Words from the President

- Mariangela “Merili” Mosley 3L

Greetings Notre Dame BLSA family! It is a privilege to serve as this year’s Notre Dame BLSA president. I am eagerly trying to fill the “large” shoes that Bobby wore for the past two years. I would like to start by saying that we here at Notre Dame appreciate your continued support and it is evident to all of us that without the collective efforts of past and current members, BLSA would not be the organization it is today.

I would be doing ND BLSA an injustice if I began talking about my excitement for this year without first reflecting on the phenomenal year we had last year. Notre Dame BLSA made a huge mark here at Notre Dame. Our members responded to the Katrina disaster with a campus-wide panel. We participated in numerous community service activities including cooking dinner at DISMAS house and tutoring children. At the BLSA regional convention our scrapbook application for chapter of the year was runner up which advanced us to the national competition. Furthermore, our moot court trial team comprised of Stephen Robinson and Sean Seymore placed third in the Thurgood Marshall Moot Court competition paving the way for future ND BLSA teams. Notre Dame BLSA Alumni weekend was one to remember with our guest speaker Max Siegel and an inspirational message from the honorable Judge Ann Williams.

With such an astonishing year behind us, I believe that Notre Dame BLSA is unstoppable. So far this year our executive board combined with our membership, has continued to foster academic excellence, build professionalism, volunteer in the community and provide support to issues challenging our community both here at Notre Dame and abroad. Recently we participated in a nation-wide BLSA initiative raising money and awareness for the suffering people in Darfur, Sudan.

In the words of last year’s president Bobby Brown “we are moving and our direction is forward, fast, and fearless.” Help us to keep up the momentum. I look forward to another successful year and believe that our current members have what it takes to make that happen.

Thank you and God bless.
Merili Mosley
Dear Alumni and Friends,

I am honored and enthused to serve as the 2006-2007 BLSA Vice President. Our chapter had a great year in 2005-2006 and we look forward to continued success. As a result of last year’s success, the role of the BLSA Vice President has changed from focusing on BLSA Weekend to promoting advocacy within the chapter including participation in NBLSA competitions. As the headlines constantly remind us, the work of the minority advocate is never complete and part of our chapter’s mission is to meet this challenge.

I am also proud to represent our chapter and serve the Midwest Region of NBLSA as the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Director. The regional competition will be held January 30 – February 3 in Chicago. This year’s moot problem poses due process, equal protection, and Eighth Amendment challenges to the differing treatment under the Federal Sentencing guidelines for drug offenses involving crack cocaine versus those involving powdered cocaine. While the distinction is slowly changing, the Federal Sentencing Guidelines continue to produce disproportionate sentences for comparable crimes with the greatest impact on minority defendants.

The Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial competition will also be held at the convention in Chicago. The mock trial problem focuses on the admissibility of evidence obtained from a search conducted as a result of targeting the profile of a Jamaican immigrant during the customs process. Among other issues, the problem focuses on the use of heritage, ethnicity, or nationality as the basis for a detention and search. As both the moot court and mock trial problems address relevant and timely issues, I look forward to exciting arguments on the issues.

Hope to see you all at the BLSA weekend in April. Take care and stay in touch.

Stephen Robinson
Annual Chat with Judge Ann

This fall, Judge Ann of the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals made her annual visit to NDLS to speak with a few 2Ls and 3Ls!). Pictured left to right are Jackie Yu, Merili Mosley, Brandon Ward, Marlys; Judge Ann Williams, Jordan Taylor, Maria Alveras, Akia Haynes, Caitlin Gossett, Laura Robinson.

Introducing the BLSA Class of 2009

Jeff Caffee
Undergrad: Saint Leo University
Hometown: Jacksonville, FL

Derrick Evans
Undergrad: Notre Dame
Hometown: Wichita, KS

Caitlin Gossett
Undergrad: Smith College
Hometown: Boston, MA

James Jennett
Undergrad: Niagara University
Hometown: Queens, NY

Janelle B. Pannell
Undergrad: Virginia Tech
Hometown: Washington, D.C.

Laura Robinson
Undergrad: Harvard College
Hometown: CA

Jordan Taylor
Undergrad: Cornell University
Hometown: Diamond Bar, CA

Kyle Sommer
Undergrad: University of Washington
Hometown: Snohomish, WA
Treasurer & BLSA Weekend Co-Chair
Kyle Smith, 2L

This year presents an opportunity to continue a rich tradition of community and fellowship that has become synonymous with Notre Dame BLSA. My BLSA Weekend Co-Chair and I are excited to announce that our theme will be, “The Virtue of Success.”

As members of the legal community, we often overlook success in a manner that transcends its professional objectiveness. This year’s goal will be to take a holistic approach to defining success and the professional and spiritual satisfaction success may bring. In order to do this, it is important that we have the support of not just our current students, but faculty and alumni alike. We hope that collectively, all of us will make BLSA Weekend a success.

Sincerely Yours,
Kyle Smith

Historian & BLSA Weekend Co-Chair
Heather Cameron, 3L

Each year, BLSA members take part in a wide various social, service and academic events. These activities unite BLSA as a family, building a spirit of friendship and community. The position of Historian was created to help the Information Officer memorialize the activities of ND BLSA.

Please visit the photo gallery on the ND BLSA web site and see some of the 2006-2007 BLSA activities.

Having been active in BLSA since my first year at NDLS, I am excited about tracking our history, and equally excited about planning this year’s BLSA weekend. I hope to see you in the Spring!

Sincerely,
Heather Cameron
BLSA Honor Roll

Recognizing the accomplishments of BLSA students at NDLS.

American Bar Association

BLSA members are the NDLS representatives to the ABA, and one of our own is a national appointee.

Advocacy

BLSA members will represent NDLS in two regional advocacy competitions.

BLSA

NDLS students are leaders at the National and Regional level of the Black Law Students Association.

Journals

Several BLSA 3Ls hold editorial positions and two BLSA 2Ls were selected for membership on NDLS journals.

Student Bar Association

BLSA is proud that its members hold top leadership positions in the SBA.
Greetings!

As the current academic chair for ND BLSA, I am honored to carry on the tradition of providing a helping hand to the current 1Ls and the BLSA community at large. First, I’d like to thank the previous academic chairs for providing us with a strong base of recurring programs. Your hard work and dedication to the organization helped to create the excellent academic programs we have today. I wish to carry on that tradition of excellence to the next generation of students.

This year, BLSA has already hosted several workshops and programs. The first set of programs focused on providing 1Ls with effective study habits and study supplements. The second set of programs consisted of the traditional resume and cover letter workshop and a new program featuring attorneys from large firms and an attorney from the Notre Dame General Counsel’s Office. I am hopeful that this event will become an annual event.

In the coming year, we are looking forward to hosting several events including a “how to select upper level courses” session, moot court competition workshop, and journal writing workshop.

BLSA is doing great things this year and I am privileged to be a part of this great organization.

Community Service Chair— Marlysha Myrthil, 3L

Dear ND BLSA Family,

We have all been given amazing talents and abilities, with which we will likely achieve much professional success. As law students, our lives can easily become consumed by reading, outlining, and writing papers. Yet, while we can spend all of our time focused on our studies, our success means little if we do not reach out to our communities and use our intelligence, talents, and skills to make a positive impact in the lives of people around us in need.

We have begun to touch our local community, but there is so much more to be done. That extra takes your time and commitment. I challenge you to commit yourself to your community—starting here in South Bend and wherever life takes you. Take one hour to help a 5th grader understand how to multiply fractions. Become a mentor to a young teen, giving guidance on life-choices, so that he or she can break the generational cycle of violence and poverty. Help inspire a life-long love of reading in a young child. Flex your cooking skills at a Dismas House dinner, or just come in fellowship. In whatever way you choose, commit yourself to service.

As future legal professionals, keep in mind these words from Dr. Dorothy Height: “We have to improve life, not just for those who have the most skills and those who know how to manipulate the system. But also for and with those who often have so much to give but never get the opportunity.

WHAT WE’VE DONE SO FAR
Fellowship dinner with former prisoners at Dismas House
Volunteered at Annual SBA Boys and Girls Club Halloween Party
Save Darfur! NBLSA International Day of Community Service (Nov. 9)
“Wear Red” Drive for the International Committee of the Red Cross
Letter-Writing Campaign to Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Candle-light Vigil in Remembrance of Darfur Victims
Candle-light Vigil in Remembrance of Darfur Victims

ONGOING SERVICE PROJECTS
Tutoring young children at the R.E.A.C.H. After-School Support Program

It's not too late to sign up! Email me @ mmyrthil@nd.edu to sign up or to get more information

Marlysha Myrthil
ND BLSA Community Service Chair
NBLSA Midwest Regional Director of Programming
Greetings from your BLSA 1L Representative! Although our representation is small in number, I am confident that our class will form meaningful relationships with each other and the BLSA community.

My hope is that BLSA members maintain a visible and active presence at NDLS by raising awareness and addressing issues of race in the law school and the greater community. I look forward to getting to know all of you as we further BLSA’s mission.

It is a pleasure to serve as this year's Admissions Liaison. Our goal is to assist the Admissions office in the recruitment of BLSA members. One facet of this is to make sure that BLSA recruitment is important to the administration. Further, BLSA will attempt to support the administration’s current efforts.

Once a prospective student has made the decision to join the ND Family, the goal is to make the transition as smooth as possible. The efforts of last year's liaison made my transition just a little bit easier. I hope to have a similar impact during my tenure.
BLSA is proud to announce BLSA 2Ls who were selected to journal membership. We are also proud of our 3Ls who were elected to editorial positions.

- **Journal of College and University Law**
  - Jacqueline Yu, Articles Editor
  - Chai Park, 2L

- **Journal of Legislation**
  - LisaMarie Collins, Webmaster
  - Stephen Duvernay, Production Editor
  - Suhey Navarez, Development Editor
  - Brandon Ward, 2L
Street Law

Learning and teaching

For those of us fortunate enough to have matriculated through Notre Dame, the opportunity to incorporate service-learning while receiving a distinguished legal education has been especially meaningful. My decision to remain at Notre Dame for law school was motivated in part by the myriad service opportunities that Notre Dame affords its students. Teaching American Government at Riley High through the law school’s “Street Law” course has reminded me that a balanced life complete with academic fulfillment, commitment to family, and service to others bodes well in producing Our Lady’s “Different Kind of Lawyer.”

My interest in teaching originated during my junior year at Notre Dame. For those familiar with the teaching prowess of undergraduate professors like Richard Pierce and Al Tillery, my passion for learning and appreciation for sophisticated classroom discussion is easily understood. This novel interest piqued after conversations with Stephen Robinson, current BLSA Vice President, who shared his valuable memories teaching in the “Street Law” program with me. Like Stephen, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with Riley High’s senior class. Their thirst for knowledge and appreciation of time shared with Notre Dame Students has been overwhelming. Significantly, I would be remiss if I did not comment on my students’ innovative sense of humor—which needless to say, provides desired retreats from the rigor and demands of the law school. The reality of being at once a teacher and a student has reminded me of the importance of perspective.

As many BLSA members who have gone before me, I recognize that as a member of a privileged class I have a responsibility to give back. This unique occasion to teach in the South Bend community is one that I do not take lightly. I enjoy working with and learning from my students. I look forward to Tuesday and Thursday mornings because I know that 25 students are anxiously awaiting our time together—eager to learn, eager to teach, and eager to share the complexities surrounding their “missing” assignments: “Ms. Ferguson,” they exclaim, “My report on North Korea is on my computer at home. I forgot to print it out and my printer ran out of ink last night!”

Service to others then, is an inextricably intertwined component of Notre Dame’s mission and of BLSA’s as well. As I see it, if we are truly to live up to the standard of being a “Different kind of lawyer,” service must be a starting point and remain steady throughout our professional journeys.

-Shawtina Ferguson

Shawtina Ferguson is a 2L from Los Angeles, CA

“My report is on my computer at home and my printer ran out of ink last night!”
Advocacy

The following BLSA members were selected to represent NDLS in regional advocacy competitions.

- **ATLA Mock Trial Team**
  - Kyle Smith

- **Jessup International Moot Court Team**
  - Krishna Thomas

- **Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Teams**
  - Heather Cameron
  - Stephen Duvernay
  - Shawtina Ferguson
  - Merili Mosley
  - Marlysha Myrthil
  - Melissa Patterson
  - Annabelle Pereira
  - Kyle Smith
The NDLS student body elects two representatives to the American Bar Association Student Division. This year, both representatives are members of BLSA.

In addition to our elected student representatives, 3L Cordell Carter, III was appointed to national office.

- **ABA Student Division Representatives**
  - Heather Cameron, SBA President
  - Chike Egbuniwe, ABA Rep
  - Melissa Patterson, ABA Rep

- **ABA National Client Counseling Competition**
  - Cordell Carter, National Student Director
NDLS members are taking an active leadership role in the National Black Law Students Association.

- **National Executive Board**
  - Leonard Stewart, Midwest Regional Director

- **Midwest Region**
  - Leonard Stewart, Regional Director
  - Marlysha Myrthil, Programming Director
  - Stephen Robinson, Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition Director
BLSA members hold the top two elected positions in the NDLS Student Bar Association. Additionally, BLSA members are the two elected NDLS representatives to the ABA.
Secretary— Krishna A. Thomas, 2L

Dear BLSA Family,

I hope you are enjoying the online version of Marshall’s Law. Our hope is that by producing Marshall’s Law online, we can stay better connected with alumni.

Before you leave the site, please click the “contact us” link to share any good news you would like published in the next edition of Marshall’s Law.

Please enjoy the photographs taken during this academic year. We look forward to seeing you in the Spring for BLSA weekend!

Krishna A. Thomas
kthomas3@nd.edu

Click on the photos for more detail.
Shout outs—BLSA Alumni Achievements

Preye Cobham, ‘06
Passed the Georgia Bar and is a first-year associate.

Cristal Clark Briscoe, ‘06
Passed the Indiana Bar and is an associate at Barnes & Thornburg in Indianapolis.

Keoini Haynes, ‘06
Passed the Indiana Bar and is an associate at Ice Miller in Indianapolis.

Sean Seymour, ‘06
Passed the Massachusetts Bar and is a first-year associate.

Chantel Bryant, ‘06
Passed the Missouri Bar and is an associate at Polsinelli Shalton Welte Suelthaus PC in Kansas City.

Bobby Brown, ‘06
Passed the New York Bar . . .

. . . And the New Jersey Bar too. Bobby is an associate at Riker Danzig Scherer Hyland & Perretti LLP in Morristown.

Myra Michail, J.D./M.B.A., ‘06
Passed the Ohio bar and is an associate at Thompson Hine in Dayton.
This year’s Welcome Back BBQ was hosted at Krishna’s house by Krishna Thomas, Chike Egbuniwe, and Suzanne DeBerry.

Front row left to right: Krishna Thomas, LisaMarie Collins, Jackie Wilson, Akia Haynes, Jordan Taylor, Suzanne DeBerry, Brandon Ward

Back row left to right: Melissa Patterson, Steve Duvernay, Shawtina Ferguson, Chike Egbuniwe, Tara Fleming, Kyle Smith
Our concession stand fundraiser took place during the second home football game of the season. We partnered with the Hispanic Law Students Association to raise funds.
BLSA and HLSA members hard at work!
Judge Ann Williams addressing the BLSA membership with a focus on 1Ls.
President's Welcome

Judge Ann / 1L Intro

Vice President

Treasurer/ Historian

1L Rep/ Admissions

Academic/ Community

BLSA Honor Roll

Street Law

Secretary/ Photos

Shout Outs

BLSA Weekend '07

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BLSA Weekend 2007

The Virtue of Success

April 2007

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Save the date!

- April 13-15, 2007—more details to follow.

More details...