



LAW SCHOOL

The Vandy BLSA Bulletin

2013-2014 Executive Board

APRIL KNOX
PRESIDENT

KENDRA KEY
VICE PRESIDENT

LECELLE CLARK
TREASURER

KATORI BROWN
SECRETARY

ERIN SHACKELFORD
PARLIAMENTARIAN
FUNDRAISING

JESSICA NWOKOCHA
SAMARA SHEPHERD
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

CYLE CATLETT
VINCENT LEWIS
COMMUNITY SERVICE

QUINTON THOMPSON
CHRISTOPHER BROWN
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

DOLAPO OLUSHOLA
JAVON PAYTON
SPECIAL EVENTS

PAMELA ONYEKABA
ADMISSIONS &
RECRUITMENT

ARRIN RICHARDS
SOCIAL

JAMES ALEXANDER
SAMIYYAH ALI
CHRISTOPHER MAIR
1L REPRESENTATIVES

PROF. BEVERLY MORAN
FACULTY ADVISOR

A Message from the President

On behalf of the Vanderbilt Black Law Students Association, I welcome you to the first issue of the 2013-2014 edition of the BLSA Bulletin.

I am so excited to serve as BLSA President this year. As you read the profiles on the following pages, I am sure you will see why. Our members are doing great things, both inside and outside the law school. From leading student organizations to journal memberships and community service, BLSA continues to blaze trails and lead by example.

As we prepare for another productive school year, our calendar is quickly filling up with programming centered on our core purposes: professionalism, academic excellence, and service to our communities. This fall, BLSA will host a talk by Arkansas Representative Darrin Williams ('93), CEO of Southern Bancorp. We will continue our annual participation in the Nashville AIDS Walk, and take part in Hands on Nashville Day. The Academic Excellence Committee is hard at work organizing our mentoring program, maintaining the BLSA library and planning academic

and professional development opportunities for our members.

In our effort to maintain a relevant and purposeful presence, we realize that our success is achieved only because of the support and generosity of our alumni and sponsors. Thank you for the many ways you continue to make our experiences meaningful.

April N. Knox
President
2013-2014



BLSA Co-sponsors Conversation on Syrian Conflict

On Friday, September 13, BLSA partnered with the International Law Society to host a conversation with Professor Mike Newton on the conflict in Syria. Professor Newton, who serves as director of the Vanderbilt-in-Venice Program, is an expert on accountability, transnational justice, and conduct of hostilities issues.

The discussion was centered on the effects of the War Powers Resolution, humanitarian intervention and treaty law on the rising tensions in Syria. Professor Newton presented the audience with a historical understanding of how these sources of law were used to intervene in other international conflicts and why those approaches may or may not be

successfully utilized now.

Professor Newton publishes extensively in the area of international law. More information about him and his research can be found at www.law.vanderbilt.edu/bio/michael-newton and his scholarly papers can be found on Social Science Research Network at www.ssrn.com.



Member Highlights



Alandis Brassel, ('15) of Newport News, Virginia, received his B.S. in Music Engineering Technology from Hampton University and M.A. in Music Business from NYU. Prior to law school, Alandis owned Go Forth Music, where he provided consulting and audio engineering services to companies like Island Def Jam and Bloomberg Television. He spent his 1L summer with the Metro Nashville Public Defender's Office.

Alandis currently serves as Vice President of Community Affairs for the Vanderbilt Intellectual Property Association and on the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law editorial staff.



Christopher Brown ('15) hails from Etiwanda, California. He completed his undergraduate degree at Columbia University. In addition to serving as one of BLSA's Black History Month Chairs, Chris is a VBA Ambassador, a member of the Legal Aid Auction Team and Moot Court, and participated in the 1L Mock Trial Competition.

Chris spent his summer working in the Economic and Cyber Crimes Unit of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office.



Katori Brown ('15) is a native of Brunswick, Georgia. She attended Alabama State University and received a B.A. in Communication before moving on to Howard University, where she obtained her M.A. in Mass Media and Media Studies.

Katori is the 2013-14 BLSA Secretary as well as Vice President of Publicity for the Vanderbilt Intellectual Property Association. She serves as a Pro Bono Phone Bank volunteer with the Nashville Legal Aid Society and a Book Em' Reading volunteer.

Katori spent her summer with the Federal Communications Commission, in the Telecommunications Access Policy Division.

Cyle Catlett ('15), of Chicago, Illinois, completed his undergraduate education at Eastern Illinois University. He is a recipient of the American Bar Association Legal Opportunity Scholarship and currently serves as Co-Chair for BLSA's Community Service Committee.

In addition to his BLSA involvement, Cyle is a 2L Representative for the Vanderbilt Bar Association and participant in the Moot Court Competition. He is also a research assistant for Professor Tracey George.



Kendra Key ('15) currently serves as the BLSA Vice President. She is on the editorial staff for the Environmental Law and Policy Annual Review and holds memberships in the ABA and Legal Aid Society. Kendra is a Dean's Scholar and a Fellow in the Cal Turner Program for Moral Leadership in the Professions.

A native of Tuscaloosa, Alabama and graduate of the University of Alabama, Kendra spent her summer in Birmingham, working as a summer associate for Maynard, Cooper and Gale and Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz.

Vincent Lewis ('15) earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Illinois. He is Co-Chair for the BLSA Community Service Committee and serves on the board for Community Service Development of Nashville, a local mentoring program.



Ariel Mason ('15) is a native of Memphis, Tennessee. She is a Double 'Dore, having received her undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University prior to beginning law school.

Ariel serves as President of the Vanderbilt Health Law Society and a member of the Vanderbilt Intellectual Property Association. She was a quarterfinalist in the 1L Mock Trial Competition and is a classical violist.

Over the summer, Ariel attended the Vanderbilt in Venice program and worked in the legal department for Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation.



Noah Mason ('15) received a B.A. in Communications, with a Minor in History, from Denison University in Granville, Ohio. In addition to being an active BLSA member, he served as 1L Representative for the Law & Business Society.

Noah is currently an editorial staff member for the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law. During the 2013 summer, he interned with the Hon. Nannette Jolivet Brown of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana in New Orleans and the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office in Decatur, Georgia.

Jessica Nwokocho ('14) is from Atlanta, Georgia and graduated *summa cum laude* from Howard University, with a degree in Journalism. She is a Chancellor's Law Scholar and recipient of the Cecil D. Branstetter Litigation and Dispute Resolution Summer Fellowship.

Jessica is the current President of the Law School Honor Council, Authorities Editor for the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law, Academic Excellence Co-Chair for BLSA, and member of the Moot Court Board. She also served as Associate Justice for the First Amendment Competition, 1L Representative for the Intellectual Property Association, and was an octofinalist in the 1L Mock Trial Competition.

In addition to interning with the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia and the Fulton County Superior Court, Jessica was a summer associate with Johnston Barton Proctor & Rose and a legal intern for the Fulton County District Attorney's Office in Atlanta.



Dolapo Olushola ('15) is a native of Abuja, Nigeria. She attended Davidson College, where she received a B.A. in Economics. In addition to her role as BLSA Special Events Co-Chair, Dolapo serves as Treasurer of the Vanderbilt International Law Society, Community Liaison Officer of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Organization, and was a 1L Representative of the Law School Honor Council.

Dolapo is a recipient of the Lightfoot Franklin & White Best Oralist Award, sits on the Student Committee of the International Bar Association, and is a student contributor for the *International Case Law Reporter*. She is also participating in the 2L Moot Court Competition. Dolapo spent her summer interning for the Federal Ministry of Justice in Abuja, Nigeria and the Hon. Cheri Beasley, Supreme Court of North Carolina.

Pamela Onyekaba ('15) hails from Minneapolis, Minnesota and received her undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota, Twin-Cities. She is the Admissions and Recruitment Chair for BLSA.

Pamela is also a participant in the Moot Court Competition and a Re-entry Organizer for the Riverbend Prison Insider Support and Education ("RISE") Program. She spent her summer with Lightfoot, Franklin & White, LLP and the TN Department of Children's Services.



Erin Shackelford ('15) is an alumnus of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where she received a B.A. in English Literature. She is a Deans Scholar and a 2L Representative for the Vanderbilt Bar Association.

This year, Erin is serving as both BLSA Parliamentarian and Fundraising Chair. She is also an editorial staff member for the Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law.

Samara Shepherd ('15) is a native of Tampa, Florida and completed her undergraduate studies at Florida State University in Tallahassee. She co-chairs BLSA's Academic Success Committee.

In addition to her leadership in BLSA, Samara is a member of the editorial staff for the Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law. She is also a member of the Law and Business Society and Sports Law Society and a recipient of the Lightfoot Franklin & White Best Oralist Award. Samara spent her summer with Locke Lord in Houston, Texas and Carlton Fields in Tampa, Florida.



Quinton Thompson ('15) obtained a B.S. in Business Administration Management from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He has been an active member of BLSA since beginning law school and is now Co-Chair of the Black History Month Committee.

As a 1L, Quinton participated in the Legal Aid Society as a 1L Representative and a member of the Street Law Program and Deferred Action Clinic. He was also a quarterfinalist in the 1L Mock Trial Competition.

Quinton continues his active leadership, serving as Street Law Director for the Legal Aid Society and Mock Trial Coach for Glencliff High School. He is also participating in the 2L Moot Court Competition this fall.

PLATINUM SPONSOR

The 2013 BLSA Annual Talent Show was sponsored by Lightfoot Franklin White, LLC. The talent show ticket sales fund our Damali Booker Public Interest Stipend, which is awarded annually to a graduating 3L pursuing a career in public interest. This year's stipend was awarded to Courtnee Reid, Class of 2013. Courtnee is from Miramar, Florida and is currently employed by Dade Legal Aid in Miami, Florida.



LIGHTFOOT FRANKLIN WHITE LLC
TRIAL & APPELLATE COUNSEL



Courtnee Reid, '13

GOLD SPONSOR

Miller & Martin, PLLC continued its long-time generous support of Vandy BLSA by sponsoring the 2012 Alumni Homecoming Reception which was held on Friday, October 26, 2012 in the North Lobby of the Law School.



SILVER SPONSOR



On January 26, 2013, Bradley Arant Boult Cummings sponsored BLSA's first Women's Empowerment Breakfast and cordially hosted our event in its Nashville office.



LAW SCHOOL

Vanderbilt Bar Association – Sponsor of the Fall 2013 edition of the *Vandy BLSA Bulletin*



LAW SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall

- Black Law Student Association & Owen Black Student Association Alumni Happy Hour – Thursday, October 4
- 2013 Nashville AIDS Walk – Saturday, October 5
- Rep. Darrin Williams (AK) – Monday, October 28
- BLSA Staff Appreciation Reception – Wednesday, November 20
- BLSA Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner – Thursday, November 21

Spring

- Women's Empowerment Breakfast
- 1L Interviewing Workshop
- Black History Month Programming
- Read Me Week & Book Drive
- Annual Talent Show – Friday, April 4
- Robert Belton 3L Banquet – Wednesday, April 16