

My name is Alaina Bethel, and I'm a third-year History and Political Science student at the University of Cincinnati. As a young woman of color aspiring to become an attorney, DEI initiatives have provided me with a sense of community, learning, and growth. They have allowed me to learn about other people's perspectives, history, and experiences.

As a history student, I firmly believe in examining the good, bad, and the ugly parts of history; even if it challenges our personal beliefs. History can be raw and brutal, yet it also highlights the experiences of marginalized people and how they fought against oppression. It is important to highlight all sides of history, even the dark sides, so we do not repeat it.

I also serve as the Community Coordinator for Black Women in Pre-Law, a group that fosters sisterhood, community, and equality. As part of our community outreach, we work with a non-profit organization called Adopt A Class, where we visit underprivileged schools to talk to students about college and introduce them to the legal field through mock trials. For many of these kids it's the first time they see someone that looks like them pursuing a career in law. This type of representation is crucial, it allows students to see what is possible for them and encourages them to break barriers.

Currently only 2% of attorneys in the United States are Black women. Without DEI, students like me lose crucial support networks that help us navigate spaces where we are underrepresented. and a place of community. These initiatives are not about division; they are about bringing people together and giving everyone an equal opportunity to succeed

Thank you for listening,

Alaina Bethel