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### Profiles of the 2007 Winners of the WLAM Foundation Outstanding Woman Law Student Award

#### **Amanda Bley, General Motors Scholar, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Amanda is in her second year as a law student at University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. Committed to honoring her school through academic excellence, Amanda participates in a number of leadership activities through her position as a member of the Dean's Honor's Society. She is also a member of the Moot Court Board of Advocates and looks forward to her participation in the Giles Sutherland Intellectual Property competition in Chicago, IL. A life-long female athlete, Amanda is dedicated to helping women achieve their goals in both the legal and non-legal fields.

#### **Amy Cocuzza, WLAM Foundation Scholar, University of Michigan Law School**



Amy has dedicated her career to advocating for workers rights and economic justice as a union organizer. She holds a master degree in Industrial and Labor Relations and has worked extensively in the healthcare and music industries. Now a second-year law student, Amy is the co-chair of the law school's ACLU chapter and has recently been named Editor-In-Chief of the University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform. She hopes to have an academic career in the labor and employment law field.

#### **Melissa Ann Cohen, General Motors Scholar, University of Michigan Law School**



After graduating from Duke University, Melissa spent a year working as a Legal Assistant at the ACLU National office in New York. Since coming to the University of Michigan she has continued her commitment to public interest law, interning during the summer of 2007 with Children's Rights in New York, and participating in the law school's Child Advocacy Law Clinic. She has also served of the board of the Women Law Student Association and the Public Service Chairperson and is an Associate Editor for the University of Michigan Journal of Gender and Law. Melissa plans to do child welfare work after graduation.

#### **Crystal Culbert, Ford Motor Company Fund Scholar, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Crystal is currently in her final year of the extended evening program at UDM while working full-time as a manufacturing plant manager. She also has degrees in electrical engineering and management sciences, and she is a licensed member of the Professional Engineers Ontario. She is active in the community as the President of the UDM Chapter of the Student Animal Legal Defense, has organized local corporate teams and participated in the CIBC Run for the Cure for Breast Cancer, and has promoted safety in the

workplace in several venues. She has recently volunteered to be a panel speaker for Women in Engineering and the University of Windsor.

### **Michal Duer, WLAM Foundation Scholar, Wayne State University Law School**



Michal is a third year student at Wayne State University Law School, where she has served as public relations chair of the Jewish Law Student Association and currently serves as Director of Oral Advocacy for the school's Moot Court program. While in law school, Michal interned with the Honorable Bernard A. Friedman of the U.S. District Court, Eastern District, and at the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office in the Domestic Violence Unit. In the past two years, Michal first worked and now serves on the executive board at the Free Legal Aid Clinic, providing legal assistance to low-income individuals with family law and elder law issues. She also works at lakeshore Legal Aid in Macomb County, where she is helping to start up a new PPO clinic for survivors of domestic violence.

### **Melanie Elturk, WLAM Foundation Scholar at Wayne State University Law School**



Melanie is currently in her third year of law school where she is a member of the Mock Trial team and serves as the President of both the Middle Eastern Law Student Association and the Muslim Law Student Association. She is deeply passionate and committed to the issues of civil rights and social justice, particularly racial inequality. She serves as teacher assistant for the 2008 Winter class Race and the Law, and works for Goodman and Hurwitz, a Civil Rights firm. She has also endeavored to advance the goals of social and racial equality by working with the NAACP, ACCESS, and as research assistant to Professor and political activist Jocelyn Benson. Melanie hopes to pursue a PhD in Sociology after law school.

### **Rachel C. Johnson, Dickinson Wright Women's Network Scholar, University of Michigan Law School**



Prior to attending law school, Rachel worked as a Foster Care Case Manager in inner-city Chicago, and then moved to Colorado where she developed and ran a seminal program for homeless families at the Colorado House and Resource Center. During law school, she has continued to work on behalf of women and minorities by representing indigent defendants through the Michigan Clinical Law Program and serving as an executive board member of the Michigan Journal of Race & Law. When she graduated in May, Rachel will be clerking for Chief Judge Robert G. Coats of the Alaska Court of Appeals, and she later hopes to pursue a career as a public defender.

### **Karen Kane, General Motors Scholar, Thomas M. Cooley Law School**



Karen graduated with an Undergraduate Degree from Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH, and then entered the Providence Alliance for Catholic Teachers ("PACT" Program), a program designed to put young energetic teachers in inner-city and



underprivileged Catholic Schools. In the PACT Program, Karen taught 5th grade in two inner-city schools while earning a Masters Degree in Special Education. While at Cooley, Karen received an Honors Scholarship, has been on the Dean's List and received the Certificate of Merit in her Evidence class, and served her fellow classmates as the Student Bar Association Property I Tutor. Karen hopes to continue to advocate for students, children and families in the future by practicing Education Law.

**Irina Kashcheyeva, General Motors Scholar, Michigan State University College of Law**



While obtaining her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Russia, Irina worked for the Tomsk Human Rights Research Center, a non-profit organization for analyzing the human rights situation in her home region and submitting the corrective recommendations to local authorities. During her studies at the MSU College of Law, Irina continued to be involved in the community, authoring an article dealing with employment of ex-offenders in Michigan, serving on the board of the school's Law Review, contributing to the local refugee center, and working for a Representative at the Michigan state legislature. Upon graduation, Irina will begin her federal clerkship in the Eastern District of Michigan.

**Aysha J. Kasham, WLAM Foundation Scholar, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Aysha is a third year student at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. While in law school, she has been involved with a non-profit literacy organization that provides tutoring to ESL adults, and is Vice President of the Immigration Law Student Association and member of the International Law Society. Aysha recently had the opportunity of representing and counseling a female asylee at the Chicago Asylum office. She spent the last year as a law clerk in the Legal Department for Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc.

**Katherine Konieczny, WLAM Foundation Scholar, University of Michigan Law School**



Prior to law school, Kathy worked as a public policy analyst for non-profit organizations and the City of Chicago. She volunteers as a board member of Women Employed, a Chicago based organization that advocated for fair economic opportunities for women. She is an enthusiastic supporter of public service, and as a leader in the Organization for Public Interest Students, she encourages other students to pursue public interest work full-time or through pro bono projects. Kathy is involved in Michigan Law's ACLU chapter and the McGee Civil Rights moot court competition. Kathy spent her 1L summer working on public health and social service issues for the New York City Council, and she will work this summer in D.C.

**Angela Magruder, Ford Motor Company Fund Scholar, Wayne State University Law School**



Angela holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from MSU, an M.S. in Electrical Engineering from UM, and is a second year evening law



student at Wayne State University and has passed the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office registration examination. Throughout her several years as an engineer in the automotive industry she excelled in a field in which women are a small minority, and has encouraged the development of young male and female engineers of every culture and background. She was one of the very first volunteers to teach science and engineering to elementary school students through the Society of Automotive Engineers program, "A World in Motion," a program whose aim is to get young students excited about science.

### **Manda Mitteer, WLAM Foundation Scholar, Thomas M. Cooley Law School**



Manda earned her Masters of Social Work degree from Grand Valley State University while working with neglected and abused children as a foster care worker with the Michigan Department of Human Services. After entering law school, she continued her advocacy of women and children while working as a PAAM intern with the Ottawa County Prosecutor's office and interning with a firm that represents parents and children involved in the neglect/abuse system. She has also served as a volunteer for Project Literacy, Habitat for Humanity, and the domestic violence unit in the Ingham County Prosecutor's office.

### **Emily Murphy , WLAM Foundation Scholar, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Emily graduated summa cum laude from Niagara University before entering the joint law degree program at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, where she is working towards her JD as well as a Canadian LLC degree from the University of Windsor. She is active at both universities, serving as Associate Director of Finance for Moot Court Board of Advocates, a competitor of the NYU Immigration Team, President of the USM College Democrats, Treasurer of Phi Alpha Delta and Copy Editor of Windsor Review of Legal and Social Issues. Emily's commitment to advocacy has led her to reach out to the Detroit community by participating in the Mediation, Immigration law and Mobile Law Clinics.

### **Alice Newlin , WLAM Foundation Scholar, Michigan State University College of Law**



A graduate of the University of Puget Sound, Alice is now in her third year at Michigan State University College of Law. At MSU, she serves as Vice President of the Women's Law Caucus and Managing Editor of the Law Review. Since starting law school, Alice has pursued numerous opportunities to serve the public interest and now works at Legal Aid of Western Michigan serving low income residents and the elderly; she also externs at the MSU Chance at Childhood Clinic, where she advocates for children and families. This summer, an article written by Alice will be published in the Columbia Journal of Gender and Law. After graduation in May 2008, she will be clerking for The Honorable Timothy Sercombe of the Oregon Court of Appeals.

**Alicia Riedl, Ford Motor Company Scholar, Thomas M. Cooley Law School**

Alicia is known as a student that is dedicated to giving back. She has been instrumental in bringing the Access to Justice Clinic to Cooley, which focuses on giving the underrepresented population access to justice. She has dedicated her time to volunteering at the Dispute Resolution Center, Kent County Prosecutor's office, and the Legal Assistance Center, while also choosing to do an externship at Legal Aid. Alicia is also the founding member of the Grand Rapids Mock Trial Board and serves as its chair. In addition, she serves as a mentor to incoming law students and has been on the dean's list and honor roll every term.

**Monica Smith, General Motors Scholar, Wayne State University Law School**

Monica has been a political organizer and leader with the Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, Integration, & Immigrant Rights and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary (BAMN) for the past five years. She is also a legal intern for the United for Equality and Affirmative Action Legal Defense Fund (UEAALDF). Monica's commitment to the defense of affirmative action had been unwavering, and in the last four years Monica has become a highly effective proponent for integration in education. Speaking to audiences as diverse as university classes, church groups, union meetings, and high school assemblies, Monica has shown her commitment to progressive social change.

**Ariana Bree Stamper-Gimbar, WLAM Foundation Scholar, Michigan State University College of Law**

After graduating from UC Berkley with a degree in both Linguistics and Native American studies, Bree now attends Michigan State University College of Law where she is Co-President of the Women's Law Caucus, an organization dedicated to community service and the promotion of strong academic and professional environment for the female student body. Bree has also recently been elected as Projects Editor for the Journal of International Law and is a competing oralist and writer in the VIS International Arbitration Moot Court team. This summer Bree is looking forward to working as a Summer Associate for Dickinson Wright in Lansing, Michigan and continuing her work in the community.

**Beth Swagman, WLAM Foundation Scholar, Thomas M. Cooley Law School**

Beth has devoted 25 years of advocating for children and women victimized by abuse and violence. Her child safety protocols have been adopted by hundreds of churches and non-profit organizations across the United State and Canada. A national speaker promoting safe relationships for children and adults, she seeks to break the silence of abuse by giving a voice to the most vulnerable among us. Upon graduation, Beth hopes to continue her advocate role by assisting women and the elderly in Estate Planning.

**Maya Ziv-el, Ford Motor Company Scholar, Michigan State University College of Law**



Maya is a third year law student from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is currently the co-editor in chief of the Journal of Business and Securities Law, captain and brief writer of her Moot Court Appellate Advocacy team, and the co-chair of the Student Bar Association's community service committee. Maya works part-time as a law clerk at Joseph & Associates, and also enjoys working in the MSU Law's tax clinic during her last semester at MSU Law. She looks forward to beginning her career in the public sector