



The Annual

Ida B. Wells
Awards
Celebration

1-4 p.m.

June

3

2023



ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS BLACK WOMEN ATTORNEYS



The Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys (MBWA) is a not-for-profit professional bar association founded in 1981 by a group of Black women attorneys from all areas of practice in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The MBWA represents every sector of the legal community including judges, in-house counsel, law firm partners and associates, Fortune 500 and 100 company employees, solo practitioners, government attorneys, law professors, and legal experts. The MBWA membership includes government officials, humanitarians, community leaders, and trailblazers.

Since 1981, the MBWA has sought to ensure the equitable administration of justice and is similarly concerned with social policy and civil rights issues impacting communities of color.

MBWA members promote legal education by leading educational seminars, lecture series, and panel discussions on a multitude of legal subjects. The MBWA helps Black women attorneys become more effective advocates to their clients and communities. Our bar association is a dedicated avenue for Black women attorneys of the Commonwealth to build meaningful connections and to serve as a resource for each another.



FOUNDING MEMBERS

Originally known as the Ida B. Wells-Barnett Society, a group of Black women attorneys formed a professional bar association to address their unique challenges as Black women in the legal profession.

Following a Spring Brunch in 1981, the association officially became the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys with a mission to advance justice for all people and to promote the professional advancement of Black women attorneys. We are grateful for our founding members and their inherent commitment to uplifting Black women attorneys within the Massachusetts legal community and beyond.

Margaret Burnham

Pamoja Burrell

Elaine Denniston

Judith Nelson Dilday

Barbara Dortch-Okara

Beatrice Greene

Ruth-Arlene Howe

Bernice McIntyre

Yolanda Mitchell

Ellen-Marie Ray

Dorothy G. Sanders

Helaine A. Simmonds

Beverly Towns Williams

Dianne Wilkerson

2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



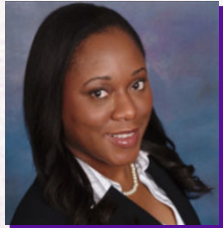
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Board Member



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1981-1983 | Bernice K. McIntyre

1983-1986 | Dianne Wilkerson

1986-1987 | Kathryn Allen

1987-1989 | Pamoja Burrell

1989-1991 | Evelynne Swagerty

1991-1993 | Dorothy G. Sanders

1993-1995 | Yvette Mendez

1995-1996 | Yvette Mendez and Francine Applewhite

1996-1999 | Francine Applewhite

1999-2001 | Beverly Coles Roby

2001-2002 | E. Selena Samm

2002-2004 | Marjorie O'Reilly

2004-2007 | Belinda Taylor

2007-2013 | Keidi S. Carrington

2013-2015 | Tiffanie Ellis-Niles

2015-2018 | Deborah Johnson

2018-2020 | Tinia Snow

2020-2021 | Janette Ekanem

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

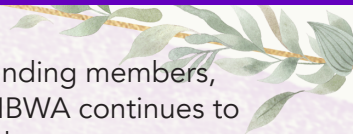


Dear MBWA Members, Supporters and Friends:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys (MBWA), I welcome you to our Annual Ida B. Wells Awards Celebration. Your presence and support are invaluable to our bar association. Today we celebrate the legacy, accomplishments, and contributions of Black women attorneys in the legal profession in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. "This Is Our Time," our theme for this year, embodies our commitment to recognize the achievements of Black women attorneys who are leaders in the community and the legal profession.

Our 2023 Ida B. Wells Award honorees, Stesha A. Emmanuel, Partner at McCarter & English, LLP and Hannah L. Kilson, Partner at Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP, are pioneers of our time, shattering glass ceilings and changing the legal landscape in Massachusetts. Our inaugural 2023 Justice Geraldine S. Hines Public Service Award, honors April English, Chief Secretary to Governor Maura T. Healey, who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to public service in Massachusetts. This award is named in recognition of the Honorable Justice Geraldine S. Hines (Ret.), the first African American woman appointed to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. Our two Blanche E. Braxton Bar Scholarship recipients, Katrina Ramkissoon and Nala Thomas, are poised to make significant contributions to the legal profession.

Since 1981, MBWA has served as a resource to address the unique challenges of Black women attorneys in the legal community.



Thanks to the inherent contributions of our founding members, past presidents and past MBWA boards, the MBWA continues to promote the professional advancement of Black women attorneys through robust educational programs. This year we educated members and engaged in high level discourse around a variety of pivotal issues, including the pathways to becoming successful entrepreneurs and the fundamentals of financial planning. We also addressed the state of lawyer well-being, examined the landscape of maternal health and reproductive rights through the lens of Black women, and even collaborated with bar association partners for a candid conversation on civil rights and inclusivity regarding the Massachusetts Crown Act.

After a successful year of contributions to the legal community, I can certainly say I am grateful to the MBWA Board of Directors for their outstanding leadership and commitment to developing programs to address the needs of Black women in the legal community. The success of this program year and MBWA's exponential growth would not be possible without an amazing group of women who have a shared vision for uplifting Black women attorneys in their legal careers.

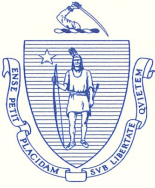
It has been an absolute honor and privilege to serve as President of the MBWA. I am incredibly proud to join a legacy of past presidents who have shaped MBWA into a leading bar association in Massachusetts. I am confident that MBWA will remain a leader in the legal community and will ascend to greater heights.

I am deeply grateful to our sponsors for supporting this year's Awards Celebration. Your contributions undoubtedly support MBWA's mission, programs, and initiatives. Thank you to the MBWA members and founders, bar association partners, and the Massachusetts legal community at large for your unwavering support. Let us continue to collaborate and advance MBWA's presence and impact in Massachusetts. This Is Our Time.

Sincerely,



Patrice C. Dixon



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE • BOSTON, MA 02133
(617) 725-4000

MAURA T. HEALEY
GOVERNOR

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

June 3, 2023

Dear Friends:

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Chief Secretary April C. English for receiving the first-ever Justice Geraldine S. Hines Public Service Award at the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys annual Ida B. Wells Awards Celebration.

This award recognizes a Black woman attorney in the Commonwealth who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to public service, and like Justice Hines, has dedicated her career to advancing civil and human rights. As someone who has worked alongside April for many years, I can think of no one more deserving of this recognition.

For nearly two decades, April served in the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. She was a civil litigator and a criminal prosecutor and, during my time as Attorney General, helped transform our hiring practices and increase staff diversity as Chief of Organization Development and Inclusion. I could always count on April to provide sound advice, be a mentor to her peers, and ensure that our work was consistently centered around racial justice and equity.

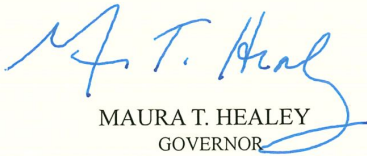
Now, as Chief Secretary for our administration, April's role is to fill appointments on boards and commissions to better reflect our communities and offer a variety of perspectives on the decisions that impact our future.

April understands that who is at the table matters and has been committed to diverse representation at all levels of government.

Like Justice Hines, April seeks every opportunity to make a difference. She has been a guiding voice for equity, fairness, and accountability in every role she has taken on and exemplifies the mission of public service. Most importantly, April is a caring colleague, mother, friend, community member, and proud Spelman sister.

Congratulations April on this well-deserved award. We are grateful for your many years of service to the people of Massachusetts. As a Commonwealth, we are better today because of you.

Sincerely,



MAURA T. HEALEY
GOVERNOR



ANDREA JOY CAMPBELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

June 3, 2023

Greetings!

I am honored to join the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys (MBWA) and all of you to celebrate the amazing legacy of Ida B. Wells and the Black women who so boldly follow in her footsteps and fight for justice across our Commonwealth.

From the Department of Corrections to foster care to public housing, my life has been deeply impacted by our various systems, and sadly I have personally experienced the worst of them. And yet, like so many of you, I turned my pain into purpose. We work for those who have ever felt left out or left behind, and entangled within our systems who need our lived experience, knowledge and advocacy.

Stesha A. Emmanuel, Partner at McCarter & English, LLP, Hannah L. Kilson, Partner at Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP, and April English, Chief Secretary to Governor Healey, have dedicated themselves to fighting for a more equitable and just Massachusetts. Today, we celebrate their courage, recognize their hard work to break down barriers, and uplift the stories and challenges of those they have so graciously helped. Congratulations!

As we recommit ourselves to the work ahead, know that the MBWA has a partner in the Attorney General's Office. We join you in the fight to make the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a better place for all.

With tremendous gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AJC', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Andrea Joy Campbell

MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES




Dorothy G. Sanders

Founding Member and Past President, MBWA

Dorothy Sanders is an innovative and solutions-oriented attorney. She is the principal of her regulatory and consulting firm, Sanders and Associates. Experienced in securities laws and compliance regulations, she has held many senior leadership positions in both the public and private sectors, spanning a legal career of over 30 years.

Ms. Sanders' breadth of legal experience includes the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Bank of America, State Street Bank, Alger Management, Nationwide Investments, and the law firm, Rivkin, Radler. In these organizations, she held positions of increasing responsibility in which she litigated federal securities matters, advised C-suite Executives and Directors, and handled complex legal, corporate, and ethical matters.

Early in her career, Ms. Sanders served as a Law Clerk to two federal judges – the late Hon. Arthur Votolato, US Bankruptcy Court for the District of Rhode Island, and the esteemed Hon. Chief Magistrate Judge Joyce London



Alexander from the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts – an exemplary mentor and personal friend.

Ms. Sanders earned her Juris Doctor from Boston College Law School, her Bachelor of Arts degree from Douglass College at Rutgers University, and is a graduate of the Executive Director Program at Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Ms. Sanders is admitted to practice law before the United States Supreme Court, the Massachusetts Federal District Court, and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

Dorothy is a co-founder, Past President, and Lifetime Member of the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys. She is also a former board member of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association, a past member of Massachusetts Clients' Security Board, and a former Business Editor of the Boston Bar Journal. Previously, she was named one of the Ten Most Outstanding Young Leaders of Massachusetts by the Boston Jaycees. Her proudest accomplishments include inspiring young professionals and mentoring others to achieve success.

Dorothy is blessed with three accomplished daughters – Sydney A. Walker, Esq. and Courtney A. Walker, Esq., practicing attorneys in New York City, and a bonus daughter, Seon McLaughlin-Evans who holds a Doctorate in Education. Dorothy currently resides in West Orange, New Jersey with her amazing husband, Winston A. McLaughlin, Esq., and CPA.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

WELCOME

Dorothy G. Sanders
Founding Member and Past President, MBWA

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Patrice C. Dixon
President, MBWA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Andrea Joy Campbell
Attorney General, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

LUNCH

INTRODUCTION OF THE BLANCHE E. BRAXTON BAR SCHOLARSHIP

Desiree Y. Murphy
President-Elect, MBWA

Shahria Boston Kidd
Treasurer, MBWA

THE BLANCHE E. BRAXTON BAR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Katrina Ramkissoon
George Washington University Law School

Nala Thomas
Suffolk University Law School



PROGRAM OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION OF THE IDA B. WELLS AWARD

Dorothy G. Sanders
Founding Member and Past President, MBWA

THE IDA B. WELLS AWARD HONOREES

Stesha A. Emmanuel
Partner, McCarter & English, LLP

Hannah L. Kilson
Partner, Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP

INTRODUCTION OF THE JUSTICE GERALDINE S. HINES PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Keidi S. Carrington
Past President, MBWA

THE JUSTICE GERALDINE S. HINES PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD HONOREE

April English
Chief Secretary to Governor Maura T. Healey

TEA

CLOSING REMARKS

Francesse J. Canty
Board Member and Chair, Ida B. Wells Committee, MBWA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER




Andrea Joy Campbell Attorney General Commonwealth of Massachusetts

On January 18, 2023, Andrea Joy Campbell was sworn in to be the 45th Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, pledging to build economic prosperity and stability for all residents, prioritize the mental health and well-being of children, stop cycles of incarceration and violence and ensure that people across the state have access to the AG's Office regardless of their zip code, language or ability.

Growing up in Roxbury, Andrea's life was filled with instability. When Andrea was eight months old, she lost her mother to a car accident while going to visit her father in prison. She and her brothers bounced around – living with relatives and sometimes in foster care – until her father got out of prison when she was eight years old, and she met him for the first time.

Andrea and her family relied on public housing and food assistance while her grandmother struggled with alcoholism.



Her two brothers sadly cycled in and out of the prison system. She lost her twin brother Andre, when he passed away while in the custody of the Department of Corrections as a pre-trial detainee.

Through all of this, Andrea persevered. Thanks to loving relatives, community support and a network of teachers who encouraged her, she turned pain into purpose. She graduated from Boston Latin School and then worked her way through college with the help of grants and student loans, graduating from Princeton University and UCLA Law School.

After earning her law degree, she worked as a legal services attorney for the EdLaw Project, defending the rights of children and their families — particularly those with disabilities.

Andrea also practiced law at Proskauer Rose LLP as an employment attorney, and ultimately left to serve the public as General Counsel at the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, working across 101 cities and towns to address regional challenges like health care access, transportation, affordable housing, and climate change.

Andrea served as legal counsel to Governor Deval Patrick, working to improve our education and transportation systems and move forward an agenda of equity across the state.

In 2015, Andrea successfully ran for the Boston City Council becoming the first woman to represent District 4 on the Council. Her first piece of legislation was the Community Preservation Act, which still generates over \$20 million annually for new affordable housing, historical preservation, and parks and open space. In 2018, she was unanimously elected City Council President – the first Black woman to hold the title.

ABOUT THE IDA B. WELLS AWARD

The Ida B. Wells Award is named in honor of Ida B. Wells-Barnett, a newspaper editor and journalist who led the American anti-lynching crusade, and founded the Negro Fellowship League in 1910.

First awarded in 2001, the MBWA presented the Ida B. Wells Award during each anniversary year to recognize a Black woman attorney who has made significant contributions to the legal profession and exemplifies the pioneering spirit and courage of Ida B. Wells. As of 2011, the MBWA bestows this prestigious award each year among others to recognize the accomplishments of Black women attorneys.

Past Ida B. Wells Award Honorees

2022

Angela Gomes
Macken Toussaint

2021

Pia Flanagan
Giselle Joffre

2019

Dawn Perry
Desiree Ralls-Morrison

2018

Karen Morton
Tanisha M. Sullivan

2017

Karla L. Jarvis
E. Abim Thomas

2016

Yalonda T. Howze
Tracey L. McCain

2015

Robin Walker
Darly David

2012

Anita Hill

2011

Dean Camille Nelson
Hon. Denise Casper

2001

Hon. Barbara A. Dortch-Okara
(Ret.)



ABOUT THE JUSTICE GERALDINE S. HINES PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

This year, the MBWA announces the Justice Geraldine S. Hines Public Service Award, named in honor of the Honorable Geraldine S. Hines (Ret.), the first African American woman appointed to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

With this award, the MBWA honors a Black woman attorney in recognition of outstanding commitment to public service, and like Justice Hines, is dedicated to advancing civil and human rights.

Prior to naming this award, the MBWA first presented a Public Interest Award during its 35th anniversary year before bestowing the award annually as of 2022 during the Ida B. Wells Awards Celebration.

Past Public Interest Award Honorees

2022

Widmine Lola Remy

2021

Angela McConney Scheepers

2016

Jacquelynne J. Bowman



Ida B. Wells
(1862-1931)

Ida B. Wells-Barnett was a newspaper editor and journalist who went on to lead the American anti-lynching crusade. Wells-Barnett was born a daughter of slaves in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Despite this adversity, she managed to attend Rust College and Fisk University. She later taught segregated public schools in Memphis, Tennessee, and wrote articles for and eventually became the editor of *Free Speech*, a Black newspaper. In 1891, the Memphis Board of Education fired her due to claims her articles were too controversial.

Wells-Barnett was strong-willed and spirited. Once she was forcibly removed from her seat for refusing to move to a “colored car” on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway. Her suit against the Railway for violating her civil rights was rejected by the Tennessee Supreme Court. This event and the legal struggle which followed it encouraged Wells-Barnett to continue to oppose racial injustice toward African Americans.

Wells-Barnett wrote for the *Conservator*, published a book-length exposé of lynching (*The Red Record*, 1895), and organized women regarding several causes, from anti-lynching to suffrage.

She served as secretary of the National Afro-American Council, and in 1910 she founded and became the first president of the Negro Fellowship League. She attended the 1909 meeting of the Niagara Movement, a conference which led to the creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys was initially named the Ida B. Wells-Barnett Law Society in honor of Ms. Wells-Barnett's vision, leadership and courage.



IDA B. WELLS AWARD HONOREE



Stesha A. Emmanuel


Partner

McCarter & English, LLP

Stesha A. Emmanuel is a Partner at McCarter & English, LLP and specializes in product liability, pharmaceutical matters and employment law. She hails from Boston, by way of Dorchester, where she attended Boston Public Schools and the MATCH Charter High School. Ms. Emmanuel obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Africana Studies from Brown University in 2008.

During her time at Brown, she studied comparative politics and dance abroad at the University of Cape Town in Cape Town, South Africa. Ms. Emmanuel is a 2011 graduate of Northeastern University School of Law.

Ms. Emmanuel's legal experience includes serving as a Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable Frederick L. Brown of the Massachusetts Appeals Court for two years. She is licensed to practice law in the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.



Ms. Emmanuel has been the recipient of several awards including the 2021 WBA Emerging Women Leaders in the Law award; 2021 Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly Excellence in the Law - Pro Bono; Get Konneted's Most Impactful Black Women Leaders in the Law award; Get Konneted's Most Impactful Black Women Leaders in Boston; 2020 Boston Business Journal Top 40 Under 40; and Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly as an Up and Coming Lawyer in 2017.

Ms. Emmanuel is a former President of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association and Director of the Women's Bar Association.

Among the many titles she holds, Stesha is happy to also wear the title of mom to five year old Evans and six month old Isaiah with her husband Yvenson, whom she loves despite him being a fan of the Miami Dolphins as she is a die-hard New England Patriots fan.

IDA B. WELLS AWARD HONOREE



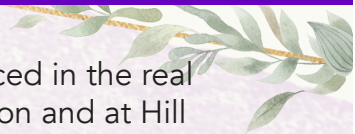
Hannah L. Kilson

Partner

Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP

Hannah is a Partner at Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP in Boston, Massachusetts, where she concentrates her practice on real estate transactions in the area of affordable housing and community development. She represents nonprofit and for-profit developers, borrowers and lenders in real estate transactions involving commercial and public financing throughout the Commonwealth. Over the last several years, Hannah and her colleagues at NSP, have represented several housing authorities located in the Greater Boston area in the redevelopment of their federal public housing stock through the creative use of HUD's repositioning programs and federal low-income housing tax credits.

Prior to joining Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP, Hannah was the Deputy General Counsel of the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency, the Commonwealth's largest economic development authority. She was responsible for the day-to-day management of the Agency's Legal Department and handled legal matters associated with the Agency's redevelopment and financing efforts.



Prior to MassDevelopment, Hannah practiced in the real estate group at DLA Piper LLP (US) in Boston and at Hill & Barlow P.C. in Boston and clerked for Judge William G. Young of the U.S. District Court of the District of Massachusetts. She has been recognized by Best Lawyers from 2020 to present.

Hannah is currently serving as President-Elect of the Boston Bar Association (BBA) and a member of the BBA's Executive Committee. She is one of the lead coordinators of the BBA's Women of Color Attorneys' Leadership Forum which is focusing on the professional development and advancement of women of color attorneys in the Boston legal community. She previously served as BBA Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Co-Chair of the 2018 Annual Meeting Steering Committee. Previously, she was Co-Chair of the Real Estate Section, Co-Chair of the Affordable Housing Committee of the Real Estate Section, and a member of the Joint Governance Committee. She was also a member of the Immigration Working Group which authored a set of immigration principles utilized by the BBA in formulating its ongoing policy position on immigration matters at the state and federal level. Presently, she is a trustee of the Boston Bar Foundation, the charitable arm of the BBA.

Hannah received her law degree, cum laude, from Harvard Law School, a master's degree in urban educational policy from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, and a bachelor's degree, cum laude, from Amherst College.

A longtime resident of the City of Boston, Hannah resides in Jamaica Plain with her spouse Joe Kuchtic. She is the proud mother of their three emerging adult children, Caila, Zuri and Ciaran Kilson-Kuchtic. An avid runner and endurance athlete, Hannah has run in numerous road races including the Boston Marathon in 2018 and several sprint triathlons in New England.



*The Honorable
Geraldine S. Hines*
(Ret.)

Geraldine S. Hines was born in Scott, Mississippi and grew up in the Mississippi Delta. She graduated from Tougaloo College in 1968 and the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1971. Upon graduation she became a staff attorney at the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, engaging in prisoner's rights litigation, and then, from 1973 to 1977 practiced criminal law with the Roxbury Defenders' Committee in positions of progressively greater responsibility culminating as the Director of the Committee.

After an MIT fellowship researching policy initiatives to address the issue of police misconduct in communities of color, she served as co-counsel in *Commonwealth v. Willie Sanders*, a highly publicized trial of a Black man accused of raping eight women. From 1979-1982 she litigated civil rights cases relating to discrimination in education and advised on special education law while a staff attorney at the Harvard University Center for Law and Education.

Justice Hines entered private practice in 1982, appearing in state and federal courts on criminal, administrative, labor and family law matters. Of particular note, she continued to

litigate civil rights cases, including employment discrimination and police misconduct claims, as a founding partner in the first law firm of women of color in the New England region. In 2001, she began her judicial career as an associate justice of the Superior Court.

Justice Hines has been extremely active in a number of civic and community organizations, some of the more prominent being the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Lawyers Guild and the National Conference of Black Lawyers. Stemming from her role in these organizations she has observed elections and investigated human rights abuses in both Africa and the Middle East. She also was appointed to both the Judicial Nominating Council and the Judicial Nominating Commission.

Justice Hines has also been an adjunct faculty member at Northeastern University School of Law since 1980 and has been a frequent speaker at several dozen educational programs for attorneys and judges, particularly MCLE, where she has both presented and published the materials in diverse subjects such as trial advocacy, Federal civil litigation and municipal torts and civil rights claims.

Appointed to the Appeals Court by Governor Deval Patrick, Justice Hines joined the court as an associate justice in 2013. She served in that capacity until July 31, 2014, when Governor Patrick appointed her to serve on the Supreme Judicial Court. At the time of her appointment, Justice Hines was the first African American woman to serve on the Court in its 322-year history.

THE JUSTICE GERALDINE S. HINES
PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD HONOREE




April English

Chief Secretary to Governor Maura T. Healey

April English serves as the Chief Secretary to Governor Maura T. Healey. As Chief Secretary, she oversees the administration's efforts to fill appointments on boards and commissions and throughout the administration. Prior to joining the Governor's office, Chief Secretary English worked in the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office for over 19 years. She began her career in the Attorney General's office working as an Assistant Attorney General in the Consumer Protection Division.

As a civil litigator, Chief Secretary English handled a wide range of cases including matters of telemarketing fraud, telecommunications, lead in children's toys, debt settlement and credit counseling, false advertising, and mortgage fraud. Eventually, Chief Secretary English transitioned to the Criminal Bureau where she served as Deputy Division Chief and as Director of the Insurance and Unemployment Fraud Division/Unit. As a prosecutor in the Criminal Bureau, she investigated and prosecuted those who committed fraud



against insurers and against the Commonwealth's unemployment insurance and worker's compensation system.

During her last 6 years at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, Chief Secretary English served as the Chief of Organization Development & Diversity/Inclusion. In this role, she oversaw the workplace composition and culture across the Office, and helped manage recruitment, professional development, mentoring, diversity, inclusion, retention, and racial justice and equity throughout the work of the office.

Chief Secretary English also worked as a Law Clerk to the Justices of the Massachusetts Superior Court from 2001-2002. She received her undergraduate degree from Spelman College in 1997 and her law degree from Northeastern University School of Law in 2000.

ABOUT THE BLANCHE E. BRAXTON BAR SCHOLARSHIP

The Blanche E. Braxton Bar Scholarship is named in honor of Blanche E. Braxton, the first African American woman to be admitted to the Bar in Massachusetts. In 1921, Attorney Braxton graduated from the Portia School of Law (currently New England Law Boston) and in 1923, Attorney Braxton became the first African American woman to be admitted to the bar in Massachusetts. She was also the first African American woman to practice in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts.

The goal of the scholarship is to promote diversity in the legal profession in Massachusetts by providing financial assistance to a member of the MBWA during studies for the bar exam administered by the Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners. This scholarship is made possible through the generous donations and fundraising efforts of MBWA members and friends.

Each year, the scholarship is awarded to female law students of color who have demonstrated outstanding academic excellence, a commitment to public service, and a dedication to the advancement of marginalized people through the legal process.

Past Scholarship Recipients

2022 | Suna Garcia Guzman and Agnes Kolbeck

2021 | Temi Omilabu and Jasmine Brown

2020 | Kaila D. Clark

2019 | Stella T. Oyalabu

2018 | Courtney M. Person

THE BLANCHE E. BRAXTON BAR SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS

The logo for Holland & Knight is a dark blue rectangle with the text "Holland & Knight" in white serif font.

Holland & Knight

Holland & Knight has generously renewed its support of the Blanche E. Braxton Bar Scholarship. This generous sponsorship was made possible through the firm's Women's Initiative, which is dedicated to the recruitment, retention and advancement of women

attorneys. This initiative also enhances professional opportunities both in and outside the firm for women lawyers, encouraging all of the firm's attorneys to be active leaders in professional and civic organizations in the communities in which they live. We thank Holland & Knight for their generous support as the MBWA continues to provide financial assistance to support graduating law students during bar exam studies.



The Women's Bar Association (WBA), Middlesex County Committee spearheaded a fundraising initiative in 2020 to support the Blanche E. Braxton Bar Scholarship. As a result of the WBA's generous donation, the MBWA has been presenting two scholarship awards during

the annual Ida B. Wells Awards Celebration. We thank the WBA for their generous support as the MBWA continues to provide financial assistance to graduating law students during bar exam studies.

THE BLANCHE E. BRAXTON BAR SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT



Katrina Ramkissoon

George Washington University Law School

Katrina Ramkissoon is a Massachusetts native who grew up in Milton. She has been passionate about the law since she was 16 years old. She attended Suffolk University where she studied Government concentrating on American politics and public policy. After obtaining her undergraduate degree, she worked at Morgan Lewis in their Boston office and then attended George Washington University Law School during the pandemic. During her time in law, she has worked diligently alongside women of color in immigration, family law, and various other areas, drawing inspiration from their successes in the field.

Katrina aspires to be a litigator and is currently preparing to take the Massachusetts Bar in July. She is looking forward to her new membership with the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys and is excited to continue their goal of advancing Black women in the legal profession.

THE BLANCHE E. BRAXTON BAR SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT



Nala Thomas

Suffolk University Law School

Nala Thomas is a recent graduate of Suffolk University Law School, earning her Juris Doctorate with a concentration in Health and Biomedical Law. At Suffolk, Nala was a member of the Victims Advocacy Organization and the Health and Biomedical Law Society. One of her greatest experiences included her time with Suffolk University's Health Law Clinic. As an SJC 3:03 Student Attorney, Nala represented indigent clients in matters regarding guardianship, social security and insurance appeals. It was through this work that she discovered an interest in increasing access to healthcare for those currently behind bars. This fall, she will begin her career as an Assistant District Attorney in Essex County.

Nala credits her strength, work ethic, ambition and all that she is to her sister Imani, parents, Renee and Eric, and the rest of her friends and family. Their dedication to honoring those who became before them inspires her everyday.

PLATINUM SPONSOR



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The Law Offices of Nicole M. Bluefort is a renowned Black female-owned law firm with offices in Lynn and Boston, Massachusetts delivering extraordinary legal services, including family law, criminal defense, probate, estate planning, real estate, and general litigation.

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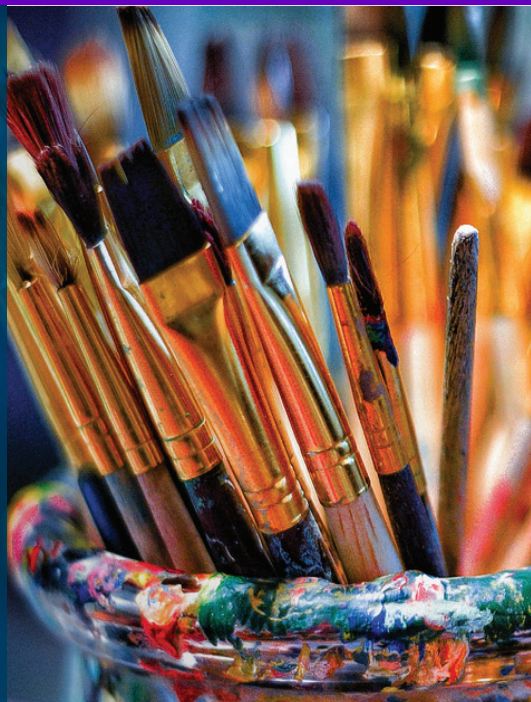




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