Twitter Thread by Dr. Carson (they/them)



Dr. Carson (they/them)
@OctaviaViento



I'm still not over the fact that only one black bar applicant who was a first time bar taker and a graduate of an ABA accredited school passed the CA bar exam in February 2020 ■

It costs on average $15k to study for the bar exam and pay expenses. Because of the racial wealth gap most Black bar applicants have to work while studying in order to pay their fees and living costs. This dramatically decreases their chances of passing the exam.

Here are a few sources:

https://t.co/UqVeUG1hzD

https://t.co/EXDaCreVrO

https://t.co/LMUFMEWuI8

More resources are on the last two posts of this thread: https://t.co/KcUBDhhrxk

> Sharing why I am a #barexam abolitionist: the history of the bar exam is ugly. In 1875, the first Civil Rights Act passed. White people feared Black people would have more access to civic life, (even tho the Act failed) including becoming attys which at the time just needed 1/8
>
> — Danielle Craig (@danielle__craig) June 27, 2020

In 2020, a collective of law grads along with professors, deans, and attorneys started a movement to abolish the bar exam bc we see it as a major barrier of entry & unnecessary duplicative. It makes entering the legal profession costs prohibitive. https://t.co/S9thxUYXq5

In 2021, I started a Community Fund for Black Bar Applicants to tackle prohibitive costs of the bar exam and raise the number of Black bar applicants that can have a fighting chance of passing:

https://t.co/hYeIFHxTAt

Before the bar exam was widely adopted by states in the early 1900 there was diploma privilege and apprenticeship. Most lawyers did not have to take the bar exam until more states adopted it in the 1970s (coincidentally the height of affirmative action).

In the early 1910s the ABA noticed that 3 Black people had been unintentionally admitted to the Bar, so convened a meeting to discuss how they can make the profession more “pure”. During that meeting they decided to adopt the bar exam and promote it to all states.

By the 1930 southern states were adopting the bar exam by legislative action and proclaiming that it would prevent “negros and undesirable whites” from becoming attorneys. By the 1970s 5% of the profession was Black and 4% of the profession were women.

Now in 2021, 5% of the legal profession is Black, only 2% are black women.

And I don’t have an ending to this thread because this isn’t over until we get more Black representation in the legal field and abolish the bar exam. /TBC