



ANTHANETTE (TONI) FIELDS

Founder
AMF Management

LOOKING FOR DIVERSE EXPERIENCES? BECOME A LAWYER.

The daughter of an immigrant, Anthanette (Toni) Fields has witnessed the impact of the law on people's lives. "I've seen how important law can be for people's livelihoods," Fields says. "A lawyer can bring justice and a credible voice to people who go unheard, which often includes people from my own community."

Fields has loved the variety that a law degree provides—whether clerking for a federal judge, working at Laugh Factory Management in Hollywood, practicing intellectual property law, handling in-house securities arbitration for the National Association of Securities Dealers (now the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority), or working for FOX Television Stations. "I wasn't ever cubby-holed as a lawyer," says Fields. "I've worked with so many different people and projects."

Now as the founder of AMF Management, Fields combines her business and law background to provide entrepreneurial business management to her clients who are artists and entertainment professionals.

"I get to work with amazing artists and counsel them on how they can take care of themselves and their families in the future," Fields says. "Some of my clients never finished high school because of their careers. My background enables me to give them advice about some of their most important decisions."

DON'T GIVE UP

Though her career appears impressive, Fields often felt like giving up. She was overwhelmed at the idea of taking the LSAT, claiming she never performed well on standardized tests. Even after paying for an LSAT preparatory class, her score only slightly improved. "I was so discouraged," she says. Instead of conceding, Fields set up appointments with the admissions offices to explain her score and share more about her other accomplishments. "It's so important to talk with the admissions offices and the professors where you are applying," says Fields. "You can share other strengths and show your perseverance to succeed. Don't let the LSAT be your barrier to law school."

The summer before law school, Fields was chosen for the James Weldon Johnson/Robert H. Waters Summer Institute. The Institute provides the opportunity for roughly 15 fellows, particularly minority students, to participate in a five-week intensive learning experience at the University of Miami before fall classes begin.

"Though I was accepted, I felt like I couldn't succeed and I didn't belong," remembers Fields. "I told Professor Robert Waters, the head of the Institute, that they were wasting their money on me. I felt like I wasn't smart enough, like I was a farce." With Professor Waters' encouragement, Fields stuck with the program and now credits the mentorship and encouragement from the Institute as influential in her success.

Financial pressures also discouraged Fields. "When I told my father about the cost of law school," says Fields, "I knew he didn't even make that much money in a year." Fields advises prospective students to remain positive and research their options. "Don't be discouraged by the numbers," Fields says. "Get financial aid and debt counseling. Find free services through the Financial Aid Office."

Fields does not hesitate when asked whether overcoming challenges was worthwhile. "Absolutely!" she replies. "I'm not saying law school is easy or that being a lawyer is a magic bullet to success, but they provide the tools and resources to shape your world. That's invaluable."