

Jennifer A. Holmes

Striving as the first Eric H. Holder Fellowship Recipient



WASHINGTON, DC – The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) established The Eric H. Holder, Jr. Fellowship and named Jennifer (Jenny) Holmes as the first fellow. This prestigious Fellowship is a lasting tribute to the extraordinary contributions Mr. Holder made to equal justice during his tenure as the 82nd Attorney General of the United States – the first African American to hold this title.

The Fellowship is made possible by a challenge grant of \$100,000 from the MARCH Foundation, an effort to commit resources to supporting a new generation of civil rights attorneys. As a Fellow, Jenny's work mirrors the key events of the day, is fast-paced, challenging and time-sensitive.

"Now that I have several months under my belt at LDF, I want to reiterate how grateful I am to the MARCH Foundation for the opportunity to pursue racial justice through the inaugural Eric H. Holder, Jr. Fellowship," Jenny said.

"The fellowship has enabled me to be on the ground doing poll monitoring during the elections in Virginia and Alabama, develop fair housing cases that we can bring to dismantle discriminatory barriers to housing, and challenge Department of Labor regulations that would have permitted employers to confiscate their employees' tips."

Jenny continues to develop cases that attempt to address the eviction crisis, which disproportionately affects Black residents in many cities. She has also returned to Alabama to advance voting rights, testifying before the Alabama Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights during a hearing on access to vote. She also helped draft a petition to the U.S. Supreme Court seeking review of a Court of Appeals decision that allowed an employer to withdraw a job offer to a qualified Black woman solely because she had locs. She has also helped hold school districts accountable to their obligations under long-standing desegregation court orders and has visited schools in Mississippi to ensure their compliance.

To whom do you attribute your drive for excellence?

I draw strength from LDF's clients—parents striving to eliminate the vestiges of desegregation from their local school districts, families trying to move into neighborhoods of opportunity, working people challenging discriminatory policies that deny them employment or promotions. They bravely serve as the face of our lawsuits and entrust us with their stories to help build a more equitable future for their families and communities.

Favorite gadget I cannot live without

My Nespresso

Hobbies, interests

Dance, political news, playing with my puppy Ruby.

Favorite quote or phrase

"It always seems impossible until it is done." – Nelson Mandela



Background prior to Fellowship

Jenny joined LDF from Covington & Burling, LLP, where she worked as an associate. During her time at Covington & Burling, Jennifer represented primarily pharmaceutical companies and sports teams, while maintaining a robust pro bono portfolio that encompassed criminal defense, economic justice, and immigrants' rights. She is a member of the Leadership Counsel on Legal Diversity's Pathfinder program, which selects promising legal associates from diverse backgrounds for advanced professional development opportunities.

Hometown

Washington, DC



Education

Jennifer received her J.D. from Stanford Law School, and attended Yale University as an undergraduate, earning a B.A. with distinction in Political Science.