



GABWA^{at}35
Galvanized to Change
Georgia and the World



President Janet C. Scott and the 2016 Executive Board of the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys

Janet C. Scott Installed as GABWA's 35th President

By ShaMiracle S. Johnson

On January 21, 2016, the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (“GABWA”), a 35-year old voluntary bar organization focused on the enrichment and empowerment of women and advocating for children’s issues, installed attorney Janet C. Scott as its 35th president. President Scott will lead the organization in 2016 under the theme of “GABWA at 35: Galvanized to Change Georgia and the World.”

Who is Janet C. Scott?

Janet Scott is an experienced litigator at Smith, Welch, Webb & White, LLC. Ms. Scott’s legal practice allows her to combine her knowledge of the law with her previous experience as an educator. Over the course of her career, she has litigated teacher termination hearings and federal and state civil cases for metro Atlanta school districts. As an Associate with Smith, Welch, Webb & White, LLC, Ms. Scott represents numerous Georgia school districts on a variety of issues.

A cum laude graduate of Spelman College, Ms. Scott also holds a Master of Arts degree in Education from Mercer University. She attended Texas Wesleyan School of Law, Fort Worth, Texas, and earned her law degree from John Marshall Law School, Atlanta, Georgia. During law school, Ms. Scott interned with Emory University School of Law’s Barton Child Law and Policy Clinic. She also served as an Extern at the Fulton County Superior Court with The Honorable Bensonetta Tipton Lane.

Ms. Scott is deeply honored to serve as President of GABWA in 2016. During installation, she announced that she will build on GABWA’s legacy by focusing on the “**E, B, C’s**”: (1) **E**conomic empowerment; (2) **B**uilding communities; and (3) **C**reating a global presence. Through this initiative, GABWA will host numerous activities to celebrate and build upon GABWA’s rich legacy

Read a special message from President Scott on pg. 2.

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT JANET C. SCOTT

“GABWA at 35: Galvanized to Change Georgia and the World! Commemorating 35 years of Advocacy, Service and Empowerment!” It is with a humble heart and galvanized spirit, that I greet you as the 2016 President of the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (“GABWA”).

In 1981, a group of motivated African American female attorneys united to establish a unique voluntary bar organization to serve not only Georgia’s legal community, but also the Georgia community at large. These women came together with a mission: “To nurture, support and galvanize the power of black women attorneys, advocate for women and children, and empower our communities.”

“Sweet” 2016 marks GABWA’s 35th anniversary. It is exciting to note that for 35 years, hundreds of black women attorneys throughout Georgia have worked zealously to advance GABWA’s mission. With this mission in mind, GABWA provides its members with a network of talented professionals who practice in all legal spaces, legal education, professional development opportunities, and the opportunity to serve various other community organizations in Georgia.

GABWA is able to effect positive change throughout Georgia, in part, due to our active membership of attorney members, student members (law students and undergraduate students), and other professional members. With members not just in Atlanta, but in our regional chapters in Albany, Augusta, Columbus, Macon and Savannah, GABWA works arduously to transform Georgia’s legal landscape.

Additionally, just a few highlights of GABWA’s legacy also includes the following award-winning programs: (1) Legally Speaking which is GABWA’s own talk show geared towards educating the community on a variety of legal topics; (2) the Professional Development Academy which is geared towards preparing new lawyers for the practice of law; and (3) the Judicial and Public Office Academy for members interested in learning how to obtain elected or appointed office. Moreover, in 2015 under the leadership of Adwoa Ghartey-Tagoe Seymour, GABWA’s Immediate Past President, GABWA launched its first Youth Summit which impacted the lives of



over 150 Georgia youth!

Furthermore, I would be remiss if I did not mention that GABWA also has its own nonprofit 501(c)(3), the GABWA Foundation, Inc. Started in 1983, the GABWA Foundation, Inc.

(“Foundation”) sponsors three (3) key programs to serve the community. Specifically, the Sister to Sister Mentoring™ Program is a partnership with the Fulton and DeKalb County Juvenile court systems which intervenes in the lives of at risk female teenagers with one on one mentoring. The second program the Foundation provides is scholarships to black female attorneys attending Georgia law schools. The third program the Foundation provides is assisting individuals in preparing wills and advance directives through the Wills Project which is a collaboration with the Atlanta Legal Aid Society.

As you can see, for the past 35 years, GABWA has continued to grow strong. We invite you to join us in 2016 as we are **galvanized to change Georgia and the WORLD!** As we build on GABWA’s legacy, this year, GABWA will focus on the “**E, B, C’s**” initiative: (1) **E**conomic empowerment; (2) **B**uilding communities; and (3) **C**reating a global presence.

I invite you to join us for this exciting moment in GABWA’s history by **joining us as a new member or renewing your existing GABWA membership, today!** GABWA’s membership is open to everyone!

Together, “we are standing on the shoulders of giants” and “to whom much is given much is required.” Please feel free to contact me at president@gabwa.org, to discuss ways that you can get involved with GABWA. I am honored to have this opportunity to serve GABWA and you!

In service for GABWA,

Janet C. Scott, Esq.

Janet C. Scott

2016 GABWA President

MLK Day: A Day On, Not a Day Off for GABWA Across the State

By Marcee Campbell, Shalamar Parham and Ashley Payne,
Community Service Committee Co-Chairs

GABWA took the day to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through service across the state. GABWA organized MLK Day projects, serving seven non-profit organizations and more than 200 women and children.

In Atlanta, GABWA members cooked and served breakfast for three organizations that provide shelter, support and empowerment for women and children in need at the Carrie Steele-Pitts Home in Southwest Atlanta, Families First Second Chance Facility in College Park, and Mary Hall Freedom House in Sandy Springs. Volunteers took the time to fellowship with the girls and young ladies at Families First. After the young ladies enjoyed breakfast, members assisted as they put on their own newspaper fashion show. The children at Carrie Steele-Pitts participated in a black history lesson; and over 120 women and children were served at the Mary Hall Freedom House.

In Albany, GABWA members collected and donated over 100 coats to the Albany Resource Center. Since 1963, the Albany Resource Center has been serving individuals with disabilities and supportive living needs.

In Augusta, GABWA members created whimsical teaching gardens for the future educational site for school-age children at

G.R.O.W. HARRISBURG, a six-part urban agriculture initiative to provide opportunities for urban, low-income neighborhoods to grow, cook and eat seasonal fruits and vegetables. Volunteers created gardens, walking paths, removed weeds, removed brush, painted and moved mulch to prepare for the planting of seedlings.

In Columbus, GABWA helped a local family, the Rodriguez family, displaced from their home by a fire, by collecting donations and presenting a check to the family. On Christmas Day 2015, the Rodriguez Family was among a group of almost 50 individuals who lost their homes due to an apartment fire.

In Macon, GABWA members held a school supply drive in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Central Georgia. GABWA collected multiple boxes of school supplies and made an outright gift of \$150.00 to the Boys and Girls Club of Central Georgia.

In Savannah, GABWA members donated over 100 travel-size toiletries and 12 blankets to the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Coastal Georgia. The Interfaith Hospitality Network of Coastal Georgia helps fight homelessness for families and children by providing emergency shelter, meals and comprehensive support.

Overall, every region reported that successful events were held to further galvanize GABWA's presence as a leader for community service in Georgia. Members shared their MLK Day of Service experiences on social media using #GABWAServes2016.



Left to right: Judge Renata Turner, Lyndosha Jamison, GABWA President Janet Scott, GABWA Vice President Rita Treadwell, and GABWA Past President Jamala McFadden serve breakfast at Families First.



GABWA Past President Sonja Natasha Brown and GABWA Global Ambassador Uchenna Uzoka prepare breakfast at the Mary Hall Freedom House.



GABWA Past President La'Ketitha Carlos served breakfast to families at the Mary Hall Freedom House with her husband, Joe Carlos, and daughter.

The Essence of Due Process is the Opportunity to be Heard: New Georgia Case Law on the Required Use of *Qualified* Interpreters

By Jana J. Edmondson-Cooper, Bilingual Staff Attorney,
Georgia Legal Services Program/ Member, Supreme
Court of Georgia Commission on Interpreters

In his State of the Judiciary Address to the Georgia Assembly on January 27, 2016, Chief Justice Hugh Thompson highlighted language access as a critical access-to-justice issue. Specifically, Chief Justice Thompson shared his “21st Century vision” for the judiciary where “every court, in every city and every county in Georgia, will have the capacity of serving all litigants, speaking any language, regardless of national origin, from the moment they enter the courthouse until the moment they leave.” Through his vision, our Chief Justice expressed his hope that all Georgia courts would soon fulfill their responsibilities, per federal law, to ensure all limited English proficient (LEP) and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) individuals have meaningful access to justice.ⁱ

Less than a week after Chief Justice Thompson’s speech, the Supreme Court of Georgia (Court) issued a unanimous decision in *State v. Tunkara*, S15A1715 (Feb. 1, 2016), which ruled, *inter alia*, that the criminal defendant was entitled to a new trial because he had an unqualified interpreter in the first. *Tunkara* is the third case from the Court within the past eleven years affirming that interpreters appointed by a court must be qualified and explaining why appointing a qualified interpreter is important. The earlier cases are *Ramos v. Terry*, 279 Ga. 889, 622 S.E.2d 339 (2005) and *Ling v. State*, 288 Ga. 299, 702 S.E.2d 881 (2010).

Ramos, in particular, sets the standard and discusses why the Court considers it an abuse of discretion when no interpreter or an unqualified is appointed when needed. Specifically the Court states “a court abuses its discretion when it selects an interpreter who is not qualified, sworn, and impartial. *Gopar-Santana v. State*, 862 So.2d 54 (Fla.App. 2003). We conclude it is an abuse of discretion to appoint someone to serve as interpreter who is neither certified nor registered as an interpreter without ensuring that the person appointed is qualified to serve as an interpreter, without apprising the appointee of the role s/he is to play, without verifying the appointee's understanding of the role, and without having the appointee agree in writing to comply with the interpreters' code of professional responsibility.” *Ramos*, 279 Ga. 889, 893; 622 S.E.2d 339 (2005).ⁱⁱ

In consideration of *Ramos*, the most qualified interpreters will be those who are licensed by the Supreme Court of

Georgia Commission on Interpreters (Commission). The Supreme Court of Georgia Rule on Use of Interpreters for Non-English Speaking and Hearing Impaired Persons (Rule)ⁱⁱⁱ states that a qualified interpreter should be used for any court proceeding or a grand jury hearing in Georgia.^{iv} An LEP or DHH court participant’s right to an interpreter also extends to all court-managed functions including, but not limited to, alternative dispute resolution sessions like mediation or arbitration.^v There are additional protections for LEP or DHH litigants and witnesses involved in cases brought under Georgia’s Family Violence Act.^{vi} Specifically, Georgia law provides that litigants and witnesses in such cases are entitled to sign language and foreign language interpreters at no cost.^{vii} Interpreters appointed in family violence cases should be paid from the local victims’ assistance fund.^{viii}

Additionally, the Rule states that a court is required to make a diligent effort to first appoint an interpreter who is licensed at the Certified level.^{ix} If no Certified interpreter is available, then deference should be given to a Conditionally Approved interpreter.^x If no Conditionally Approved interpreter is available, then a Registered interpreter is to be given deference.^{xi} Court personnel may access the Commission’s statewide registry of licensed interpreters (sign language and spoken language) by visiting the searchable Georgia Court Professional Directory at <http://coi.georgiacourts.gov/> . Court personnel are encouraged to confirm an interpreter’s credentials via the Directory before appointing him or her to serve as an interpreter. This vetting process should be used also for interpreters with whom the court may already be familiar to ensure that the interpreter’s license is still current.^{xii} Any questions regarding interpreters credentials may directed to Commission staff via e-mail at gcr.interpreters@georgiacourts.gov or by phone at (404) 463-3808. Commission staff is also available to assist court personnel with locating interpreters of languages for which there are no Commission-licensed interpreters.

Faced with a need, where no interpreter is available locally, courts should weigh the need for immediacy in conducting a hearing against the potential compromise of due process, or the potential of substantive injustice if interpreting is inadequate.^{xiii} Unless immediacy is a primary concern, some delay might be more appropriate than the use of a telephonic language service [or unlicensed interpreter].^{xiv} Telephonic interpreters can be very helpful, especially in rural areas. However, courts should be mindful that individuals who work for commercial providers often have not received the same level of training as those

Meet the Leadership: GABWA'S 2016 Officers



Janet C. Scott
President



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President Elect



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Vice President



Chimere Chisolm-Trimble
Vice President, Albany



Amanda Heath
Vice President, Augusta



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Bernie Lawrence Watkins
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Shaquana Ellison
Student Member at Large



Stephanie Bonner Wiggins
Financial Secretary



Adwoa Ghartey-Tagoe Seymour
Immediate Past President

Meet the Leadership: 2016 Committee Chairs

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Marcee Campbell
Ashley Payne

Fundraising

Kenya Johnson
Deidre Merriman

Inter-Bar Relations

LaKeisha Randall
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Judicial Review

Jamala McFadden
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Sherri Allen

Sections

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Adria Greene
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Working Mothers

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Family Law

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Aisha Blanchard Collins

Employment Law

Charlotte Redo
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Entertainment Law

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Enjoliqye Aytch
Ucheene Uzoka

Constitution & Bylaws

Ashley Palmer
Aleta McLaurin

Strategic Planning &

Implementation

Shatorree Bates

Regional Development

Jana Edmondson-Cooper
Aleta McLaurin

Jana Edmondson-Cooper: A True Servant Leader

Jana J. Edmondson-Cooper is a Bilingual Civil Rights Attorney with in-depth access to justice expertise at Georgia Legal Services Program.

Who do you credit for instilling in you the importance of servant leadership:

My parents were my first examples of servant leaders. They exemplified a commitment to service and a strong work ethic. Throughout my life, I witnessed both of them serve our community through their roles as a public school teacher, elected official and CEO/President of a non-profit agency. I inherited their commitment to service which manifested itself in my desire to represent individuals who are frequently marginalized due to their socio-economic status and/or limited English proficiency.



What does your role as a bilingual civil rights attorney entail:

I provide bilingual legal counsel and representation to low-income individuals, the majority of whom are limited English proficient (LEP) in federal and state administrative forums as well as courts of law. My areas of practice include family law, health law, housing, public benefits, wills and estates and education law with a focus on language access as an access to justice issue. I am able to glean from my past experience as a professional legal interpreter and my current role to engage in strategic access to justice advocacy contributing to the development of statewide and national curricula for training attorneys and judges on language access as well as the development of local, state and national language access policies.

How did you feel when you were recognized by the GA Commission on Equal Opportunity and Governor Deal as one of the 2016 Freedom Award Honorees because of your effort in confronting and eliminating discrimination in both the fair housing and equal employment sectors:

I was humbled and very appreciative that the GA Commission on Equal Opportunity and Governor Deal recognized my work in this way. I always knew that I wanted to do public interest, but I never thought that I would receive this type of recognition. I am grateful that my husband, mom and sister were able to

share that special day with me. I am also appreciative of the outpouring of support from everyone, especially my GABWA sisters. It is a privilege to wake up each day and walk in my purpose—advocating on behalf of marginalized communities and educating members of the bench, bar and community about language access as an access to justice issue.

What do you like to do in your free time:

I enjoy spending time with my family, and playing with my two-year old nephew. What relaxes me the most are the rare moments when I have no pressing professional or personal obligations

and I can relax at home enjoying doing absolutely nothing!

How has your alma mater, Spelman College and your involvement in GABWA shaped your view on sisterhood:

I have been blessed beyond measure through my membership in several sisterhoods: biological, Spelman and GABWA. I have formed incredible bonds with incredible women committed to making a difference. The support and encouragement never ceases. The quality of mentorship is second to none. You just do not know how grateful I am to be in receipt of it all. To say thank you to my sisterhoods, I pay it forward. My view on my sisterhoods is that they have supported and challenged me to exceed my own highest personal and intellectual expectations and goals.

What advice would you share with others:

Sometimes following your heart, professionally, is not the popular thing to do. Everyone will not always understand it or agree. Push forward anyway. Also, have great mentors. Do not be afraid to ask for help. And whatever you do, support others.

What is Your favorite quote: “Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.” Marian Wright Edelman



GABWA and Gate City Bar Association student members at the Law Student Interview/Resume Workshop

MEET ME AT THE BARRE

GABWA members from across the state met at Pure Barre facilities for an innovative exercise class. In recognition of American Heart Month, GABWA members learned heart healthy exercise techniques that focused on a total body workout. Pure Barre utilizes the ballet barre to perform small, isometric movements, which burn fat, sculpt muscles and create long, lean physiques. The state-wide fitness event was co-sponsored by Georgia YLD Women in the Profession Committee.

From a Law Student's Perspective: The GABWA/Gate City Law Student Interview/Resume Workshop

By Sharece Thomas

The spring 2016 GABWA and Gate City Bar Association (“GCBA”) Mock Interview/ Resume Review Workshop, organized by Attorney Dawn Jones and hosted by King & Spalding, LLP, featured prominent attorneys mentoring Georgia law students. Students from all of the Georgia law schools attended, with an excellent turnout from the students of Atlanta’s John Marshall Law School. The day was chock full of information that provided law students with the tools necessary to succeed in the competitive legal job market. I, along with my peers, was fortunate to participate in a mock interview and to have my resume critiqued. Both were invaluable experiences. Thanks to GABWA and GCBA’s members, I was provided helpful feedback regarding striking a healthy balance between confidence and transparency during an interview. I was also encouraged to allow my resume to better reflect who I am. Along with providing constructive criticism, the membership also boosted law student morale by highlighting our strengths. I was praised for my professionalism, my valuable experiences and how I uniquely discussed them, and my overall presentation. As a student member of GABWA, I am fortunate that the membership realizes the importance of paying it forward. To Attorney Dawn Jones, GABWA and GCBA members who volunteered this year and in years past, thank you for the unwavering support and guidance that you consistently provide to GABWA’s student members.

GABWA SERVES DAY

On March 5, 2016, Macon GABWA participated on GABWA serves day by providing food, fun and fellowship to the Crisis Line and Safe House of Central Georgia. GABWA members fellowshiped with survivors of domestic violence, heard the survivors' stories and enjoyed great food. The women were inspiring and courageous and Macon GABWA looks forward to volunteering with Crisis Line and Safe House of Central Georgia in the future.

A Leadership Tea to Remember

By ShaMiracle S. Johnson

On March 6, 2016, the Honorable Gail S. Tusan and GABWA Past President, Jamala McFadden hosted the 10th Annual GABWA Leadership Tea. Donned in their Sunday's best, GABWA's leaders enjoyed a Sunday afternoon full of food and fellowship. A crisp Georgia spring day was the backdrop for what turned out to be a fabulous tea for President Janet C. Scott and her leadership team. A tradition that started ten years ago, GABWA's historical leadership gathered to impart words of wisdom into President Scott and GABWA's 2016 leaders. Reminded of the responsibilities that accompany servant leadership, GABWA Past President Jamala McFadden charged the 2016 leadership team to "show up, step up, and slay."



GABWA Leadership Team members pose with President Scott at the 10th Annual GABWA Leadership Tea.



GABWA's 2016 Leadership Team enjoyed an afternoon of food and fellowship at the 10th Annual Leadership Tea.



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HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL

Immediate Past President of
The Georgia Association of Black
Women Attorneys (GABWA)

Who's Who Top Legal &
Accounting Professionals

Top 40 Under 40
(The National Bar Association)

Top 100 Women of Influence

2014 Distinguished
Alumni Award

Executive Board Member of The
Georgia Trial Lawyers Association

Graduate of GTLA's LEAD
Program & YLD's
Leadership Academy

GABWA Educates Augusta on the Importance of Diversity in the Legal Profession

GABWA's Augusta Region held a CLE that enlightened attorneys and college students on the importance and value of diversity in law school and in the legal profession. The CLE was well-received and more than fifty individuals, including Judges from the Augusta Superior and Probate Court's, attended the CLE. Meeting attendees were educated about diversity in the legal profession by a notable panel of legal professionals. The panelist included the Honorable David D. Watkins, Judge, Richmond County State Court; Edward J. Tarver, U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Georgia; Kellie K. McIntyre, Solicitor General, Augusta Richmond County; Omeeka

P. Loggins, President, Augusta Bar Association; Katherine M. Mason, Office of the Public Defender, Augusta Judicial Circuit; and Harold V. Jones, II, District 22, Georgia State Senato, Harlod V. Jones Law Office, LLC. Laverne Lewis Gaskins served as the program moderator. The CLE was co-sponsored by the Georgia Bar Committee to Promote Inclusion in the Profession and the Georgia YLD Inclusion in the Profession Committee.



Left to right: Dr. Stephane Dunn, President Janet Scott, and Tracey Vaughn Ward.



Left to right: Charity Purvis Jordan, Tracey Vaughn Ward, Dr. Stephane Dunn, and Judge Glenda Hatchett.

Lights, Camera, Action: GABWA is Breaking Barriers in Hollywood

GABWA's February General Body Meeting honored the impact of African American women in Hollywood. A lively roundtable discussion, held at Clark Atlanta University, focused on the history of African American women in the entertainment industry and the attorneys who work behind the scenes. GABWA's membership was fortunate to hear from Hollywood's best. The panel included: **Keisha Perry, Esq.**; **Dr. Stephane Dunn**, Associate Professor Morehouse College; **Ameenah Kaplan**, Actress; **Charity Purvis Jordan**, Actress; and **Tracey Vaughn Ward**, Actress. GABWA member, Bernie Lawrence Watkins, Esq., moderated the panel and encouraged the panelists to dig deep as they provided unique insight regarding their personal experience in Hollywood, the barriers that remain, and the roles that race and gender play behind the scenes. While many strides have been made in breaking barriers in Hollywood, the panelists made a charge to those who are established in Hollywood to create opportunities for minorities, their stories, and their leadership.

GABWA Focuses on The State of Education in Georgia

MONUMENT DEDICATION

The Judge Ruffin Monument Dedication was held at The Family 2 Life Center of Tabernacle Baptist Church and was followed by a reception at the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History. Judge Ruffin served as the First African American Chief Judge of the Georgia Court of Appeals. Judith Ruffin, his wife, and his son were present at the event and addressed the crowd. Judges, attorneys, and other members of the community were serenaded by a local community choir as they walked to the reception space. Mrs. Ruffin made available for viewing personal photos and memorabilia from Judge Ruffin's legal career and personal life at the museum.



Left to right: Marquetta Bryan, Esq., Of Counsel– Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP, Rodney Bowler– Henry County School District Superintendent, Dr. R. Stephen Green– DeKalb County School District Superintendent, Nina Gupta, Esq., Partner– Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP, Dr. Meria Carstarphen– Atlanta Public Schools Superintendent, Janet C. Scott, Esq., and Richard Woods, Georgia State School Superintendent

On March 17, 2016, GABWA held its March General Body Meeting at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP. In line with the EBC's, as announced by President Janet Scott, the meeting focused on building communities through Georgia's educational system. State leaders from near and far gathered to provide GABWA members with The State of Education in Georgia. The panelists included Nina Gupta, Esq.; Richard Woods, Georgia State School Superintendent; Dr. Meria Carstarphen, Superintendent, Atlanta Public Schools; Dr. R. Stephen Green, Superintendent, DeKalb County School District; and Rodney Bowler, Superintendent, Henry County School District. Moderated by Marquetta Bryan, Esq., the panelists addressed advancements in Georgia's educational system, areas that require improvement, and ways that organizations like GABWA can provide assistance.



GABWA members pose for a "Selfie" with Courtney English– Atlanta Public School Board Chair, Dr. Meria Carstarphen– APS Superintendent, and Dr. R. Stephen Green– DeKalb County School District Superintendent.

GABWA, Meet Sharece Thomas, J.D.

Sharece Naomi Thomas, J.D. is a 2016 Graduate of Atlanta's John Marshall Law School "AJMLS" and the immediate past president of the AJMLS Black Law Student Association "BLSA" chapter. In 2015, Sharece served as GABWA's student ambassador and she currently serves on the Newsletter Committee.

Explain how you exemplify the commonly used phrase "Black Girl Magic": Black Girl Magic celebrates the universal awesomeness of Black women, and combats the negative stereotypes that Black women face. I exemplify Black Girl Magic by illustrating my absolute best self in challenging situations. I remain positive and encourage others.

What advice would you like to share to law students in pushing through setbacks: The advice I would share with law students in pushing through setbacks is to understand that no one can take away what is destined for you. You have to remain resilient and steadfast. Most importantly, if you do not get something you felt like you deserve, be thankful because that closed door might have been a blessing in disguise.

How has GABWA shaped your legal prowess: GABWA has shaped my legal prowess by giving me unmatched opportunities to network and to work closely with a variety of attorneys, whom I may not have met. I have developed lasting relationships with attorneys who are only a phone call away when I need to navigate through many life lessons.

Who is your role model and why: My role model is Michelle Obama. She is smart, beautiful, confident, and gracious.

What do you like to do for fun: I enjoy playing chess, spades, tennis, charades, and dance.

How do you "slay" as a student of John Marshall School of Law: I slay through my confidence, working hard, serving my community, and treating people well. I embody fierceness and femininity.

What are your plans after graduation: I plan on working and continuing to serve GABWA, Gate City, and Gideon's Promise.

What do you want to be remembered for: I want to be remembered for being encouraging to others and leading through service.

What is your favorite quote: You only live once; but if you do it right, once is enough. - Mae West



GABWA Legal Education Co-Chair, Tennille Hoover, Esq. moderates GABWA's "Eliminating Debt and Building Wealth" panel.

GABWA Educates Young Attorneys and Law Students on Wealth Building

On April 21, 2016, GABWA held its April General Body Meeting which focused on eliminating debt and building wealth. GABWA members learned how to create a long-lasting legacy from a panel of experts. Moderated by GABWA members, Sareena Beasley, Esq. and Tennille Hoover, Esq., the panel provided candid advice on managing finances, eradicating student loan debt, accomplishing home ownership and building a financial portfolio. GABWA members were fortunate to learn from the following leading experts, who served as panelists: Shateree Bates, Esq, Fulton County Government.; Marcus Hunter, Accenture; Joey S. Martin, CCF Investments, Inc.; Dr. Roshwanna Novellus, "The Wealthy Yogi"; Ameedah Williams, Grant and Fund Mi Dreamz; and Melvin Williams, Jr., CCF Investments, Inc.

Travel Wise, GABWA

GABWA's 5th Thursday Lunch was held on Thursday, March 31, 2016. GABWA members learned how to "travel wise." The panel featured leaders who have traveled extensively for their careers and in their personal lives. They used their personal and professional travel experiences to provide best practices to GABWA members. Notably, Solange Garvey, a representative from the U.S. Department of State, travelled from Washington, DC to Atlanta to participate in this seminar and to address resources that are available when travelling abroad. John Sours, the Director of Georgia's Consumer Protection Unit, also identified Georgia laws that protect consumers from international travel schemes. Former CNN travel reporter, Kalin Thomas, discussed the cultural values and customs that impact our travel experience as professionals. The 5th Thursday Lunch was available via livestream for GABWA members who could not attend in person.

GABWA, Crowns Her First Top Chef and Brings Home the Win at the MBLC Cook-Off



Left to right: GABWA Strategic Planning Committee Chair Shatoree Bates, GABWA President Janet Scott, GABWA's Top Chef Monique Keanne, GABWA Inter-Bar Relations Chairs Pamela Peynado Stewart and LaKeisha Randall celebrate GABWA's big win!

On April 10, 2016, GABWA held its first mini "Top Chef" Competition, where Monique Keanne was crowned GABWA's Top Chef. Chef Keanne's entrée was entered into the Multi Bar Leadership Counsel's Cook-Off Competition. Team GABWA brought home the gold in two categories- (1) Best Entrée; and Best Overall Representation of the Theme "Red, White and You!" You Go, GABWA!

GABWA Serves with Sister to Sister

By Sharece Thomas

On February 27, 2016, GABWA volunteered with the Fulton County Juvenile Court and DeKalb County Juvenile Court, Sister to Sister Mentoring Program. Sister to Sister welcomed GABWA members as the young ladies discussed ways to avoid peer pressure. The student mentees discussed the various forms of peer pressure that they encounter in their schools and in their communities. Coincidentally, the mentors explained that peer pressure never ends; it just transforms into adult peer pressure. The student mentees were given scenarios that required them to identify negative versus positive peer pressure. After the students identified what constitutes negative peer pressure, they were taught avoidance strategies. The session concluded with the student mentees and mentors breaking into small groups, where they created and acted out skits. Each skit included student(s) being peer pressured and implementing an avoidance strategy to thwart the peer pressure. Prior to leaving for the day, the student mentees went around the room and shared what they learned. A number of the young ladies indicated that prior to the session; no one had ever provided them with the skills necessary to avoid negative peer pressure. The Sister to Sister Mentoring Program meets the second and fourth Saturday of each month at the Fulton County Juvenile Court and DeKalb County Juvenile Court from 10 a.m. to noon. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please contact Mercedes Ball at mgballs2s@gmail.com.

The Essence of Due Process is the Opportunity to be Heard: New Georgia Case Law on the Required Use of *Qualified* Interpreters, *Cont'd*

who go through the state certification process.^{xv} Often, telephonic interpreters are not trained in legal terms of art and the accuracy and competency of the interpretation can suffer unbeknownst to the court.^{xvi} According to the National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators, the use of a telephonic interpreter is best suited for legal proceedings of short duration and only when a qualified in-person interpreter cannot be found and a continuance would jeopardize due process in the case.^{xvii}

The bottom line is that Georgia decision-makers must provide *qualified* interpreters in all criminal and civil matters, at no cost to LEP or DHH participants or their attorneys. The term "decision-maker" includes judges, magistrates, and special masters, commissioners, hearing officers, arbitrators, neutrals or mediators.^{xviii} The essence of due process is the opportunity to be heard and the appointment of qualified interpreters safeguards that opportunity

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR MEMBERS OF THE BENCH AND BAR

1. Supreme Court of Georgia Rule on Use of Interpreters for Non-English Speaking and Hearing Impaired Persons (2012)

2. Forms and Brochures provided by the Commission (including Bench Cards)

3. *Ch. 11: Appointing Qualified Interpreters, 2016 State Court Benchbook*. **NOTE:** *The Council of Superior Court Judges and Council of Magistrate Court Judges have chosen to adopt this material and intend to update their current respective benchbooks. This material is also a great resource for attorneys handling cases with LEP or DHH litigants or witnesses.*

4. *Is it Reversible Error: Due Process and Access to Justice for LEP and DHH Individuals*, Georgia Court Journal (March 2015)

ⁱ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d.

ⁱⁱ **NOTE:** *Ramos* was decided before the category of Conditionally Approved was added by the Supreme Court of Georgia Commission on Interpreters in 2008.

ⁱⁱⁱ Direct link: <http://coi.georgiacourts.gov>

^{iv} Rule, Section I (D), p. 1.

^v Rule, Appendix A (II), p. A-1.

^{vi} O.C.G.A. § 19-13-1 *et. seq.*

^{vii} O.C.G.A. § 15-6-77(e)(4).

^{viii} *Id.*

^{ix} Rule, Section I, *Commentary*, p.1

^x *Id.*

^{xi} *Id.*

^{xii} **NOTE:** The Registered category of interpreters only consists of languages for which there is currently no national certification exam. So, for example, an interpreter who speaks Spanish, Haitian Creole or Korean – languages for which there are national certification exams – can only be licensed as Certified or Conditionally Approved. While an interpreter of Amharic – for which there is no national exam – can only be licensed as Registered.

^{xiii} Rule, Section I, *Commentary*, p.1.

^{xiv} *Id.*

^{xv} See, Edmondson-Cooper, Jana J. "Is it Reversible Error?: Due Process and Access to Justice for LEP and DHH Individuals," Georgia Courts Journal (March 2015) available <http://w2.georgiacourts.gov/journal/index.php/component/content/article/59-march-2015/322-is-it-reversible-error>

^{xvi} *Id.*

^{xvii} See, *National Association of Judicial Interpreters & Translators (NAJIT) Position Paper-Telephone Interpreting in Legal Settings* (February 2009) available at <http://www.najit.org/documents/Telephone%20Interpreting.pdf>

^{xviii} Rule, Appendix A (II) (A), p. A-1.

LUNCH & LEARN

Macon held its annual 3L Lunch and Learn on Saturday, April 23rd at Buca di Beppo. Ten 3Ls came out and heard stories from GABWA lawyers about bar exam preparation and relaxation techniques. Additionally, GABWA lawyers discussed what life is like "post-bar exam." More importantly, it was a time of fellowship and laughter, encouragement and hope about the future. Macon GABWA salutes Mercer BLSA's Class of 2016!

CATCH US IF YOU CAN! GABWA MEMBERS ARE HERE, THERE... EVERYWHERE!!!!



GABWA members enjoyed an *April Membership Mixer* sponsored by the **Cochran Firm**.



Committee Chairs mixed and mingled at Sweet Georgia's Juke Joint for the **Sections Mixer**. Check out the photographs below!



GABWA members helped create personal care packages by preparing decorated shoeboxes filled with personal care and basic need items. The shoeboxes will be redistributed to the United Way's non-profit partners who serve disconnected youth, veterans and the homeless around the Atlanta region.



SAVANNAH– THE PORT CITY

GABWA is fortunate to have 5 regional chapters that further the organization’s mission. This issue, we are spotlighting our Savannah Region and all that it has to offer. A special thanks to **Denise Cooper** for contributing to this piece. Enjoy!

Savannah’s Judiciary

Did you know that **Savannah** houses several branches of the judiciary? Your client’s needs can be served in the following courts:

Recorder’s Court
Magistrate Court
State Court
Probate
Bankruptcy
Superior Court
Juvenile Court



Meet the Regional Vice President



Denise M. Cooper, is a Savannah native currently working for the City of Savannah as an Assistant City Attorney. Attorney Cooper holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Spelman College and a Juris Doctor from Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan. She is a current member of the State Bar of Georgia, United States District Court of the Southern District of Georgia and the Georgia Court of Appeals. Attorney Cooper is also a certified Guardian Ad Litem. Prior to her matriculation to law school, Attorney Cooper was employed with the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles as a P.O.S.T. certified parole officer in Fulton County, Georgia, South Metro office.

With a strong passion for community service and outreach, Attorney Cooper is engaged as a volunteer with various community organizations and agencies – State Bar of Georgia Committee to Promote Inclusion in the Profession, committee member (2014-2015); State Bar of Georgia ICivics, committee member (2015-2016); Court Appointed Special Advocates (C.A.S.A.), Board Member; Savannah Bar Association; Port City Bar Association, Vice-President; Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys, Vice President Savannah Region; Mock Trial Team - Savannah High School, attorney-coach and State Competition Judge; Savannah Law School Mock Trial – Competition Judge; Savannah Chatham County Public School System, Audit Committee Member; King-Tisdell Cottage Foundation, Board Member; Leadership Savannah graduate; and Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys Judicial and Political Office Academy Graduate (2015).

Additionally, Attorney Cooper is an active member of Gamma Sigma Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, the Savannah (GA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, National Alumnae Association of Spelman College – Savannah Chapter, and Junior League of Savannah, where she currently holds leadership positions in each of the organizations. Attorney Cooper serves as a Trustee, Advisor to Teen Church and Christian Youth Fellowship (CYF), and is Director of the Board of Christian Education at St. Paul CME Church.

Where Should You Eat?

Lunch: Mrs. Wilkes Dining Room

Brunch: The Chart House

Dinner: Vic’s on the River

Interesting Savannah Fact

The infamous “40 Acres and Mule” policy was discussed and developed during a meeting held in Savannah, Georgia.

Popular Tourist Events

- The Historical Beach Institute
- King-Tisdell Cottage
- Ralph Mark Gilbert Museum
- First African Baptist Church
- Tybee Island Beach
- SCAD Film Festival
- The Black Heritage Festival
- Numerous marathons and 5K races

CATCH US IF YOU CAN! GABWA MEMBERS ARE HERE, THERE... EVERYWHERE!!!!

On March 29, 2016, GABWA members enjoyed a great meal, live music and fellowship at *Sweet Auburn Seafood*. GABWA member, Mecca Anderson, planned a *Supper Club* outing that left members asking when will we do it again?! Please join us for the next GABWA Supper Club that will be held on *Tuesday, June 28, 2016 at 6 p.m.*



GABWA members teamed up with *Sporty Girls, Inc.* to engage young ladies in non-traditional sporting activities. GABWA members assisted the young ladies as they embarked upon a fun filled day of fitness including soccer,

golf, tennis, lacrosse, and zumba. The young ladies were also taught healthy eating habits.

Escada hosted GABWA for a private shopping event.



GABWA e-board members are working diligently to build upon GABWA's legacy.



GABWA

The Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys (“GABWA”) was founded in 1981 by a group of African American women who sought to form a voluntary bar organization that would (1) focus on women and children’s issues, (2) increase black female representation in the judiciary and in public offices, and (3) take a proactive stance on political issues. Today, GABWA has an active membership of women and men who strive each day to fulfill the organization’s mission: to nurture, support and galvanize the power of Black women attorneys, advocate for women and children and empower our communities. GABWA is open to all persons, regardless of race or sex. Become a member today!

GABWA:

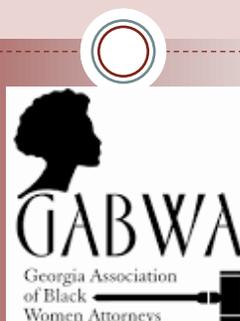
P.O. Box 4381 Atlanta, GA
30302

GABWA Foundation:

P.O. Box 7381 Atlanta, GA
30309 Phone: 678-825-5675 E-mail: contact@gabwa.org

GABWA Newsletter Chair:

ShaMiracle S. Johnson
newsletter@gabwa.org



5 (Almost) Free Things to Do in Atlanta with Kids

Summer is here! Atlanta is a great place for families. However, as school ends and summer begins, many parents scramble to find summer programs and camps to enroll their children in. For the budget conscious mommy/daddy this may be an issue, as camp and summer program prices are steadily increasing from year to year. Below, are some free or almost free activities that will keep the entire family busy.

1. Movies Under the Stars

There are a number of locations that offer free movie screenings. You bring the blanket, a lawn chair and some snacks and the venue provides the movie! www.thrillist.com provides a listing of venues that offer movies under the stars, as well as a listing of other outdoor activities that are taking place in your neighborhood.

2. Centennial Park

Why not cool off on a hot day by letting the kids run free in the Fountain of Rings at Centennial Park. Bring an umbrella, a cool drink, and plenty of sunscreen as you enjoy the warm sun.

3. Make a Wish Upon a Star

Not at Disney World, but right here in Atlanta at *Fernbank Science Center*. Fernbank hosts free observations every Thursday and Friday night (weather permitting).

4. Connect with Nature

Dauset Trails and *Dunwoody Nature Center* are just a couple of places to take a hike, collect rocks, or go fishing for the outdoor enthusiasts.

5. Workshops

There are a number of different stores that offer creative and fun activities for kids. *PGA Superstore* offers free golf clinics Saturday mornings. *Home Depot* offers free workshops, where kids can build shelves, cars and a number of fun crafts. *Michaels* also offers classes for as low as \$2.

DID YOU KNOW? If any of your summer activities take you near the State Bar of Georgia, you can park for free (if your Georgia bar dues are current)! If the garage appears closed, press the button on the call box, provide your name and state bar no. to the security personnel, and you should be allowed entry into the garage, where you can park for free as you explore downtown Atlanta!