

## Profiles of the 2003 Winners of the WLAM Foundation Outstanding Woman Law Student Award

### **Johanna Campbell, Ford Fund Award, Cooley Law School**



Johanna Campbell is the Ford Scholar at Cooley Law School. She wrote eloquently in her application of her deep commitment to helping women to live peaceful lives, revealing a unique understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence. Ms. Campbell has worked directly with victims as an investigator with an Indiana prosecutor's office, and legal advocate at an Indiana legal services agency, participating as well in task force efforts intended to eliminate family violence. Since moving to Lansing, she has volunteered at the Council Against Domestic Assault, providing support to both staff and residents of the shelter. She is dedicated to "keeping shelters funded, educating the community on what is unacceptable behavior in spousal and partner relationships, and providing support to those on the precipice of staying or escaping." As a lawyer, she plans to educate colleagues on the dynamics of abuse, in order to avoid re-victimization of people who have survived so much.

### **Laurie Carafone, Ford Fund Award, University of Michigan Law School**



Laurie Carafone just graduated from the University of Michigan Law School and intends to devote her legal career to protecting the rights of women and children. That dedication began during work with the International Institute of Boston, where her preparation of a case for a Somalian woman who survived a murder attempt with one of her children, losing others, led to asylum. During law school, Ms. Carafone clerked for the National Center for Youth Law in Oakland, California, researching child welfare laws, and worked in the UM Child Advocacy law clinic, serving as a lawyer and guardian ad litem for children in abuse and neglect cases. She interned at the World Organization Against Torture in Geneva, Switzerland, gaining knowledge of the UN's human rights system, during 2001. Ms. Carafone has applied for an Equal Justice Works fellowship that would return her to Boston to expand legal resources, especially visas, for women and children seeking asylum or protection under the federal Violence Against Women Act.

### **Angelita Martinez, Ford Fund Award, Wayne State University Law School**



Angelita Martinez will graduate in May of 2005 from Wayne State University Law School, where she is an active member of the Women's Law Caucus, helping to design a women's symposium, participating in its mentoring program, and collecting cell phones for domestic violence victims. As an



undergraduate at Wayne, she served as the only student liaison for the President's Commission on the Status of Women, and coordinated the University's first annual Women's History Month exhibit. She serves on Wayne County's Foster Care Review Board, reviewing cases of abused and neglected children, and making recommendations to juvenile court referees and judges, as well as the Family Independence Agency. Ms. Martinez plans to pursue a career in family law, continuing her advocacy for women and children in society.

### **Cathy A. Raidna, Ford Fund Award, Michigan State University Detroit College of Law**



Cathy A. Raidna will graduate from Michigan State University Detroit College of Law in May of 2004. Ms. Raidna is the Founder and Executive Director of Adoptions of the Heart, a non-profit agency serving families both biological and adoptive. In addition to supporting families in crisis, the agency educates them and collaborates with community professionals to meet their needs. She also serves as a facilitator for a program that recruits families for parenting classes, and is a certified social worker. Ms. Raidna is hoping to move her agency into a large location that would provide housing for young women coming out of foster care, as well as an educational center, and is working with AIDS groups to partner on adoption options for terminally ill parents.

### **Kelly A. Walters, Ford Fund Award, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Kelly A. Walters is completing her first year at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, where she is a member of Law Review and the Women's Law Caucus. Those nominating her for the award cited her maturity, energy, and extraordinary ability to balance the demands of law school with her responsibilities as Chief Financial Officer of a family business and mother of eight children. A former teacher, Ms. Walters worked last summer in the Abandoned Properties Project of the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, successfully placing families into once-abandoned homes. She is a role model not only for other women law students, but also her children, who have grown more independent and responsible as their mother returned to school.

### **Malika N. Pryor, Justine Orris Scholar at Wayne State University Law School**



Malika N. Pryor is the Justine Orris Scholar at Wayne State University Law School, where she is a first-year student who is carrying forward her commitment to "thinking globally, and acting locally." As an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, Ms. Pryor was involved in the Black Student



Union, Students Establishing Educational Dreams, Sister to Sister, and Black Folx Productions, serving in leadership positions in all, and receiving the Student Leader of the Year Award from the NAACP. She taught kindergarten following her graduation, and served as a group facilitator in the Leadershape Institute at the University of Michigan. Ms. Pryor describes her life mission as “working towards the restoration of justice and hope through the legal system and public policy.”

### **Trish Oleksa Haas, Howard & Howard Scholar at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Trish Oleksa Haas will graduate in May of 2004 from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, where she is a member of Law Review and recipient of a Dean’s Scholarship for Academic Excellence. She demonstrated an ability to lead in a male-dominated field through her nine years in the Air Force, rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Posted as the first woman weather observer at Galena Air Force Station in Alaska, Ms. Haas says that she learned early on that respect comes through “leading by example.” That quiet and competent style served her well not only in military service, where she earned many commendations and awards, but also in her newer role as step-mother of two teenaged daughters. She is one of the top ten students in her class, with both her character and life experiences making her an inspiration to many.

### **Lisa Bagley, WLAMF Award, University of Michigan Law School**



Lisa Bagley is a second year student at the University of Michigan Law School who says that she comes from a family of strong women who taught her to work hard toward her goals. Her interest in human rights law has been honed through teaching of immigrant children in France, and obtaining a Masters Degree in international relations at the London School of Economics. An active member of UM law school’s Women Law Students Association, International Law Society and the Public Interest Group, she is an associate editor on the Journal of International Law and Journal of Gender and Law. Ms. Bagley worked in Cambodia as a fellow last summer, studying that country’s labor code and whether women understood or pursued their legal rights under it. She is working this semester at the AIRE Centre in London, providing legal advice and research on European and international human rights law. She is seeking a Fellowship in Asylum and Refugee Law for the summer.

### **Lisa M. Berden, WLAMF Award, Wayne State University Law School**



Lisa M. Berden will graduate in May from Wayne State



University Law School, where she serves on the Student Board of Governors and the school's curriculum committee, as well as a member of the Law Review. She has organized fundraisers for student organizations, and has helped to reorganize Wayne's Habitat for Humanity Chapter, including hands-on building in Detroit. Ms. Berden also is involved in the Detroit Synergy Group, an organization dedicated to encouraging people to live, socialize and do business in Detroit, and previously served as an intern for Michigan Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly. Ms. Berden draws on her prior experience as a high school teacher as she continues her commitment to community service.

**Barbara Byrum, WLAMF Award, Michigan State University Detroit College of Law**



Barbara Byrum came to Michigan State University Detroit College of Law with an agribusiness degree and a new business, Byrum Hardware, in the city of Charlotte. She mentors middle schools students by teaching them business practices there, and has mentored a law school classmate on starting her own business. Her community service includes serving on the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Board, where she works to increase and retain businesses in the community, and the Charlotte Rotary Club, where she has sponsored speakers on women's issues. As a team captain and community education chair for the local Cancer Society, Ms. Byrum has taken part in fundraising and awareness campaigns. As president of an MSU professional sorority dedicated to the promotion of women in agriculture and natural resources, Ms. Byrum is developing a scholarship program for women pursuing undergraduate degrees.

**Katherine Donohue, WLAMF Award, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law**



Katherine Donohue graduates this May from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, and has participated with distinction in Law Review, serving as Symposium Editor, and Moot Court, winning Best Brief and Oral Argument in 2001 competition. Her commitment to community service began as an undergraduate, when she tutored high school students and was an activities volunteer at Maxey Boy's Training School. She remains active in her sorority, advising new members and helping with educational programs. She will join the Butzel Long law firm upon her graduation, a choice based in part on that firm's participation in an internship program that allows new associates to work in the Wayne County Prosecutors Office.

**Kimberly R. Isham, WLAMF Award, University of Michigan Law School**



Kimberly R. Isham attends the University of Michigan Law School as a second-year student, where she has continued her feminist and lesbian activism. She launched a new student organization there, Wolverine Street Law, a challenging process that included work with the administration and student government, as well as training of participating students. Now officially recognized, the organization works with pregnant teens and teen moms in Ann Arbor, teaching them their legal rights on custody, paternity, domestic violence and employment issues. Ms. Isham also volunteers at the Family Law Project, working on divorce cases, and SAFEhouse, helping victims of domestic violence. A Bergstrom Child Welfare Fellow at UM, Ms. Isham has gained valuable legal training on child abuse and neglect, as she represents children and serves as a guardian ad litem. She intends to continue that commitment as an advocate for women and children upon graduation.

#### **Shawna Langston, WLAMF Award, Cooley Law School**



Shawna Langston attends Cooley Law School, where she is first in her class, Managing Editor of the Law Review, and Chair of the Mock Trial Board. While excelling academically and raising two daughters, she has committed herself to advocacy against domestic violence, starting as a shelter volunteer and rising to become President of RAVE (Resources Against Violent Encounters to Women of West Michigan). She also assisted the Grand Rapids Police Department by providing crisis intervention to survivors of domestic violence, as part of the Domestic Assault Response Team, trying at the same time to empower survivors with knowledge needed to begin a violence-free life. Since starting law school, Ms. Langston has volunteered with both a local shelter and the Michigan Foster & Adoptive Parent Association, and served as an extern with the Washtenaw County Public Defender's Office.

#### **Diane L. Nelson, WLAMF Award, Michigan State University Detroit College of Law**



Diane L. Nelson attends Michigan State University Detroit College of Law, and hopes to participate in reform of the juvenile justice system upon receiving her law degree. She works in the Macomb County Family Independence Agency as a volunteer, serving as a parent mentor in the Parent to Parent Program whose goal is to keep children with their parents in a tolerant, safe and stable home. Since starting law school, she became lead volunteer for a different FIA program, the Family to Family Duffel Bag Program. It ensures that children placed into foster care get necessary supplies to ease the shock of an often hasty departure from home. Ms. Nelson trains other volunteers and manages the

storage center for the program. She hopes to mentor teens during her time with the FIA, and plans to practice law in the area of child advocacy.

### **Wendy Taube, WLAMF Award, Cooley Law School**



Wendy Taube is attending Cooley Law School after a decade-long career as CFO and manager of a construction company. She is an elected Senator for her class at Cooley, was appointed Interim Student Services Director, participated in Moot Court, and currently serves as President of the Women's Law Alliance. As President of the WLA, she organized a symposium on women's leadership, attended by Governor Granholm, and fundraiser for breast cancer research. Ms. Taube intends to focus her law practice on advocacy for women and children, a passion developed in part by her attendance of an international women's conference in Mexico. She describes the shock she experienced at hearing about how women are mistreated all over the world, and how motivated and empowered she feels to address women's rights, globally. Ms. Taube is currently organizing a domestic abuse awareness panel and a women judges panel, in her leadership role at Cooley.