



Lead from Where You Are

Our Approach to Leadership Development

ArentFox
Schiff



AFS FELLOWS
LEADERSHIP MATTERS



In 2017, we started something new. Our vision was bold: to create a unique and meaningful experience that would help our attorneys become better, more effective, and impactful leaders.

Four core pillars guided and centered our work:

*Everyone can lead from where they are.
Everyone must be seen, heard, and valued.
Leadership can and must be taught.
Leadership matters.*

Today, one out of every five attorneys at ArentFox Schiff have either graduated from or are currently a part of the Fellows Program. We created a community that actively supports each other both personally and professionally. And Fellows help make ArentFox Schiff a place where people not only want to work but build their careers.

I am proud of where we are a decade into this firmwide experiment, including the recent addition of the Executive Fellows Program, and I hope this information helps you understand our shared vision for leadership development in the legal profession.

M. Scott Peeler
*Founder and Leader of
The AFS Fellows Programs*





In our first ten years, these objective, measurable impacts of the Fellows Program prove that “leadership matters” isn’t just our tagline - it’s a statement of fact.

100%

All Fellows eligible for promotion have been elevated.

60

60 Fellows have been elevated to Income Partner.

10

10 Fellows have been elevated to Equity Partner.

\$40M

Fellows collected more than \$40 million in fee receipts in 2025.

500+

Fellows associates average 500 more billable hours than other associates.

140+

Fellows partners average 140 more billable hours than other partners.

50%

Half of the firm’s Industry Groups are led by AFS Fellows.

80%

The Fellows Program has an 80% retention rate.



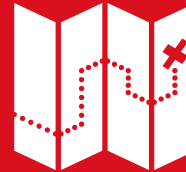
The Fellows Program is a selective, three-year leadership development initiative unique to ArentFox Schiff. Partnering with some of the most brilliant leadership experts in the country, the Center for Creative Leadership®, the Myers-Briggs Company®, and others, the Fellows Program seeks to make every attorney in the firm a thoughtful, strategic, visionary, and effective leader.



5th - 9th Year associates and counsel/partners within two years of their elevation may apply to join the Fellows Program. This allows every attorney up to seven years of eligibility.



Applications are reviewed by the Selection Committee without any identifying information. Following that process, all applicants are interviewed by members of the Committee.



A new class is selected to join the Fellows Program each year. In the Fall, they travel for a weekend retreat and begin their first year of the Program.



Fellows classes stay together for three years. Each year of the Program centers around different elements of leadership, personal growth, and professional development.



The Fellows Program is my favorite part of AFS. It's such a great opportunity – you get to meet a wonderful, diverse group of people while also learning a lot about yourself and how to lead effectively. There's nothing that compares.



Laurel LaMontagne
Fellows Class of 2022



LEAD FROM WHERE YOU ARE

Partnership and leadership are not the same thing. The world often conflates titles with leadership, but this is a mistake. Too many people delay the chance to lead waiting for some arbitrary moment in the future.

True leadership is the ability to push past the inner voice holding us back and actively work to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Everyone must be empowered to share great ideas and **lead from where they are.**





The Fellows Program is founded coinciding with Arent Fox's 75th anniversary.

The inaugural group, the Class of 2017, consists of nine associates and one partner.

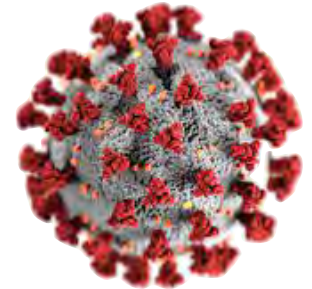
The first Fellows retreat takes place in October.



The Class of 2019 is selected and meets for its retreat.

2019 marks the first time three classes are actively working in the Fellows Program.

The Class of 2017 works on its Third Year Project.



2017

2018

2019

2020



The Class of 2018 is selected.

The Fellows Class of 2017 meets for the inaugural Year Two Retreat in Washington, D.C.



A global pandemic rocks the world in March 2020.

No class is selected this year, and all Fellows work to connect people during a time of working from home. The result is **AF QuaranTeams** which is actively used by more than 1000 employees during the pandemic.

This marks the first time all Fellows come together for a firm-wide project.



The pandemic eases as vaccinations become available, and we slowly begin to return to the office.

The Class of 2021 is selected.

Work on Year Three Projects resumes.



Arent Fox and Schiff Hardin merge, and the Program rebrands from **AF Fellows** to **AFS Fellows**.



The Spring Class of 2022 meets for their retreat in April.



The Class of 2024 becomes the eighth Fellows class and the fourth since the merger.

2021

2022

2023

2024/2025



Two classes are selected this year to facilitate firm integration.

The Fall Class of 2022 meets in Sands Point, New York.



The **Executive Fellows Program** launches and meets for its inaugural retreat in Chicago, Illinois.



The Class of 2023 becomes the seventh Fellows class and the third with members from both legacy firms.



The Class of 2025 becomes the ninth Fellows class and the first to have its retreat in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.





AFS Fellows come from all of our offices, represent every practice and industry group, and foster new and exciting communities.

By bringing together individuals with the widest possible set of personal and professional life experiences, the Fellows Program builds bridges that would not otherwise exist. These add immeasurably to participants' experiences at the firm, and help nurture and protect an organizational culture of which we can all be proud.



The Fellows Program is a great opportunity to focus on being a better professional, a better leader, and a better person. It gives you the extra push and structure to work with peers across the firm that you would otherwise never meet. Since joining the Fellows Program, I am more aware of my professional strengths and weaknesses. Now, rather than just powering through challenges, I am more intentional when working with others, planning my time, and allocating my energy.

Anthony-Ray Sepúlveda
Class of 2022



THE POWER OF EMPOWERMENT

Everyone must be seen, heard, and valued. One of the most important functions of a leader is to include and empower different voices. Whether you're setting an internal vision for the future or coming up with a practical, real world solution for a client, the dialogue must include voices that reflect as many different experiences and viewpoints as possible.

We must always ask, "**what voices are missing from the discussion,**" and how we can meaningfully add them to the conversation.





THE FIRST YEAR

After being selected, each Fellows class begins its three-year journey together on the grounds of a stunning estate. They arrive at a century-old mansion strangers and leave forty-eight hours later bonded in ways impossible to describe.

The themes of the First Year Retreat are self awareness, appreciation of others, the meaning of true leadership, and bonding as a class. All Fellows learn about their personality through the **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®** and receive powerful feedback from the **Center for Creative Leadership's Skillscope 360®**.

The **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®** is one of the world's most popular personality assessments. Used by almost all of the Fortune 500 companies and with more than 70 years of science and research-based insight, the MBTI® is a robust tool for self-awareness and organizational improvement.

Based on the theories of Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, the MBTI® identifies Fellows' natural preferences in four areas of personality:

- Do they focus on the outside world, interacting with people and taking action, or on their inner world, reflecting on ideas, memories, and experiences?
- Do they take in information by focusing on what they perceive using their five senses or by seeing the big picture and looking for relationships and patterns?
- Do they make decisions by analyzing the situation or by considering what's important to those involved?
- Do they approach the outside world in a planned, orderly way or embrace spontaneity?

Fellows' natural preferences in these four areas sort them into one of 16 distinct personality types. Understanding these offers Fellows objective insight they can use to enhance their professional and personal relationships, as well as their direction, focus, and choices.



Sarah Roscioli

The **Center for Creative Leadership® (CCL)** is one of the preeminent providers of leadership development assessments. Over the past 50 years, CCL has worked with top executives of organizations from around the world, including all of the Fortune 100 and more than two-thirds of the Fortune 1000.

CCL created the original **360-degree assessment**, and **Skillscope 360®** is one of the most current and reliable versions of that tool. It provides Fellows straightforward and practical feedback on essential job-related skills. Fellows also gain access to **CCL Compass®** — a cutting-edge online tool that brings this data to life and provides a platform to develop a bespoke action plan.

By learning how they are perceived by their bosses, colleagues, and direct reports, Fellows are armed with the information and the perspectives essential for personal and professional success.



Elizabeth Saratov



THE IMPACT



The first year retreat is special because it presents an opportunity to escape from the demands of day-to-day life, to step back and look at the bigger picture, and to engage with some really important questions. The Fellows Program is a reflection of the attorneys who work here, and the firm will be what we make of it. Beyond that, the discussion and community that you will find is truly special. There's nothing like it.

Ankit Shrivastava
Class of 2021



Programming starts early, but if you can get up just a little earlier, treat yourself to a walk around the grounds in the morning as the sun is rising. It's a great way to clear your mind and get ready for the day. Take advantage of this time by being the most honest version of yourself – that's the way you'll get the most helpful feedback.

Allison Pfeifle
Class of Fall 2022



The First Year Retreat is the most pleasant “working weekend” in my memory bank to date. When I finally met this dynamic group of people, it was magic. Everyone is so, so different...and yet, we all shared our thoughts and ideas and jokes and fun apps on our phones (getting put on to star gazer apps was a total win!), and by the end of the weekend, we were a bonded group and it felt like we had so much in common.

Anne Carmene Almonord
Class of 2019



Listen to all the feedback and be open to change. This is about growing as a person. Exhale and relax – share yourself - you are with people who will have your back going forward. This is my motto – I had special engraved wooden signs made of it, hanging in my house --- “You get what you give.” Open yourself and give lots. Show up. Be present. This weekend, and always.

Berin Romagnolo
Class of 2022



The retreat was the first real opportunity to share ideas and concerns about the transition from senior associate to partner. It was a group of like-minded and similarly driven people with whom I could share concerns. It was also an opportunity to meet peers that have become valued friends and teammates. This is perhaps the best opportunity to meet incredible people who will support you.

Amal Dave
Class of 2017

The First Year Retreat offers Fellows meaningful opportunities to get to know one another and have fun. Gourmet dinners coupled with trivia and a chance to win extraordinary bottles of wine; s'mores in the great fireplace; golf cart races; and walks along the beach are just some of the experiences that bond each Fellows class.





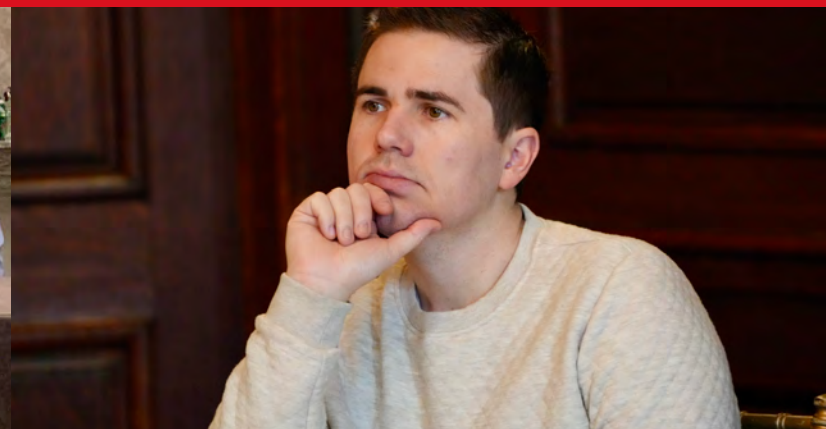
FIRST YEAR PROJECT

During their first year, AFS Fellows are given an individual task known as the **"Mitzvah Project."** A mitzvah is a selfless act done entirely for the benefit of another person. In keeping with this concept, Fellows are asked to choose someone in their lives they are not related to and do something for them without spending money. This work is designed to anchor Fellows to several fundamental pillars of the Program: to lead from where you are; leadership is about making a positive difference in the lives of others; and "small," selfless acts can have an enormous impact.

At the beginning of their Second Year, Fellows meet as a class and share the details of who they chose; what they did; and what they learned.



Leadership is not innate. The traits people usually refer to when describing a “natural born leader” relate more to their stage presence and physical characteristics than their ability to articulate a clear and positive vision. The idea of being born a leader allows for implicit bias and would foreclose the merits of studying, discussing, and fostering leadership qualities in yourself. It also indulges an “us vs. them” mentality that should play no part in true leadership.





THE SECOND YEAR



The second year of the Fellows Program is centered around the importance of mentorship/sponsorship and what it means to lead at the firm. Fellows are given unique opportunities to talk to and learn from individuals tasked to lead ArentFox Schiff.



SECOND YEAR RETREAT

The Year Two Retreat begins with the **Chairs' Dinner**. Fellows spend an evening dining and talking with the current and past Chairs of the firm. This unparalleled opportunity to ask questions and hear from these individuals highlights what it takes to set the vision for the firm and how different people approach that task.

These discussions are powerful, unique, and create strong and enduring bonds.

Our Agenda



Thursday, November 30, 2023

6:00pm – 9:00pm

The Chair's Dinner
Marc Fleischaker, Mark Katz, and Tony Lupo
The Lafayette Restaurant
Hay-Adams Hotel
800 16th Street, NW

Friday, December 1, 2023

8:00am – 10:00am

Leading at ArentFox Schiff
Cristina Carvalho, Joe Krasovec, Brain Waldman
James Madison Room

10:00am – 11:00am

A Culture of Inclusion and Empowerment
Eva Pulliam, Alex Birkhold, Annie Lee
James Madison Room

11:00am – 2:30pm

Working Lunch with Scott Peeler
James Madison Room

2:30pm – 5:00pm

Year-Three Project Discussion
Concorde Room

6:00pm – 8:00pm

Dinner
Joe's Seafood, Prime Steak & Stone Crab
750 15th Street, NW

Saturday, December 2, 2023

8:00am – 10:00am

Breakfast
Concorde Room

8:00 am – 3:00pm

One-On-One Meetings
Concorde Room

The Year Two Retreat also includes a meaningful opportunity to speak with and learn from the firm's Managing Partners.

Through these dialogues, Fellows begin to understand the differences between the firm's Chair and Managing Partner, and perhaps most critically, how they work together cooperatively to realize their shared vision.

Fellows also hear from a variety of other firm leaders including the head of the Financial Management Committee; the firm-wide leads of the Diversity Committee; and Executive Committee members.

Fellows learn what it takes to successfully plan, design, launch, and lead programs that benefit the entire firm. They use real-world examples like the Task Force to shape the firm's approach to diversity, inclusion, equity, and empowerment. They also study the origin of the Fellows Program.

And finally, Fellows discuss and determine what issues they will tackle for their Third Year Project.





SECOND YEAR PROJECT



During their second year, AFS Fellows are asked to think of a person who has meaningfully mentored them and to write that person a letter expressing gratitude for at least three specific things that impacted their lives. After receiving a response, Fellows are asked, “if everyone at the firm were given that same assignment, who would have written to you and what would they highlight?”

This task, known as the “**Sanders Project**,” helps Fellows focus on the power of mentorship and sponsorship and to actively begin that form of leadership and service to others at the firm.



LEADERSHIP MATTERS

That's not just our tagline. Leadership is where organizational cultures are won or lost; morale rises or falls; and vision is gained or sacrificed. Leadership is not relegated simply to those elected or appointed to a titled position - everyone can and should make a difference.

People want to work in an organization with values they share. **Acts of leadership** are how those values are defined.





THE THIRD YEAR



During their third year, Fellows work to identify a major problem or issue facing the firm, develop and implement a workable, specific action plan to improve that situation, and formally present their successes and failures at a year-end meeting. This work is entirely self-driven, and by putting into action all the lessons learned in the Program, Fellows have the opportunity to make positive change on a firm-wide level.



Class of 2017

Recommended changes to the bonus and incentive structure for Associates. These were adopted by the firm and included the change in productivity bonuses to 50-hour increments.



Class of 2018

Recommended improvements to training and business development skills for non-equity partners. These were adopted and led directly to the creation of the Executive Fellows Program.



Class of 2019

Recommended actions to increase income partner representation, development, and retention. Given delays in Third Year Projects related to the pandemic, these recommendations are under review.



THE IMPACT





The Executive Fellows Program launched in November 2022. Sixteen high-performing non-equity partners were named to the inaugural class and met for a four-day retreat in Chicago, Illinois.

This Program teaches Executive Fellows the skills necessary to achieve equity partnership and to succeed once that goal is achieved. Since the Program began, two Executive Fellows have been elevated to equity partnership.

Executive Fellows are paired with some of the firm's best business developers and receive invaluable training and hands-on experience.





The Executive Fellows Program is a two-year leadership, managerial, and business development program for senior non-equity partners. The program pairs each Executive Fellow with a Business Development Mentor (“BDM”) who actively assists them build a book of business sufficient to become an equity partner. In addition, the program provides all Executive Fellows relationships and information necessary to succeed as an equity partner at the firm.



Non-equity partners are nominated by the firm’s Managing Partner to participate in the Executive Fellows Program.



Executive Fellows meet for a four-day retreat where they learn essential leadership and managerial skills, develop their brand, and get unique one-on-one opportunities with the firm’s Chair.



Following the retreat, Executive Fellows meet with their Business Development Mentor. They work together to actively formulate a practical and actionable business plan that is implemented over two years.



In the second year of the program, Executive Fellows meet quarterly to learn skills and information vital for their success in programs called the Equity Partner Toolkit series.



Participating in the Executive Fellows Program is one of the most impactful experiences I have had at the firm. The insight I gained from the various self-evaluations and feedback from my fellow attorneys has helped me in business development, as an attorney and manager, and in my personal life as well. In addition, I got to know other partners and firm leadership in an intimate setting. I recommend the program to anyone.



Jill Steinberg
Executive Fellows Class of 2022



The Fellows Community. The Fellows Program creates bonds between participants that add immeasurably to their lives. These friendships would not otherwise exist and are genuine, safe, supportive, and entirely organic. They extend to families, major life events, and celebrations, and these relationships lead directly to major personal and professional successes. It is by far one of the best parts of the Fellows Program.





For more information about the Fellows Program, please contact:

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