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**The American Bar Foundation Welcomes the
2021 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows**

CHICAGO, June 02, 2021- The American Bar Foundation (ABF) has chosen five exceptional undergraduate students to take part in the 2021 [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program \(SURF\)](#). The students were selected among a highly competitive group of applicants for their excellent work throughout their current undergraduate careers. The 2021 Fellows are Natasha Chaiyarat, Laura Fagbemi, Connor Herbert, Nicole Maria Mateo, and Sasha Matsuki.

Also known as the Montgomery Summer Research Diversity Fellowship Program, the SURF program offers undergraduate students from underrepresented groups a hands-on learning experience in the field of law and social science research. Over the course of eight weeks, each fellow works closely with an ABF Research Professor as a research assistant, affording them the opportunity to be mentored by and take part in sociolegal research with experienced scholars.

Fellows also learn about other empirical and interdisciplinary sociolegal research by joining ABF faculty, program alumni, and legal professionals in a series of seminars and forums. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the 2021 program will once again be virtual this year.

The SURF program is generously supported by the Kenneth & Harle Montgomery Foundation, the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC), Kirkland & Ellis, LLP, Banner Witcoff, Solon E. Summerfield Foundation, and AT&T.

“We are pleased to introduce our next group of outstanding undergraduate fellows to the ABF community,” said Ajay K. Mehrotra, ABF Executive Director and Research Professor. “The ABF is deeply grateful to our many sponsors who help make possible our mission to support the next generation of scholars and lawyers.”

Many SURF alumni have gone on to make significant contributions in the fields of law and social science working as legal practitioners, deans, and professors of law as well as in the fields of government, social policy, and business. Notable alumni include Mariano-Florentino Cuellar, California Supreme Court Associate Justice (1992); Erika George, Law Professor at the University of Utah College of Law (1992); Danielle Holley-Walker, Dean at Howard University School of Law (1995); and Grey Mateo-Harris, Partner at Barnes & Thornburg LLP (2004).

Meet the 2021 Summer Undergraduate Fellows:



Natasha Chaiyarat is an incoming senior at Brandeis University, pursuing a double major in International Studies and History. Natasha will be working with ABF Research Professor Christopher Schmidt on his current project on the relationship between the U.S. Supreme Court and the American people since 1930.



Laura Fagbemi is a rising senior at Rice University, with a double major in Social Policy Analysis and English. Laura will examine the Future of Latinos and After the JD projects with ABF Research Professor Robert Nelson.



Connor Herbert is an incoming senior at the University of Cincinnati, majoring in Political Science and International Affairs. He will focus on Chinese lawyer activism and international responses to human rights violations. Connor will work alongside ABF Research Professor Terence Halliday.



Nicole Maria Mateo is a rising sophomore at the University of Chicago and is pursuing a double major in Psychology and Law, Letters, and Society. Nicole will study Portrait Project 2.0 on Asian American Lawyers and diversity in the legal profession with Ajay K. Mehrotra, ABF Executive Director and Research Professor.



Sasha Matsuki is an incoming junior at Indiana University majoring in History and Political Science. Sasha will work alongside ABF Research Professor Tom Ginsburg on his project, Democracies and International Law: The Trials of Liberal Theory.

About the American Bar Foundation

The [American Bar Foundation](#) (ABF) is among the world's leading research institutes for the empirical and interdisciplinary study of law. The ABF seeks to expand knowledge and advance justice through innovative, interdisciplinary, and rigorous empirical research on law, legal processes, and legal institutions. To further this mission the ABF will produce timely, cutting-edge research of the highest quality to inform and guide the legal profession, the academy, and society in the United States and internationally. The ABF's primary funding is provided by the [American Bar Endowment](#) and the [Fellows of The American Bar Foundation](#).