THE BLSA APPEAL

2016-2017 Executive Board
Dawn Campbell, President; Kevin Christopher, Vice-President; Misty O'Neal, Executive Secretary, Christian West-Coleman, Treasurer; Noor Obaji, Fundraising and Events Chair; Naomi Reaves, Community Service Chair; Patrick Hillard, Professional Liaison; Danny Bounds, Parliamentarian; Escarlet Escobar, 1L Representative

NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
The University of Memphis
Benjamin L. Hooks Chapter
Dear BLSA Members and Supporters:

Thank you for allowing me to serve this great organization as your President for the 2016-2017 academic year. It has been my pleasure and greatest honor serve an organization founded on the mission of excellence, service, and inclusion. My executive board and I have strived to increase BLSA’s presence in both the law school as well as the Memphis community. On behalf of the entire executive board, I would like to thank each of you for all you’ve done to make this year such a great success. It is only because of your dedication, commitment, and service to BLSA that this organization remains as active, engaged, and service driven as it was founded to be 1968.

As we near the close of the school year, I wish each of you the best of luck on final exams. To our 1L and 2L members, congratulations in advance on what I know will be the best law school semester yet! And to my fellow 3Ls, it’s almost over!!

Finally, I would like to congratulate and welcome BLSA’s President for the 2017-2018 academic year, Ms. Karlyn Washington. I am certain that Karlyn and her executive board will bring great passion, energy, and exciting ideas to BLSA in the coming year.

In service,

Dawn M. Campbell
Please join us and celebrate with our own Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Team at a reception sponsored by Lewis Thomason Law Firm on Friday, April 28, 2017 at 5pm. Students to be honored are James Davis, Patrick Hillard, Karlyn Washington, and Dominique Winfrey.
The Benjamin L. Hooks Chapter of the Black Law Students Association invites you to the

KENNETH COX CEREMONY

honoring Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law class of

2017

Wade Auditorium
Friday, May 12th at 6:00 p.m.

1 North Front Street
Memphis, TN

Please make plans to join us for the Black Law Students Association Kenneth Maurice Cox Donning of the Kente Ceremony Friday, May 12, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in Wade Auditorium. This ceremony was created in honor of Kenneth Maurice Cox, one of Memphis Law’s first African-American graduates. To commemorate his successes and achievements, the Benjamin L. Hooks Chapter of BLSA honors each graduating 3L BLSA member. This ceremony will recognize each graduate for their contributions to the law school’s academic, cultural, and professional environment. Graduates to be honored are: Dawn Campbell, Erica Coleman, Kristen Downey, Ashley Finch, Elizabeth Booker-Houston, Kristen Hudson, Esperanza King, Chris Lewis, Kioni Logan, Krysten Petty, Danielle Salton, Shelby Smith, Stephanie Tasch, Nesanet Temesghen, Shanell Tyler, & Christian West-Coleman
Escarlet Escobar was born in Los Angeles, California on October 8, 1994 to Elisa Canales and is currently a first-year student at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. Ms. Escobar currently serves as the 1L Representative for the Black Law Students Association. Ms. Escobar grew up with four younger siblings and her mother and grandmother. She and her family moved to Nashville, TN in 2008. Ms. Escobar graduated from McGavock High School in 2012 and obtained her bachelor’s degree from Belmont University in 2016. At Belmont, Ms. Escobar was heavily involved with the Speech and Debate team, where she qualified for the National Tournament three years in a row. She graduated as the Tennessee State Champion in three events. Ms. Escobar is passionate about advocating for others and hopes to pursue her legal career in the field of immigration. In addition to serving as a Graduate Assistant for the Tennessee Institute for Pre-Law, Ms. Escobar plans to work as a Pro Bono Fellow this summer at Baker Donelson. Ms. Escobar hopes to stay in Memphis to contribute to the growth of the immigration legal community. Aware that there is a lack of diversity in the legal profession, Ms. Escobar wants to do everything in her power to contribute to the community.
Misty O'Neal

Misty L. O’Neal is a second year, Juris Doctor Candidate at the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. She currently serves as the Executive Secretary for the Benjamin L. Hooks Chapter of the Black Law Students Association, the Fundraising Coordinator for the Public Action Law Society, a member of the American Bar Association Moot Court Team, a member of the Association of Women Attorneys, a Student Ambassador, and a Memphis Law Moot Court Board member. This year, Misty received the Memphis Access and Diversity Scholarship, and the National Bar Association, Ben F. Jones Chapter’s Judge D’Army Bailey Memorial Scholarship. Misty has also received the 2016 Public Action Law Society Bronze Award for completing 50-89 hours of Pro Bono Service. Misty currently holds a Bachelor of Science with a Political Science concentration from Middle Tennessee State University, and a minor in Music. Misty is the daughter of local Memphis attorney Darrell J. O’Neal, and serves as a Paralegal for his law firm, the Law Office of Darrell J. O’Neal. Misty is also a State of Tennessee Notary Public. At Memphis Law, Misty competed in both the Freshman and Advanced Moot Court Competitions. As a 1L, Misty received the Best Oral Advocate Award, receiving the highest overall composite score of all competing advocates, as well as receiving the Top 10 Oral Advocate Award in the 2015-2016 Freshman Moot Court Competition. Misty also competed in the American Bar Association’s National Appellate Advocacy Competition under the tutelage of Cecil C. Humphreys Chair Professor, Barbara Kritchevsky, where she received the highest overall oral advocate composite scores of both the 2L and 3L teams from Memphis Law. Misty’s plans upon graduation from Memphis Law is expanding her father’s current law practice dealing primarily in Civil Litigation such as Personal Injury, Civil Rights, Medical Malpractice, Bankruptcy/Foreclosure, Class Actions, Worker’s Compensation, Administrative Law, and Discrimination.
Dominique Winfrey

A second-year law student and native Memphian, Dominique Winfrey was raised in an impoverished neighborhood by a single-mother. Despite these circumstances, Dominique graduated from City University School of Liberal Arts fifth in her class and went on to attend the University of Memphis on a full-ride scholarship where she graduated with honors with a degree in Political Science and Sociology. Dominique is an advocate at her core with a strong passion for youth and the underrepresented within the inner city. Dominique plans to be a voice for those often over-looked and often criticized. She found this passion at an early age and originally pursued the path of teaching. However, late in her undergraduate journey, Dominique discovered that the field of law was the proper channel to pursue this passion. Raised in the Memphis community, Dominique plans to remain in Memphis to pursue her legal career. She believes that the city of Memphis has contributed greatly to who she is today and feels honored to give back to the city that has placed fortitude and grit on the inside of her. Dominique plans to begin her legal career in Criminal Law and consulting work.
Events

Blood Drive

On January 31, 2017, BLSA hosted its annual Blood Drive through Life Blood. Thanks to the many students and faculty who turned out to donate blood, BLSA was able to save nearly thirty lives. Special thank you to BLSA’s Community Service Coordinator, Naomi Reaves, for coordinating such a great event.

Unity in Diversity Scholarship Banquet

On February 23, 2017, BLSA held its inaugural Unity in Diversity Scholarship Banquet. The Unity in Diversity dinner was an opportunity for the Memphis community to come together to celebrate our unique experiences, differences, and accomplishments, while creating opportunities for diverse students to pursue a legal education. Thanks to our generous sponsors, the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law has additional resources to bring diverse talent to Memphis law and the City of Memphis.
Civil Rights Panel

On February 16, 2017, BLSA hosted its Annual Civil Rights Panel: Civil Rights: Past, Present and Future in honor of Black History Month to reflect on the Civil Rights movement and where the movement is headed. This panel included some of Memphis’ most iconic civil rights leaders in Mike Cody of Burch, Porter & Johnson and Walter Bailey of the Walter Bailey Firm, as well as two of Memphis’ rising civil rights leaders, Maureen Holland of Holland and Associates and Josh Spickler, Public Defender and Executive Director of Just City. Former United States Attorney, Edward Stanton III, served as the moderator.
Events

Judicial Meet & Greet

On March 29, 2017, BLSA hosted a Judicial Meet & Greet with judges from Circuit, Criminal and Chancery courts. This event provided a great opportunity for many students to meet and socialize with some of Memphis’ most prominent judges and establish lasting relationships and potential clerkship opportunities.

BLSA 3 On 3 Basketball Tournament

On April 6, 2017, BLSA hosted a fun and successful 3 On 3 Basketball Tournament at the Larry O. Finch Center at the U of M Main Campus. Spearheaded by BLSA member, Asa Toney, the tournament included current U of M law students and faculty who teamed up together to support BLSA, while engaging in a little friendly competition.
BLSA All-Stars

Congratulations to the following BLSA All-stars:

Naomi Reaves and Ashley Finch - National Mock Trial Team in the National Mock Trial Competition in St. Louis, MO.
Misty O’Neal - National Appellate Advocacy Competition for the American Bar Association Moot Court Team.
James Davis, Patrick Hillard, Karlyn Washington, and Dominique Winfrey - Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition in Atlanta, GA
Patrick Hillard & Dominique Winfrey - School Mock Trial Competition Champions
Elle Mihnovich & Ariel Rush – National Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition, Great Eight
Waleed Naser - Best Oral Advocate Overall, Freshman Moot Court Competition
Escarlet Escobar - Runner-up Best Oral Advocate Overall, Freshman Moot Court Competition

Congratulations to Misty O'Neal for being elected as the 2017-2018 Associate Chief Justice of the Memphis Law Moot Court Board!

Congratulations and Welcome to the Newly elected 2017-2018 Memphis Law Moot Court Board Members:
Lan Chen, Elle Mihnovich, Jeffrey Moore, Patrick Hillard, Noor Obaji, Misty O’Neal, Ariel Rush, and Dominique Winfrey