

2023 SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

JAZZ

Gala

UPLIFTING EACH OTHER &  
HONORING OUR JOURNEYS

ASSOCIATION OF  
BLACK   
WOMEN LAWYERS  
OF NEW JERSEY

APRIL  
29  
2023



Duane Morris proudly supports the  
**Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey**  
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*Uplifting Each Other & Honoring Our Journeys.*  
Congratulations to our colleague Trina L. Glass  
and all of tonight's honorees.

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2023 SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

# JAZZ *Gala*

UPLIFTING EACH OTHER &  
HONORING OUR JOURNEYS

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SCAN HERE FOR  
FUNDRAISER AUCTION



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*Cara Fort*

**2023 SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER**

# **JAZZ** *Gala*

**UPLIFTING EACH OTHER &  
HONORING OUR JOURNEYS**

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Greetings All,

On behalf of the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey (“ABWL”), I extend a warm welcome to all of you to our 2022 Annual Scholarship Fundraiser. It brings me joy to write to you as the President of ABWL, an organization that is committed to honoring Black women and providing support and resources to the law students and communities we serve.

ABWL’s annual scholarship fundraiser is a vital event for our organization, as it allows us to support and uplift the next generation of Black women attorneys and honor outstanding Black women achievers. This year, our theme is “Uplifting Each Other and Honoring Our Journeys”. In that spirit, I would like to thank our scholarship fundraiser committee for their dedication and commitment to make this event possible. Their efforts are instrumental in providing an uplifting and successful platform to fundraise.

As we celebrate the accomplishments of our honorees and scholarship recipients, let us acknowledge their hard work, perseverance, and dedication, they have demonstrated in their unwavering commitment to excellence.

To our young women recipients, we say: we see you, we believe in you, and we are here to support and uplift you along the way.

To our honorees, we say, you are amazing trailblazers, embodying courage, resilience, and excellence. You uplift and inspire us to reach new heights, honoring the journey of black women everywhere.

To our sponsors, your generosity and support make it possible for ABWL to achieve its mission. We thank you for your dedication and support, in providing financial opportunities for Black women law students and ABWL, as we serve our constituency and communities.

To our supporters and friends, we appreciate your steadfast commitment to our academic, personal and professional development. Your continued partnership and participation in our efforts, are essential to our success as individuals and as an organization.

Moving forward, let us continue to uplift each another and honor our individual journeys by promoting empathy, healthy connections and support. This empowers us all to make a positive impact on our profession, our communities, and our personal lives.

Congratulations to our honorees and recipients! May everyone enjoy this special occasion!!

Kindest regards,

**Kimberly D. Deal, Esq.**  
President, ABWL-NJ



**McCarter  
English** &

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRWOMAN



Dear Guests, Friends, and Family:

On behalf of the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey (ABWL), I am delighted to welcome you to this year's Scholarship Fundraiser Jazz Gala. Your support of this esteemed organization and its mission to empower Black women in the legal profession is truly appreciated. In 1975, our Dear Founders formed this organization because they experienced the need for Black women lawyers to have a space where they can network with each other, grow professionally, and provide support to each other in a way that only those with similar backgrounds and experiences can.

ABWL has continued to fulfill its mission by providing scholarships to well-deserving law students to assist them in shouldering the financial cost of their education. Indeed this year, ABWL will award its largest amount yet in scholarships. ABWL has also established a robust mentorship program where law students are paired with seasoned attorneys who offer guidance, support, and a unique perspective on the legal profession.

During our program, we will honor phenomenal attorneys who embody this event's theme – Uplifting Each Other and Honoring Our Journeys. The theme was inspired by the challenges Black women attorneys have faced due to professional and personal changes engendered by the recent global health crisis, the racial tensions that surfaced publicly, and the need to reevaluate one's place in the workforce. These challenges could not have been overcome without the support of family, friends, and colleagues. As Black women, we have also leaned on our resilient spirit and ingenuity to forge new paths forward by taking the roads less traveled. Although the personal and professional decisions many of us have made did not make sense to others and even ourselves, they have brought us to places along our journey that have helped us grow in so many ways.

To all of Our Sponsors, Guests, Donors, and Vendors, thank you for your unwavering support and for joining us today. Tonight, you are invited to celebrate along with us our renewed spirit while we will continue to Uplift Each Other and Honor Our Journeys.

To the entire planning committee, words cannot express my gratitude for your support and hard work. Without you, this event would not have been a success.

And to ABWL as a whole, I am humbled by the trust that you have placed in me in chairing this year's marquee event. Thank you!

Warmly,

**Narline Casimir, Esq.**

Chair, Scholarship Jazz Gala  
President-Elect, ABWL-NJ

# EVENT COMMITTEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Event Chairwoman**

President Elect Narline Casimir, Esq.

## **Administrative Support**

Ms. Ann L. Watkins

## **Auction Fundraiser:**

JoEllyn Jones, Esq.

## **Awards & Honors**

Danalee Elie, Esq.

Danielle Counts, Esq.

Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq.

Nilaja Ford, Esq.

Kea S. Noyan, Esq.

## **Communications, Marketing & Technology:**

Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq.

## **Decor**

Donnette Brown, Esq.

## **Entertainment**

Afiyfa Ellington, Esq.

Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq.

Kimberly D. Deal, Esq.

## **Finance:**

Kea S. Noyan, Esq.

## **Program Journal:**

Alicia Hubbard, Esq.

Chané Jones, Esq.

Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq.

Nilaja Ford, Esq.

## **Scholarships:**

Angel Otuwa, Esq.

Hon. Michelle Perry-Thompson, J.S.C.

Hon. Geraldine Eure, J.M.C.

Hon. Paula Dow, J.S.C.

Tracy M. Thompson, Esq.

Vera McCoy, Esq.

Temperance Williamson, Esq.

Donnette Brown, Esq.

## **Sponsorships & Advertisements:**

Nilaja Ford, Esq.

Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq.

## **Vendors**

Afiyfa Ellington, Esq.

**Many thanks from Chairwoman Narline Casimir**

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# OUR HISTORY

# ASSOCIATION OF BLACK WOMEN LAWYERS OF NEW JERSEY

The Founders of the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey (ABWL-NJ) established an organization to meet the needs of Black women and students interested in the practice of law.

Their dream became a reality in 1975 when they formed ABWL-NJ, a non-partisan, non-profit organization that promotes the participation of African-American women in the field of law. The oldest women's bar association in New Jersey, ABWL-NJ has spent four decades engaged in strategies designed to gain the legal, educational, economic and social empowerment necessary to enhance the quality of life for African-American women, their families and the New Jersey community-at-large.

ABWL-NJ's commitment to providing outstanding service to women and to the wider community is demonstrated by an untiring commitment to improving the quality of life for all. ABWL-NJ is actively involved in facilitating and disseminating information and discussion on a wide range of topics including public education, domestic violence, mortgage foreclosure, the juvenile justice system and the challenges of mass incarceration of people of color. ABWL-NJ has cooperated with other state, county and specialty bar associations to address these important issues.

The Social Justice Committee of ABWL-NJ has enhanced its grass-roots outreach, providing workshop speakers to the New Jersey Black Issues Convention, New Jersey Legislative Black Caucus, and The New Jersey NAACP State Conference as well as to the NJSBA. In accordance with ABWL's stated Mission, the Social Justice Committee strategically takes positions in opposition to or in support of pending legislation which impacts the Black community. The Committee advocates by letter writing to elected officials, issuing Press Releases, or signing on to Press Releases with our social justice coalition partners such as NJISJ, NJ-BIC, Salvation & Social Justice, the NJ NAACP, Fair Share Housing, Rutgers Inclusion Project, New Jersey Policy Prospective and The Black Multi Faith Alliance all of the United Black Agenda Group. The Joint ABWL & GSBA Judicial and Prosecutorial Appointments Committee (JPAC) which was born out of the social justice agenda continues to work diligently to bring diversity to the Superior Court, Administrative Law, and Workers Compensation Bench in New Jersey as well as to New Jersey's Board and Commissions. To date, more than 15 Black women have been appointed to the bench due to the work of the joint commission since the beginning of Governor Phil Murphy's administration.

ABWL-NJ is also known for its Law Day programs in schools and other community based venues; its Pink and Black Affair to promote awareness of breast cancer prevention and provide financial assistance for medical care for women of color; and its annual Scholarship Fundraiser (frequently hosted as a Jazz Brunch), the traditional forum through which it awards book grants and scholarships to Black women law students and also recognizes the professional achievements of those who have made significant contributions to the community. ABWL-NJ recently created the Law Student Emergency Needs Fund to address law student needs outside of grants and scholarships and has grown a robust law student mentoring program, as well as mentoring programs for girls in middle schools throughout the state. In addition, ABWL-NJ continues to advocate for increased access of persons of color and women into the legal profession, support efforts to preserve law school admission policies that promote their enrollment, encourage employment practices that promote diversity, and champion equal rights under the law through active participation on NJ Supreme Court Committees, in specialty bar associations and in the New Jersey State Bar Association. In further keeping with its service mission, ABWL-NJ created the Honorable Anne E. Thompson American Inn of Court in March 2009 (renamed The Honorable Marie White Bell, JSC (ret) in 2019), which provides continuing legal education and fosters fellowship among the bar and bench. In sum, ABWL-NJ remains committed to:

- Providing forums to disseminate legal information on matters of interest to attorneys of color; ;
- Fostering communication, cooperation and understanding within the legal profession;
- Assisting in service to charitable organizations and the Bar;
- Encouraging and assisting students in the pursuit of a career in law;
- Encouraging its members to maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism.

For more information about ABWL-NJ, please visit our website at [www.abwl-nj.org](http://www.abwl-nj.org)

The Past Presidents Council of ABWL-NJ congratulates the scholarship recipients, the honorees, and the event committee of the 2023 Scholarship Fundraiser Jazz Gala!



**PAST PRESIDENTS**

*Heartfelt thanks to our Past Presidents for their steadfast leadership and contributions to advancing our mission. We are proud to stand on your shoulders and are eternally grateful for your service.*

*Hon. Renee Jones Weeks, JSC (Ret.)  
1975-1977*

*Hon. Joan M. Burke, ALJ 2006-2009*

*Lois Wright, Esq. 1977-1978*

*Katherine M. Wade, Esq. 2009-2010*

*Joyce Wilson Harley, Esq. 1978-1980*

*Charisse M. Penalver, Esq. 2010-2011*

*Dolores Pegram Wilson, RN, Esq.  
1980-1982*

*El-Rhonda Williams-Alston, Esq. 2011-2012*

*Andrea McCoy Johnson, Esq. 1983-1985*

*Lisa Hendricks Richardson, Esq. 2012-2013*

*Paulette Brown, Esq. 1985-1987*

*Tracy M. Thompson, Esq. 2013-2014*

*Stephanie Bush-Baskette, Esq. 1987-1989*

*Nina D. Bonner, Esq. 2014-2015*

*Esther Canty-Barnes, Esq. 1989-1991*

*Hon. Geraldine R. Eure, JMC 2015-2016*

*Theresa Andrews, Esq. 1991-1992*

*Lori E. Caughman, Esq. 2016-2017*

*Wanda Douglas Thigpen, Esq. 1992-1995*

*Hon. Carolyn V. Chang, Esq. 2017-2018*

*Deirdré Webster Cobb, Esq. 1995-1997*

*Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq. 2018-2019*

*Cristal Holmes-Bowie, Esq. 1997-1999*

*Norma R. Evans, Esq. 2019-2020*

*Denise Crump-Sharperson, Esq. 1999-2001*

*Marsetta Lee, Esq. 2020-2021*

*Margaret Leggett Tarver, Esq. 2001-2003*

*Jennifer Downing Mathis, Esq. 2021-2022*

*Desha Jackson, Esq. 2003-2005*

*Sharon Price-Cates, Esq. 2005-2006*

# Congratulations

## ABWL-NJ HONOREES

- Michele Meyer-Shipp, Esq.
- Mikeisha Anderson Jones, Esq.
- Trina Glass, Esq.
- Honorable Tiffany Williams Brewer

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## Archer Salutes and Supports the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey

**Congratulations to the Honorees and Scholarship Recipients of the  
2023 Scholarship Fundraiser Jazz Gala**

Archer & Greiner, P.C. has always considered dedication to the community an integral part of its mission and central to the firm's enduring success. We take great pride in giving back to the communities in which we live and work and are pleased to support the Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey and the 2023 Scholarship Fundraiser Jazz Gala.

**For more information, contact:  
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609.580.3729**

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ON THEIR

**2023 Scholarship Fundraiser Jazz Gala**

AND CONGRATULATES ALL THE

*Scholarship Recipients and Honorees*



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# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

*& Honoree*

# MICHELE C. MEYER-SHIPPI, ESQ.



Michele C. Meyer-Shipp joined Dress for Success Worldwide as CEO in February 2022. Michele leads the organization's 144 affiliates in 23 countries as it continues its mission to help women achieve economic independence via a suite of services that includes job readiness support, professional development resources, coaching and mentorship, and workplace attire.

Michele joins Dress for Success from Major League Baseball, where she served as Chief People & Culture Officer. While at MLB, Michele led the human resources, diversity and inclusion, and office operations functions for the League Office with an emphasis on launching new programs and policies to recruit and develop talent, advancing diversity and inclusion efforts, and enhancing workplace culture. She also served as a senior advisor to the Commissioner as well as leaders across 30 Major League baseball teams and multiple Minor League teams.

Prior to MLB, Michele served as Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at KPMG LLP, where she led initiatives relating to talent recruitment, development, and retention; supported the efforts of leaders across KPMG's 85+ national offices; and managed a portfolio of external strategic partnerships. Previously, she served as Global Chief Diversity Officer for both Prudential Financial and the law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. Michele spent the first decade of her career practicing employment law in both the private and public sectors, where she advised clients on optimizing talent and implementing equitable workplace initiatives. Meyer-Shipp is a graduate of Rutgers University and Seton Hall University School of Law.

Michele is a sought-after speaker and has served as a Yahoo! Finance News Contributor and been featured in top media outlets including the New York Times, USA Today, The Economist, Forbes, Fortune, Business Insider, CNN, The Wall Street Journal, Savoy Magazine, Black Enterprise, The Tamron Hall Show, CORE Magazine, Working Mother Magazine, Diversity Woman Magazine, Quartz, Inc. and more. She is also the recipient of numerous awards, including The Network Journal's "25 Influential Black Women in Business" (2021), Core Magazine's "100 Most Influential Blacks Today" (2021), Black Enterprise's "Portraits of Power" (2020), and Business Insider's "38 Power Players of Consulting" (2020). She is a member of the Boards of the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) and the Fritz Pollard Alliance Foundation.



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# HONOREES

# Milbank

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We are proud to support the  
**ABWL-NJ's 2023 Scholarship  
Fundraiser Jazz Gala.**



Warm congratulations to  
this year's honorees, including our  
Chief DEI Officer,  
**Mikeisha Anderson Jones, Esq.**



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## MIKEISHA ANDERSON JONES, ESQ.



Mikeisha Anderson Jones (she/her) is the Global Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officer at Milbank LLP. In this role, Ms. Anderson Jones leads the Firm's global DEI strategy working closely with offices across the Americas, Europe and Asia on the unique challenges and opportunities in each region.

Ms. Anderson Jones has over 20 years of experience as a lawyer, business executive, and DEI leader. Most recently, she served as Vice President of Global Inclusion & Diversity at American Express. There, she collaborated across the organization to develop best-in-class inclusion practices and grow representation and engagement of underutilized/underrepresented groups. Previously, she served as Vice President of Global Contracts, Legal, and Proposal Strategy.

Earlier in her career, Ms. Anderson Jones held increasingly advanced general counsel roles in-house at Cardinal Health/Catalent Pharma Solutions, was a law firm associate at Reed Smith LLP and Lowenstein Sandler PC, and served as a judicial clerk for the Hon. John Hughes, USMJ for the District of New Jersey.

Ms. Anderson Jones, a Certified Diversity Professional, received her J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law and her A.B. from Smith College. She is a Trustee of the New Jersey State Bar Foundation and is a frequent speaker on career development and inclusion. Ms. Anderson Jones has received accolades for her professional accomplishments including as Savoy Magazine's Most Influential Executives in Diversity & Inclusion, Women of Color Magazine's Women in Finance Diversity Champion, Face2Face Africa's 30 Black Stars, and the National Diversity Council's Top 100 Diversity Officers. She recently authored "What Law Firms Can Learn from Corporate America" in Bloomberg Law.

Ms. Anderson Jones is a proud "Yardie" who loves to travel with family and friends. Her joy is in connecting people, passion, and purpose.

## TRINA GLASS, ESQ.



Attorney Trina L. Glass has established a robust career in finance and corporate industries where Black women are immensely underrepresented, and has used her access in these areas to create opportunities to welcome more Black women into the legal profession. She has held roles at BNY Mellon | Pershing, FINRA and as a shareholder at the firm Stark & Stark, where she was Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Ms. Glass is currently Special Counsel with Duane Morris LLP. Ms. Glass advises corporate clients, emerging fund managers, registered and new investment advisors, broker-dealers and other financial services firms in regulatory and compliance matters, including securities filings, regulatory analysis, due diligence and investigations. Her practice also involves counseling clients on risk mitigation strategies, privacy and cybersecurity policies and best practices, and written supervisory and compliance policies and procedures. She provides counsel and assistance to firms seeking registration with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commissions and appropriate state securities commission, if applicable.

Ms. Glass served as Chair of the NJ State Bar Association's Privacy Committee. Trina has served as Commissioner for NJ State Lottery and as a member of District VIII Ethics Committee at the pleasure of NJ Supreme Court. While Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee at Stark & Stark Trina paneled and moderated discussions on the CROWN Act, Constitutional Rights, and Juneteenth. Trina is also a frequent presenter on regulatory compliance topics in the Securities Industry, Privacy and Cybersecurity.

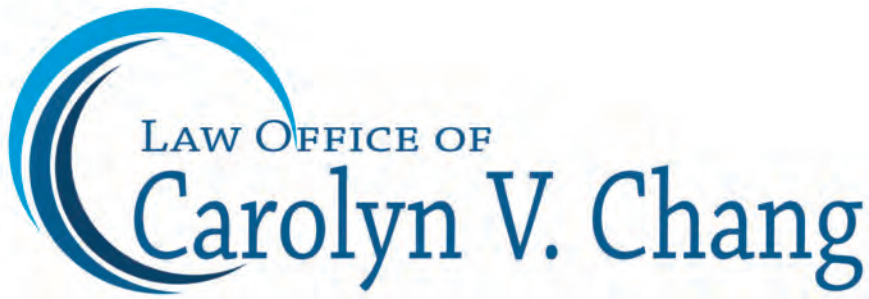
She is dedicated to community service and participated in programs including Habitat for Humanity and programs to benefit Breast Cancer Awareness. Trina is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and a graduate of Rutgers University Law School - Newark and North Carolina Central University.

### **Our Mom:**

***Champion of change. The phrase not only represents the mission of ABWL, but embodies what our Mother is on a day to day basis. As a black woman lawyer, it is not easy to be in your position and to be heard. The definition of hard work is seen through our Mother as she strives from sun up to sun down to make sure diversity is not just a topic to discuss during your next meeting, but a tangible, proactive practice that will benefit any organization. In our eyes there's no one more deserving than you, Mom, and it's safe to say many agree. We love you Mom and could not be more proud of this recognition that you deserve.***

***Love Your Sons,  
Najee and Myles***





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# *Congratulations*



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Gala**

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Award Recipients,  
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Recipients**

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ABWL-NJ 's important  
mission to advance  
black women in the study  
and practice of law**

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## 2023 HONOREE

### HONORABLE TIFFANY WILLIAMS BREWER, ESQ.



Tiffany Williams Brewer is an Assistant Professor of Law teaching courses in Evidence, Professional Responsibility, Legislation & Regulation and a seminar in Black Women & the Law. As a former New Jersey Administrative Law Judge, Judge Brewer brings her judicial experience into the classroom and the law school community. Judge Brewer has over 20 years of teaching experience as a full time and adjunct professor in law and public administration at universities in California, Massachusetts and New Jersey. She has also taught courses in Legal Writing, Administrative Law, and Trial Advocacy and has directed student programs focusing on externships, mock trial and moot court. Judge Brewer is also a frequent international lecturer and trainer, having conducted legal writing, trial advocacy and judicial judgment drafting trainings in Saudi Arabia, India and throughout the African continent in conjunction with the African Union. Her scholarly focus spans several areas of her professional expertise including, examining the intersectionality of racial justice, ethics and religion, gender equity, global women's leadership, and criminal justice reform for women and girls.

Judge Brewer was recently appointed by the New Jersey Governor as the first African-American to Chair the New Jersey State Commission of Investigation, an independent investigatory agency empowered to expose organized crime, government fraud and corruption. Throughout her career, Judge Brewer has served in high profile leadership roles in government including as an Administrative Law Judge, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of New Jersey, Deputy Chief Counsel to the NJ Governor, Chief Counsel to the Speaker of the NJ General Assembly, NJ Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (overseeing the state's election system), and Regulatory Officer (agency counsel) at the NJ Civil Service Commission. In private practice, she has served as a litigation associate at several large law firms in Massachusetts and New Jersey. Judge Brewer started her career as a law clerk to the Honorable Frederick L. Brown in the Massachusetts Appeals Court. During law school, Judge Brewer had the unique opportunity to serve as an intern at the White House for the Office of Legal Counsel. Prior to law school, she also served as the Special Assistant to U.S. Senator Bill Bradley.

Judge Brewer is admitted to practice in Massachusetts, New Jersey, the District of Columbia, the Supreme Court of the United States and various federal courts. As an active leader in the profession, Judge Williams currently serves as Secretary of the Section of Litigation of the American Bar Association and as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. Previously she served as the ABA Deputy Representative to the United Nations, as an Associate Editor to the Litigation News magazine, member of the Section of Litigation Council and as Section of Litigation Managing Director.

In addition to her legal career, Judge Brewer is a pastor and an advocate for the global advancement of women and girls as Founder & CEO of the Esther Project & the Esther Institute for the Advancement of Women and Girls. Judge Brewer has been recognized for her global work with the Esther Project by a United States Senator, the NJ Legislature, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (of which she is a member) and numerous organizations and publications.

ABWL-NJ  
2023 SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER JAZZ GALA  
PROGRAM

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WELCOME

Kimberly D. Deal, Esq.  
President, ABWL-NJ

REMARKS & INTRODUCTION OF MISTRESS OF CEREMONY

Narline Casimir, Esq.  
Event Chairwoman and President-Elect

LIFT EVERY VOICE & SING

MISTRESS OF CEREMONY

Queen Stewart, Esq.

INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER & AWARD PRESENTATION

Kimberly D. Deal, Esq.  
President, ABWL-NJ

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MICHELE MEYER-SHIPPI, ESQ.

DINNER INTERMISSION

PRESENTATION OF HONOREES

Mikeisha Anderson Jones, Esq., CDP, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer at Milbank, LLP  
*Introduction by Danielle Counts, Esq., Awards Subcommittee Co-Chair*

Trina Glass, Esq., Special Counsel/Corporate Law at Duane Morris  
*Introduction by Kea S. Noyan, Esq., Treasurer*

Honorable Tiffany Williams Brewer, Esq. Assistant Professor of Law at Howard  
University School of Law and former Administrative Law Judge  
*Introduction by Cameryn J. Hinton, Esq., Past-President 2018-2019*

ABWL-NJ  
2023 SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER JAZZ GALA  
PROGRAM

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARD SPONSORS

PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Angel Otuwa, Esq.  
Scholarship Committee Chair

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Shelleah Jackson, Rutgers University Law-Camden  
Zaniya Lewis, Rutgers University Law - Camden  
Shardai Taylor, Rutgers University Law - Newark  
Kamani Cook-Christian, Rutgers University Law - Newark  
Claudia Theagene, Seton Hall University Law  
Jazmine King, Widener University Law  
Jasmyn Montgomery, Rutgers University Law - Camden

THE HONORABLE RENEE JONES WEEKS  
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# SCHOLARSHIP

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In the 1997-1998 program term ABWL-NJ named its scholarships after two trailblazers: M. Bernadine Johnson Marshall, Esquire and Martha Belle Williams, Esquire. Over the past four decades, ABWL-NJ Scholarship Awards to law students have now exceeded \$150,000. We thank our members, sponsors and supporters for making this possible.

## M. BERNADINE JOHNSON MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Marie Bernadine Johnson Marshall was born in Trenton, New Jersey. Mrs. Marshall attended the Newark Public School System having graduated from West Side High School. She then went to Howard University in Washington D.C., graduating in 1944 with a degree in sociology. At a time when few women attended post-graduate schools, Mrs. Marshall did so and in 1947 graduated from Rutgers Law School. In 1949, Mrs. Marshall began a journey of "firsts," when she and Martha Belle became the first African-American women admitted to the New Jersey Bar.

Mrs. Marshall began her legal career engaging in the general practice of law with her father, the late Jacob B. Johnson, Sr., a former Assistant Prosecutor in Essex County. She focused on matrimonial, immigration, landlord-tenant, estate and general trial law. In May 1955, Mrs. Marshall was appointed Associate Counsel to a United States Senate Judiciary Sub-committee investigating juvenile delinquency. At that time, she was the youngest woman lawyer and only African-American woman lawyer practicing on Capitol Hill. In 1958, she rejoined the practice with her father until 1960. She continued to practice law on her own until her retirement in 1988.

Mrs. Marshall's commitment to the legal and African-American community is evidenced by her involvement in a number of professional and community organizations including, the Urban League of Essex County, the YM-YWCA of Newark, the North Jersey unit of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. and Zonta International, a business women's club. She was also a member of the Essex County Mental Health Association and Planned Parenthood of Essex County. In addition, Mrs. Marshall served on various boards and commissions. She was appointed the first female member of Newark's Alcoholic Beverage Control Board in 1961 and later served as the Board's chairperson. She also served on the boards of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield and the Girls Center of Essex County. In addition, she was a former counsel to the New Jersey State Federation of Negro Women's Clubs, Inc. The recipient of numerous awards, Mrs. Marshall was honored with a State Senate Resolution in 1995 in recognition of these and other trailblazing efforts in law and community service. She was a shining light who paved the way for African-Americans in the field of law. This light was dimmed in September 1997, but her legacy lives on.

## MARTHA BELLE WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Martha Belle Williams was born January 9, 1924, in Montclair, New Jersey and graduated from local elementary, junior and high schools in that city. She attended Essex County Junior College in Newark and transferred to Upsala College, from which she graduated in 1945 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history, political science and economics. She received her L.L.B. Degree from Rutgers University School of Law in 1948. In 1949, M. Bernadine Johnson Marshall and Martha Belle Williams changed African-American and New Jersey history by becoming the first African-American women admitted to the New Jersey Bar.

Mrs. Williams started her legal career as a law clerk in the office of Sidney G. Grover of Newark. She later became an associate in the law firm practicing civil and criminal law. Thereafter, she was briefly associated with both J. Mercer Burrell of Newark and Louis E. Saunders of Jersey City in the practice of general law. In 1968, Mrs. Williams was named senior attorney for the Montclair Office of the Essex County Legal Services. In this position, she gained local notoriety for her uncanny commitment to economically disadvantaged people whom she counseled and advised.

Mrs. Williams was a member of the Essex County and New Jersey Bar Associations, the American Judicature Society and the Montclair Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women. She also served as President of the Montclair Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and at the time of her appointment, was the youngest woman in the United States to attain that position.

Mrs. Williams was highly respected for her ability to bring a ray of sunshine and hope to everyone she encountered. That ray was extinguished prematurely in June 1969, when she died at the age of 45. Mrs. Williams' legacy continues through the many attorneys she touched and the legal scholars who recognize her contributions to the profession.

## M. BERNADINE JOHNSON MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

### SHELLEAH JACKSON



Shelleah Jackson is a native of the Greater Philadelphia Area. She attended the University of Pittsburgh where she obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Health Services on a pre-law track. Upon graduation, Shelleah was accepted into Teach for America, where she served in Charlotte, NC as a ninth grade Honors English teacher and the head coach of the Speech and Debate team.

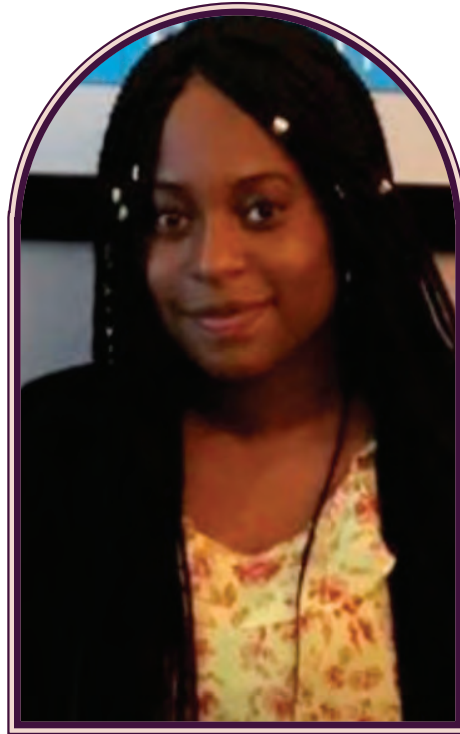
She obtained her Master of Science in Education with a focus in Secondary Education and after some rewarding years as a teacher, Shelleah transitioned into the education nonprofit sphere where she worked as a Program Manager of a black-owned leadership organization. There, she created, implemented, and trained staff on interactive curriculums to build leadership, public speaking, and professionalism skills in 350 high-achieving black high school students. Shelleah worked as the Tutor Manager of a Raleigh-based nonprofit that provides free or low-cost research-based, highly effective math and literacy tutoring programs for teachers and school districts. In this role, Shelleah built and maintained strategic partnerships with companies, universities, and community organizations to recruit and manage 900 tutors to tutor 600 students weekly.

Shelleah is proud to be a second-year student at Rutgers Law School, Camden. This year, she is a Staff Editor on the Rutgers University Law Review, the Diversity and Inclusion Representative for the Student Bar Association (SBA), a Legal Writing Fellow/Teaching Assistant, and a member of the Intramural Mock Trial Team. Additionally, last semester, she served as the Judicial Extern to The Honorable Karen Williams in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey.



# MARTHA BELLE WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

## ZANIYA LEWIS



Zaniya Lewis is the Founder/CEO and Executive Director of YesSheCanCampaign, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that inspires young people to be extraordinary and change the world. YesSheCanCampaign has reached 3,000+ students and volunteered 20,000+ hours. The organization has won national and international recognition and helped students win over \$700,000 in educational funding.

In 2019, Zaniya became a victim of scholarship displacement and she has used her story to spread awareness about scholarship award displacement through her nonprofit YesSheCanCampaign. YesSheCanCampaign launched a national campaign to dismantle scholarship award displacement, as well as DISSCHOLARED, an award-winning program that spreads awareness about scholarship award displacement. Inspired by her story, in 2021 New Jersey enacted legislation to restrict scholarship award displacement, becoming the second state in the nation to outlaw this brutal practice. Her advocacy inspired The Helping Students Plan for College Act 2021, the first-ever federal bill to address scholarship award displacement nationwide.

In May 2020, Zaniya received her B.A in Political Science from The George Washington University. Zaniya is currently a second-year law student at Rutgers Law School. Zaniya has received many accolades for her work, including the Diana Award and Taco Bell Foundation Live Mas Scholarship. Zaniya's mission in life is to inspire others to keep climbing and to use their passions to make a difference in the world.

# 2023 ABWL-NJ SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



## SHARDAI TAYLOR

Born and raised in Macon, Georgia, Shardai is a former professional dancer turned legal analyst. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance and a minor in Spanish Language and Literature from Brenau University. Following graduation, she accepted a position with a modern dance company, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (DCDC) 2 in Dayton, OH. After a season with DCDC, she relocated to New Jersey to continue her professional career with a focus on arts administration. She translated her performing arts experience into fundraising and development for the South Orange Performing Arts Center (SOPAC) in South Orange, New Jersey. She went on to obtain a Masters of Management in International Arts Management from Southern Methodist University and HEC Canada.

Shardai returned to New Jersey and used her business management degree to begin a career in healthcare. After work with various healthcare companies, she chose to specialize in the area of pharmacy. This proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is currently pursuing a Juris Doctor degree at Rutgers School of Law in Newark, NJ. She works as a legal analyst for a local pharmacy group. Shardai is a passionate advocate for the performing arts while enjoying her current work in healthcare and pharmacy law.

She is looking forward to combining her interests and applying all of her experiences as they interact with the law upon completion of her legal studies. Shardai is excited to be a member of the class of 2026 at Rutgers and experience all that law school offers.



## KAMANI COOK-CHRISTIAN

Kamani Cook-Christian is a second-year student (2L) at Rutgers University School of Law-Newark where she serves as both a member of the Minority Student Program and as treasurer of the Association of Black Law Students. She is an associate editor for Rutgers Race and The Law Journal. During her 1L summer, she spent time working with the firm Chasan Lamparello Mallon, & Capuzzo.

Kamani was a Posse Scholar which afforded her a full tuition leadership-based scholarship at Lafayette College where she obtained bachelor's degrees in both English and Anthropology & Sociology in 2017. In undergrad, Kamani spent time organizing with the Association of Black Collegians and a social justice peer education group called Kaleidoscope.

After college, she taught in elementary school full-time while obtaining a Master of Teaching degree with a concentration in special education. Kamani is passionate about equality, social justice, and health & wellness. She enjoys being active, spending time with her family and friends, and enjoying the world of a good book when she has free time.



## CLAUDIA THEAGENE

Claudia Theagene is a first-year law student at Seton Hall University School of Law. Prior to attending law school, Claudia attended the State University of New York at Plattsburgh where she majored in Political Science with minors in Legal Studies and Africana Studies. After receiving her Bachelor's degree, Claudia dedicated a year of service through AmeriCorps where she tutored English Language Arts to sixth and seventh graders at Great Oaks Charter School in New York City.



## JAZMINE KING

Jazmine King is a second-year law student at Widener University Delaware Law School. She resides in Lindenwold, New Jersey. Jazmine received her B.A. in Political Science and Jurisprudence from Montclair State University in 2018. In her spare time, Jazmine enjoys going to the beach, playing with her Boston Terrier puppy and attending concerts and festivals throughout the year. Currently, Jazmine is working towards a career in insurance defense litigation. She is expected to graduate from Widener in May 2024.



## JASMYN MONTGOMERY

Jasmyn is currently a first year Law Student (1L) at Rutgers Law School in Camden, New Jersey. At Rutgers Law School, she was chosen as a Social Justice Scholar, one of a small cohort of students who demonstrate an exceptional commitment to public service and are most likely to dedicate their legal careers to working on social justice causes, and on behalf of underserved communities. She was also elected as a 1L representative for the Black Law Students Association (BLSA), and the Student Bar Association (SBA).

She is a member of the Minority Student Program, the Association for Public Interest Law (APIL), and the Domestic Violence Program which provides support to domestic violence victims. Jasmyn graduated from Delaware State University (DSU), in Dover, Delaware in 2015, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice.

During her four-year enrollment at DSU, she was a member of the Honors Student Association, making the Dean's list every semester. She was also a member of the Pi Gamma Mu International Honors Society in Social Sciences and the National Honors Society of Leadership and Success. Jasmyn sang in DSU's gospel choir and was a student worker at the Office of Judicial Affairs and the Office of Admissions.

A lawyer's either a social engineer or a parasite on society ... A social engineer [is] a highly skilled, perceptive, sensitive lawyer who [understands] the Constitution of the United States and [knows] how to explore its uses in the solving of problems of local communities and in bettering conditions of the underprivileged citizens.

~ Charles Hamilton Houston~

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***To all the 2023 ABWL-NJ  
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May this quote guide you in your  
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rewards that will serve to be an  
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*Congratulations to all of  
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*Please save these dates!*

**APALA-NJ Annual Golf Outing on May 4, 2023**  
at Maplewood Country Club

**APALA-NJ 24th Annual Gala on September 28,  
2023** at DoubleTree in Fort Lee



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Kudos to the dynamic attorneys of the ABWL-NJ on  
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2:00 pm  
Members Only  
Private location

## Tea Party Soiree Saturday, May 13 2023

4:00 pm - 7:00pm  
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## Summer in the Park Saturday, June 10, 2023

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