

Profiles of the 2004 Winners of the WLAM Foundation Outstanding Woman Law Student Award

Robin Apisa, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, Michigan State University at Detroit College of Law.



Born and raised in Hawaii, Ms. Apisa practices her belief in “O’hana,” the need to care for others. She mentored high school students in the Lansing area, worked in the MSU/DCL Rental Housing Clinic serving low income tenants, and currently works as an intern in the Flint City Attorney’s Office, counseling victims of domestic violence. Ms. Apisa has served as Vice-President of the Women’s Law Caucus, President of the Labor and Employment Law Association, captain of her moot court team, and Director of Competitions for the Moot Court and Advocacy Board. She has been on the Dean’s List for two years and will graduate this May.

Osleen Barrington, Ford Motor Company Fund Awardee, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law.



Ms. Barrington found her role model in her mother, who raised two daughters as a single parent, providing them with strength and courage. Her involvement in the law school’s immigration clinic included representing a woman who had been tortured in Cameroon; asylum was granted thanks to her passionate and skilled work. Ms. Barrington has been a Girl Guide Leader, motivating young girls to develop their independence, has volunteered at Crossroads serving Detroit’s homeless, and recently completed training to be a mediator. A member of the Moot Court Board of Directors and Black Law Students’ Association, she will graduate this May.

Tanille Brooks, Ford Motor Company Fund Awardee, Wayne State University Law School.



Tanille Brooks has put her education to good use, serving as a reading and Spanish tutor for students in several Detroit schools. She has volunteered at Ann Arbor’s Safe House, counseling battered women and answering the emergency hotline. At Wayne, she currently serves as Treasurer of the Black Law Student Association and will graduate in May of 2005. Ms. Brooks also currently clerks for Michigan Supreme Court Justice Marilyn J. Kelly.

Ryann-Lynn O’Boyle Bunch, Howard & Howard Awardee, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law.



First in her class at UDM, Ms. Bunch serves as Editor-in-Chief of its Law Review, was Treasurer of her Second Year Class, and participates in the American Inns of Court Program and Women's Law Caucus. The first in her family to attend college, Ms. Bunch worked her way through while caring for a chronically ill sibling. She worked as an intern at the Saint Clair County Prosecutor's Office, and as a summer associate at Bodman Longley, all the while winning numerous academic awards. A mentor to other law students, Ms. Bunch plans a lifetime of mentoring others.

Neftara Clark, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, Michigan State University at Detroit College of Law.



Ms. Clark will graduate this spring after a very active law school experience that included membership in the Black Law Student Association, the Women's Law Caucus and Family Law Society, and the Chance of Childhood Program. Her advocacy on behalf of domestic violence victims has included work in the Ingham County Prosecutor's Domestic Violence Unit, research for the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and clerking in the Domestic Violence Unit of a Legal Services Office. The recipient of many leadership awards and a long-time mentor to young people, Ms. Clark's stated passion is "development of progressive grass roots programs that not only look good on paper, but also truly benefit people, especially children and their families."

Jackie J. Cook, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, Cooley Law School.



Ms. Cook works full time as the Intensive Juvenile Probation Officer for Sanilac County Family Court while attending Cooley in its full time weekend program. Her deep understanding of family dynamics arises in part from her supervision and counseling of juveniles who are perpetual offenders. She previously served as the Sanilac County Prosecutor's Domestic Violence Victims' Advocate, educating and empowering women while also volunteering her time at the local shelter. As Secretary for the Sanilac Area Violence Elimination Council, and a member of the county's Child Abuse Prevention Council, Ms. Cook devotes herself to fundraising and public relations that have a major impact on the community.

Jenny A. Covington, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, Wayne State University Law School.



The mother of a four-year-old son, Ms. Covington founded the Parents' Association at the law school as a support network for students with dependents. Her diverse interests are reflected in her BS degree in microbiology and internship with an arts arbitration association in California. As a representative for the Wayne Student Board of Governors, Ms. Covington has organized fundraisers for the Women's Law Caucus, First Step, and student organizations. Ms. Covington currently clerks for Chief Judge Lawrence Zatkoff of Michigan's Eastern District, and she will graduate in May of this year.

Sharon Dolente, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, University of Michigan Law School.



Ms. Dolente's commitment to women is demonstrated by her roles throughout law school as Co-President of the Women Law Students Association, editor of the Michigan Journal of Gender and Law, organizer of a symposium on marriage law, and teacher of an undergraduate course on Women and Law. Devoted to a planned career in public interest law, Ms. Dolente has worked in public defender offices, on death penalty research, and on the board of an organization providing funding to students pursuing public interest careers. She hopes to work on reform of Michigan's public defense system, and to continue her mentoring activities with Young Detroit Builders after her graduation in May.

Dena Lampinen, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, Cooley Law School.



Ms. Lampinen has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to fighting domestic violence through both her career and community service. A district court probation officer in Lansing, she is a member of a Domestic Assault Response Team, assists survivors in obtaining personal protection orders, organizes childcare for survivors, and is a key participant in the group End Violent Encounters. She cites the strength of domestic violence survivors as her inspiration, and expects to work toward improving their treatment in the legal system upon her graduation from law school.

Donna K. Mallonee, Ford Motor Company Fund Awardee, Michigan State University at Detroit College of Law.



Ms. Mallonee's community activism has centered on an environmental cause believed to impact women and children disproportionately; the presence of cancer-causing chemicals in certain areas, in her case, Midland, Michigan. Her research and advocacy as a local resident and mother have brought light onto an important health issue, and spurred cleanup responses. Ms. Mallonee is a member of Cooley's Women's Law Caucus, and its Public Interest Law Society and Environmental Society, and she will graduate this May.

Amy Myers, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, University of Michigan Law School.



A student attorney at the law school's Family Law Project who represents domestic violence survivors in divorce and custody disputes, Ms. Myers is continuing her strong commitment to women's issues. She has directed a Women's Center, organized a "Take Back the Night" campaign, done research for Lambda Legal, the Michigan Poverty Law Project and the Feminist Majority Foundation, and organized Head Start volunteers, also winning a 2002 Initiative Award for changing the culture at her undergraduate university. Ms. Myers plans to work exclusively in the public interest upon her May, 2005 graduation, preventing violence against women and helping victims live as survivors.

Suzanne Newsom, Justine Orris Awardee of the Macomb Region Women Lawyers Association, Wayne State University Law School.



Ms. Newsom is a dedicated advocate of women's rights, primarily demonstrated through her mentoring, networking and domestic violence activities. As the sole woman member of Wayne National Moot Court Team, she has mentored junior team members; as a member of the Women's Law Caucus, she has managed a mentorship program and implemented a new "Networking for Women" seminar. Ms. Newsom plans to practice family law, and has been influenced by her experiences on child protection cases at the Attorney General's Office, and her research work on family violence.

Lana Panagoulia, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan Foundation Awardee, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law.



Ms. Panagoulia's belief in a life of service is reflected by the quote with which she started her application: "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time. [Marian Wright Edelman]." Active as an officer in the law school's Student Bar Association, she has been part of its first all-women board. She organized a "Voice of Justice" fundraising campaign that raised \$28,000 for student fellowships, far more than had previously been raised. Ms. Panagoulia has clerked for Michigan Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly and will graduate in May of 2005.

Patty Skuster, Ford Motor Company Fund Awardee, University of Michigan Law School.



Ms. Skuster's life-defining experience in Namibia as a Peace Corps volunteer, organizing women in empowerment workshops and developing AIDS awareness projects, led her to a joint degree program in law and public policy. At Michigan, she has chaired the Political Action Committee of the Women Law Student Association, and won the first Cornelia Kennedy Scholarship for Women's Rights Advocacy, while also teaching undergraduate courses on worldwide hunger, homelessness and reproductive policies. Following her graduation this May, Ms. Skuster plans to advance women's reproductive rights on a global scale as the leader of a non-governmental organization.

Wendy Strouse, Ford Motor Company Fund Awardee, Cooley Law School.



Ms. Strouse is the founder and director of a task force against domestic violence, working with community leaders and justice system members to raise awareness, collaborate on services, and improve law enforcement policies. This leadership arose from her experience as a case manager in a homeless shelter, where she counseled women and served as their advocate in several arenas. On the Dean's List at Cooley, and planning to pursue a career that includes advocacy on family violence, Ms. Strouse will graduate this May.