

From the Dean



Alumna Nancy Daniels ('77) received the 2020 Exemplary Public Service Career Award virtually in November 2020.

We are now accepting nominations for our Exemplary Public Service Career Award, which recognizes alumni who have dedicated their careers to public service and have demonstrated exceptional character, integrity, leadership, humility and professionalism, as well as the highest regard for ethics. The award aims to honor public servants whose dedication to the profession may otherwise go unnoticed. Additional considerations include:

- Length of the nominee's public service career
- Impact of the nominee's public service career (number of people served, significant legal achievements benefiting a large number of people, etc.)
- Nominee's demonstrated ability to inspire others
- Nominee's genuine concern for others, as displayed in various facets of the nominee's personal and professional life

Please [submit nominations online](#) by Tuesday, May 11, 2021. All nominations should include the nominee's name and an explanation of how they meet the award criteria. You may send additional documentation, including links to sources of information about the nominee. The award winner will be recognized during this fall's 2021 Homecoming festivities. In addition, a painted portrait of the award recipient will be displayed at the College of Law. Many thanks to those who endeavor to help us recognize extraordinary public servants by sending nominations.

-Dean Erin O'Connor

BLSA Hosts Panel on Being an Anti-Racist Advocate



(Clockwise from top left) Moderator Flor Diaz-Wayt and panelists Olayemi Olurin, Aramis Ayala and Kimberly Newberry

On Thursday, March 25, the Black Law Students Association hosted a "How to Be an Anti-Racist Advocate" panel, the final installment in their racial justice panel series. Panelists included Aramis Ayala, former state attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida; Kimberly Newberry, research and writing specialist for the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Northern District of Florida; and Olayemi Olurin, staff attorney for The Legal Aid Society of NYC. Flor Diaz-Wayt, attorney at the Second Judicial Circuit Public Defender's Office, moderated the event.

The panelists discussed what it means to be an anti-racist advocate, the importance of diversity in public defender and prosecutor offices, and the fact that clients encounter racism from the very beginning of the criminal justice process—from the areas that are policed and how they are policed, to who is arrested and the charges brought against them, to bond practices and the presumption of innocence.

"Sentencing through the criminal punishment code goes all the way through the beginning of how you were arrested, what is your background, whether or not you showed remorse, how is remorse shown," said Ayala. "The standards of remorse are based upon a different culture that is not necessarily the same for Black culture, or for Brown culture and others. So the reality is, the systemic racism exists from how we define legal terms of reasonable suspicion to how we ultimately apply punishment in the criminal justice system."

Panelists also discussed books and courses that helped them develop as anti-racist attorneys and talked about ways attorneys, particularly white attorneys, can be cognizant of how a client's race impacts the judicial process. Olurin said the first thing for advocates to do is to look at the fullness of their clients' experiences and realize the criminal justice system is not a systemic racism bubble removed from the rest of society.

Watch the entire [video recording of the event online](#).

Alum Profile: Hon. Thomas N. Palermo ('01)

The Honorable Thomas N. Palermo is a circuit court judge in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, where he presides over juvenile delinquency cases. Before ascending to the bench in May 2019, Palermo served as an assistant United States attorney for 12 years and an assistant state attorney for four years. In March 2021, Palermo received the 2020 Robert W. Patton Outstanding Jurist Award from the Hillsborough County Bar Association. The award recognizes an outstanding jurist who has an excellent reputation for sound judicial decisions; has an unblemished record for integrity as a lawyer and judge; is generally recognized by bar members as highly qualified; is active in bar-related activities open to the judiciary; and demonstrates concern or willingness to assist young lawyers. The honor was presented by his sister-in-law Alexandra "Alex" Haddad Palermo ('12).



"It has been an honor to serve on the bench. Every day I hope my service is worthy of this opportunity. Receiving the Patton Award isn't the mark that I am succeeding. Instead it challenges me to try to live up to the legacy of Judge Patton and all the outstanding judges who have received this award before me. It is amazing to be counted in their company, to even be a judge, or to be here with you all as part of the FSU College of Law family."

Student Profile: 3L Nabeha Shaer

Desired Practice Location: New York City or Washington, D.C.

Expected Graduation: Spring 2021

Field of Law Sought: International human rights law; also interested in international criminal law, public international law and civil rights law



Nabeha Shaer is from Niceville, Florida. She attended the University of South Florida, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Africana studies and international studies, and was certified in Arabic language. When she graduates from FSU Law later this month, she will also earn the International Law Certificate. Shaer is currently interning at Ben Crump Law, PLLC and Rand Law, L.L.C., where she served as an evidentiary witness on the case of Michael Brown for international hearings before the international commission convened to investigate systemic racism and police brutality. She also prepared evidentiary and written documents for ongoing United Nations investigations on systemic racism and racial profiling in the killing of George Floyd, and drafted a U.N. Urgent Appeal against a Jamaican Supreme Court decision enabling racial discrimination in schools. Last semester, Shaer completed a directed individual study, where she urged the International Criminal Court (ICC) to hear and prioritize a case involving Palestinian child prisoners. The directed study was shared with the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC in February 2021. During her 2L summer, Shaer interned for the International Bar Association in London. She compiled legal research and wrote legal memoranda on international criminal law. During the fall semester of her 2L year, Shaer participated in the FSU Public Interest Law Center Children's Advocacy Clinic, where she represented children clients in court and oversaw their legal needs. Shaer clerked for the U.S. Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review in Charlotte, North Carolina, during her 1L summer. She drafted legal opinions and memos for immigration judges in asylum proceedings. During the spring semester of her 1L year, Shaer interned for the FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights, where she conducted human trafficking research and filed immigration petitions for refugees.

Shaer is the founder and vice president of the Muslim Law Student Association. She is also a member of the Advocates for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, where she served as community director and 1L representative. Shaer participated in Alternative Spring Break during her 1L year, and she also participated in an exchange semester at Erasmus University School of Law in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, during the spring semester of 2020. This experience helped her gain specialized education in international human rights and international criminal law. Shaer received Book Awards for International Trade Transactions and Special Topics in Human Rights. If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Shaer after graduation, [visit her LinkedIn profile](#) or email NabehaShaer@gmail.com.

"I have always been guided by my objective to advance human rights through working for the most vulnerable individuals and communities. I hope to be an integral part of a more just future, in whatever capacity that may be."

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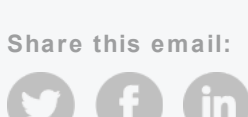
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