

## Talking Points: Fatima Elmansy

**2021 CHARLES J. BEARD, II DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT**

Boston University Law student Fatima Elmansy has been selected as a Foley Hoag 2021 Charles J. Beard, II Fellowship recipient. Fatima received her Bachelor of Arts from Hunter College where she studied Political Science. As a law student, she is involved with various groups such as the International Refugee Assistance Project, the Women of Color Collaborative, Middle Eastern Law Students Association, and Muslim Law Students Association.

### How did you become interested in law?

My interest stems from my personal and professional experiences. Especially after becoming a community organizer, I realized that my strengths lie in advocating and there was a natural progression to go to law school. Communities, especially marginalized ones, need good advocates, who can understand their experiences and specific needs. I'm also drawn to the intellectual rigor of the field; I love learning, and in law, you get to learn something new every day.

### What do you hope to gain in your experience at Foley Hoag?

I hope to gain as much experience as possible from people who are experts at what they do. I want to learn valuable lessons from both junior and senior lawyers, both from their careers as well as their lives, that I can incorporate into my career down the road. I also wish to pick up assignments in a variety of practice areas so that I might find an area of focus that best suits me. Law school is very litigation heavy, so I'm hoping to gain practical experience doing transactional work.

### How will your previous experience translate during your time at Foley Hoag?

I believe my experience during the three years I took off between my undergraduate degree and law school will aid me in my time at Foley Hoag. During my time as a community organizer in local government, I



*Fatima Elmansy*

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learned to be resourceful and deliver the best services to the community with whatever resources I had. I carry this mindset with me as I begin to transition into law. I hope my proactive attitude and unique background are helpful as I navigate a new and challenging, yet rewarding environment.

### What do you hope to accomplish during your time at Foley Hoag?

I hope to build meaningful and lasting relationships with people that I truly admire. As a law student, I want to get a better grasp of what it's like to be a full-time associate at Foley Hoag. I hope to work on interesting cases and make sure I have fun in the process!

### What do you envision for your career in law?

I want to carry the principles that drew me to law school in the first place into my time as a lawyer. First and foremost, I plan to remain true to myself by maintaining a community-centered approach. I also hope to become an expert in a chosen field that I am passionate about, but remain involved in pro-bono work and in mentoring other young women of color who navigate this space.

### What issues do you specifically hope to address as a lawyer? What matters to you?

As I learn more about the law, the inequities that exist within our legal system become more apparent and I'm motivated to do something about it. I hope to more fully understand where these inequities stem from, so that I can address them and work towards change instead of blindly accepting them. Issues of racial and social justice are of importance to me, and I hope to remain involved in them. A big reason I came to Foley Hoag is that the firm is very intentional about its DE&I initiatives. There is a genuine commitment to being engaged in DE&I and this is an important step towards addressing some of the inequities in law.

### How has your experience with student organizations influenced your career path?

My involvement in student organizations has decisively enriched my time at Boston University and yielded insight I hope to take with me through to my career. I'm the president of the Women of Color Collaborative this upcoming year, an organization that I find provides a needed space for women of color and allies. Additionally, my experience with the International Refugee Assistance Project has increased my care and interest in human rights beyond our borders and has served as an important outlet for further exploring my interests in law school.

### How do you anticipate your language skills will provide you an edge as a lawyer?

I'm fluent in Arabic as well as proficient in Spanish. I think that being bilingual is an enriching part of life and a unique advantage in law. Being able to communicate across language barriers provides an understanding of how different people communicate. It gives one a sense of how others exist in the world and have many different lived experiences. This cross-cultural awareness helps deepen my understanding of other people's perspectives and allows me to further my work.