student Association, the Law Review, the Trial Team, and the Criminal Defense Law Clinic. Says McKenzie, "I am always eager to get involved. It's fun to be amongst a crowd of like-minded individuals, and through that involvement, I can build a sense of community."

When he first arrived at RWU Law, McKenzie did not wait around to get the lay of the land; he hit the ground running and had a wide field of interest. In addition to serving as a 1L representative for various law associations on campus, he became a student admissions counselor for the law school—the first 1L who was granted this opportunity. "Through that experience, I quickly built long-lasting relationships with my fellow student admissions counselors and the faculty and staff in the admissions office, Library, Career Center, and Dean's suite," explains McKenzie, "All of which helped me feel deeply connected within RWU Law community."

But the deepest sense of connection McKenzie felt was with the BLSA. "I quickly found my community there," he says, "and they have motivated me to become a better person."

Given the success of his tenure with the SBA, it is interesting to note that McKenzie initially had no intention of running for its presidency. “I actually wanted to be our school's BLSA president; however, after many people encouraged me to run for the SBA presidency, I decided to give it a try,” says McKenzie. “SBA has helped me grow as a leader, a student, and more importantly a friend. A friend to my peers. A friend to my community. A friend to the institution.”

Now that his very successful—and very busy—time at RWU Law is coming to a close, McKenzie is eyeing the future with typical gusto and ambition. He’s considering a career in estate law or real estate law, but for his first year after graduation, he will serve as a clerk in the Rhode Island Superior Courts. When he has the opportunity to do pro bono work, he plans to focus on immigration law. “I first became interested in the law when I saw news stories of children in cages at the Mexican border,” explains McKenzie. “And I will always be committed to making a positive impact in that area.”

Whatever his next steps may be, McKenzie knows he is ready. He heads out to the world with the confidence that has come from involvement and experience. He knows he can handle the pace and the workload of any job. And he brings a little something else; a core belief in himself and a way he should live that has served him well so far. Says McKenzie, “I knew that I was a leader since I was in high school. I have always held leadership roles and when I have a vision, I do not stop until I see it through.”