



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For information contact:
Leah Gurowitz 202/ 879-1700

July Bar Exam Sets Record *An Historic Day for the D.C. Court of Appeals*

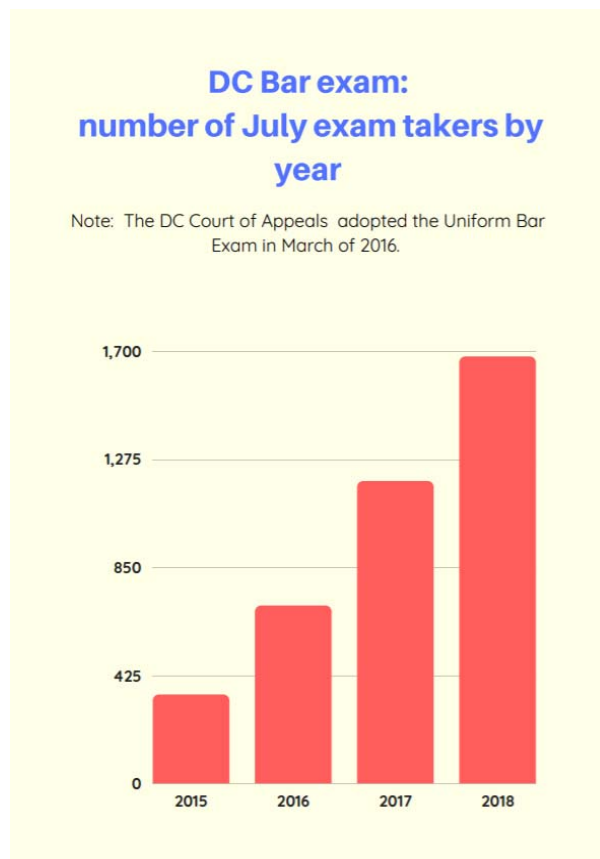
WASHINGTON, DC - July 24-25, 2018 marked an historic milestone for the D.C. Court of Appeals (DCCA), as nearly 1,700 exam takers packed the Walter E. Washington Convention Center to sit for the DC Bar Exam. The DCCA's Office of the Committee on Admissions & Unauthorized Practice of Law (COA/UPL) administered the exam, the largest in DC's history! Under the oversight of Julio Castillo, Clerk of Court, and Shela Shanks, Director of the COA/UPL, and her dedicated staff, the exam was administered with minimal disruptions. The effort was also supported by a host of DC Court volunteers – proctors, event staff and other essential personnel (e.g. medical and security teams) – without whom the successful administration of the exam would not have been possible.



(set-up of the Convention Center's Lower Exhibit Hall in advance of the bar exam)

“I applaud the hard work of the Committee on Admissions under the leadership of Director Shela Shanks and the Clerk and Deputy Clerk of the Court of Appeals, Julio Castillo and Herb Rouson. They successfully administered the largest bar exam in the District of Columbia’s history,” said DCCA Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby. “With the adoption of the Uniform Bar Exam, the number of bar exam takers in the District of Columbia has increased four-fold. The D.C. Court of Appeals oversees the largest unified Bar in the country. The integrity of the D.C. Bar is critical to ensuring access to justice both here in Washington, D.C. and across the country where our members reside. The D.C. Court of Appeals, in conjunction with the D.C. Bar, will continue to find new ways to offer value to D.C. Bar members, while ensuring the quality of the Bar.”

In 2018, a total of 2,393 law school graduates took the DC bar exam; representing a 49.8% increase over the 1,597 applicants who sat for the February and July 2017 bar exams combined. Through July 2018, there have been 2,110 new attorneys sworn-in to the DC Bar; representing a 25.2% increase over the 1,685 attorneys sworn-in between January and July of 2017. “In these challenging fiscal times for our DC Court system, and against the backdrop of stagnant and/or shrinking resources, I’m extremely proud of the growing commitment of our COA/UPL staff and their stakeholders,” said Herb Rouson, DCCA’s Chief Deputy Clerk of Court. “Their ongoing commitment to COA/UPL’s mission is also a strong indication that the DC Courts’ goals, particularly those of having a *Professional and Engaged Workforce*...through *Effective Court Management and Administration* are appropriately guiding our day-to-day operations,” Rouson added.



In response to the tremendous increase in the demand for membership into the DC Bar, the DCCA has taken a number of steps to streamline and/or revise its business processes. For example, through [Administrative Order 03-18](#) (issued in April 2018), the DCCA implemented a new process that allows attorneys, upon certification for admission, to be sworn-in to the DC Bar in absentia.

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