

♀ OUTREACH

The Newsletter of the *Women's Law & Public Policy Fellowship Program*

Winter 2003

Meet our 2003-2004 Advocates

From Housing for Native Americans to the Rights of HIV-Positive People in South Africa, 2003-2004 Advocates Have Rich Public Interest Background

Virginia Davis was born and raised in Greenfield, Indiana and recently finished a clerkship with the Honorable Ronald Gilman on the 6th Circuit of Appeals in Memphis, Tennessee. She earned her B.A. from Yale *cum laude* and her J.D. degree from Harvard Law in May 2002. While at Harvard, Virginia was awarded the Dean's Award for Community Leadership and was a member of the Native American Law Students Association. During a six week trip to Accra, Ghana with Harvard's Legal Resources Center, Virginia worked on a grassroots campaign aimed at improving access to healthcare in a low-income, Muslim community. Her recently published article, "A Discovery of Sorts: Reexamining the Origins of the Federal Indian Housing Obligation" appears in the Harvard Blackletter Law Journal. Virginia will spend her Fellowship year at the National Women's Law Center, working on equality initiatives, including promoting the nomination of high quality and fair judges.

Phumzile Dlamini comes to the Fellowship Program from Swaziland where she was the coordinator of the "Vote for a Woman" campaign, working to increase the number of women in Swaziland's Parliament. She was also a founding member of Concerned Women of Swaziland, which initiated and developed the Human Rights and Constitution Awareness Program to prepare women to participate in the Constitution-making process. Phumzile earned her law degree from the University of Swaziland and a Diploma in Women's Law from the University of Zimbabwe. She hopes to use her training in the LAWA program to improve the organization of legal reform and advocacy groups in Swaziland when she returns.

Sylvia Garfinkle graduated from George Washington University *summa cum laude* with a B.A. in history in 1999. She received the Jessie Fant Evans Prize for Most Outstanding Senior in the History Department. Sylvia received her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center *cum laude* in 2002, where she was awarded the Domestic Violence Clinic's Outstanding Advocate Award and served on the editorial board of the American Criminal Law Review. Sylvia comes to the Fellowship Program after working as a litigation associate at Latham & Watkins. She will spend her Fellowship year in the Georgetown University Law Center Domestic Violence Clinic where she will not only represent clients in domestic violence cases, but also teach and mentor law students participating in the clinic.

Angela Hooton received her B.A. *magna cum laude* from Northwestern University in 1999, where she majored in Social Policy. Angela earned her law degree from Yale Law School in May 2002. While at Yale, Angela was a board member of Yale Law Women and the Collective on Women of Color in the Law, and a co-editor for the Yale Journal of Law and Feminism. Angela also volunteered with a number of student mentoring programs, and worked in the legal services clinic. Angela has been published in the Wisconsin Women's Law Journal with her article, "Constitutional Review of Affirmative Action Policies for Women of Color: A Hopeless Paradox?" and in the Texas Journal of Women and the Law with her article, "From Welfare Recipient to Childcare Worker: Balancing Work and Family Under TANF." Last year, Angela was a Blackmun Fellow at the Center for Reproductive Rights in New York. Angela will be working at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Jennifer Joni comes from South Africa where she worked for the AIDS Law Project as an attorney dealing with employment discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS. She has also worked closely with school governing bodies, educators, and students to educate individuals living with HIV about their rights, responsibilities, and choices. Jennifer earned her law degree from the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa. She is interested in issues of reproductive rights and workplace issues, particularly as they relate to HIV/AIDS.

Ruvimbo Masunungure was the Advocacy Program Manager at the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers' Association, where she lobbied and advocated for changes in the justice system. She has

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New LAWA Fellows arrive in Washington

Special Feature: WLPPFP 20th

Participants and Honorees are Jubilant at 20th Anniversary

by Advocate Angela Hooton ('03-'04)

Excitement filled the air at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC on September 25, 2003, where people gathered to celebrate the 20th Anniversary Dinner of the Women's Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program (WLPPFP). The honorees of the star-studded event included U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Botswana High Court Justice Unity Dow, Georgetown University Law Center Dean Judith Areen, and Charles H. Revson Foundation Past President Eli N. Evans. Current and past Fellows from the U.S. and Africa, members of the public interest community, friends of the program and other distinguished guests filled the room to capacity.

The dinner offered a unique opportunity to reminisce with old friends, make new acquaintances and listen



Conference participants with Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg at Anniversary Dinner.



Former Revson Foundation President Eli Evans is honored at Anniversary Dinner.

WLPPFP, presented one of the awards to Justice Unity Dow for her important contributions to women's rights in her home country of Botswana. Unfortunately, Justice Dow could not attend the event for personal reasons, but Mercy Garekwe and Keneilwe Lekoba, who worked with Justice Dow in their home countries of Botswana, accepted in her honor. WLPPFP Board member Wendy Webster Williams, Professor at Georgetown

University Law Center, and Ambassador Elizabeth Frawley Bagley honored Dean Judith Areen for her leadership and legal scholarship. WLPPFP Board member Judith Lichtman, President of the National Partnership for Women and Families, and WLPPFP Board Chair Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Congresswoman from the District of Columbia and Georgetown Law Professor, recognized Eli N. Evans for his overwhelming support of WLPPFP since its inception in 1983. Finally, Professor Martin Ginsburg gave a riveting introduction to his wife Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, replete with hilarious personal anecdotes about his experience as the husband of one of the world's most powerful and remarkable women. Justice Ginsburg, a relentless champion of women's rights, gave a mov-

ing speech about some of the early women's rights pioneers in Washington, DC and congratulated the Program on its contribution to public service.

Not only was the entertainment inspiring, but the food was delicious and everyone seemed to genuinely enjoy themselves. By all accounts, the night was a huge success! Congratulations to all who planned, supported and attended the event. ■



WLPPFP Board Chair and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and former Revson Foundation President Eli Evans at Anniversary Dinner.

Anniversary Celebrations

20th Anniversary Alumnae Conference

The 20th Anniversary Dinner was the highlight of a two-day conference, which opened on the morning of September 25th with remarks by Fellowship Chair Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, followed by a panel discussion moderated by National Public Radio legal correspondent Nina Totenberg. In addition to Fellowship Board members **Marcia Greenberger**, **Mary Hartnett** and **Wendy Williams**,



Hadija Ally, Nina Totenberg and Marcia Greenberger speak on conference panel.

two distinguished Fellowship alumnae participated on the panel: **Cassandra Butts**, who is policy director and general counsel to Rep. Richard Gephardt, and also serves as his chief presidential campaign policy advisor (and managed to participate on the panel before catching a plane to get to the New York democratic debate held later that day); and **Hadija Ally**, who is currently with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Peshawar Pakistan.

The two-day conference provided a unique forum for the alumnae to share their experiences and discuss their work on issues including employment equality, civil rights, HIV/AIDS and domestic violence. The conference was conceived, organized and led by Fellowship alumnae, with seven different substantive breakout sessions. One example was the break-out session entitled: **Women & Law: Views from the Hill, the Bench, and the Parliament**. Alumnae presenters included Carol Beier, recently sworn in as a Judge on the Kansas Supreme Court; Dora Byamukama, a Ugandan parliamentarian, and Holly Fehner, Chief Labor Counsel for the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee. The session was moderated by Sibongile Sigodi, who served on South Africa's Amnesty Committee of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and returned to South Africa after her Fellowship where she is now reviving the Port Elizabeth Rape Crisis Center. Other break-out sessions included "Education and Employment Equity," "Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS-Related Rights" and "Emerging Trends in Rights Related to Sexuality, Race and Disability." The sessions were highly participatory, because

Alumnae Conduct International Domestic Violence Workshop

In conjunction with the 20th Anniversary Celebration, the Program held a Workshop on State Response to Domestic Violence on Wednesday, September 24th for several accomplished domestic violence advocates from Southern Africa. The Program hosted **Chibuya Dabutha**, Coordinator of WoMen Against Rape, Botswana; **Virginia Francis**, National Project Manager, Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit, South Africa; **Naira Khan**, Director of the Child and Law Foundation, Zimbabwe; **Mark Kenny**, Specialist Prosecutor, Wynberg Sexual Offences Court, South Africa; **Vuyo Mahlali**, Program Director, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Africa Programs, South Africa; **Rebecca Mahlunge**, Population Services, Zimbabwe; **Thoko Majokweni**, Special Director of Public Prosecutions, Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit, South Africa; and **Tandazwa Ndita**, current LAWA Fellow, all generously sponsored by the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**.

These international advocates met with WLPPFP alumnae GULC Professor and Domestic Violence Clinic Director **Deborah Epstein** and GULC Visiting Associate Professor of Law and Deputy Director **Laurie Kohn** to discuss issues of mutual interest and develop strategies to address problems of abuse women face worldwide. They also took a tour of and observed a trial at the D.C. Superior Court. ■



20th Anniversary conference break-out session

the alumnae presenters and attendees alike were well-versed leaders in their particular fields.

The Program would like to profusely thank our terrific volunteer Alumnae Co-Directors who organized the conference—**Johanna Bond**, **Angela Dwamena-Aboagye**, **Margaret Johnson** and **Sarah Lubega**—and all of the class representatives and alumnae attendees who made the conference possible and successful. The Program would also like to express its gratitude towards the W.K. Kellogg Foundation whose generous support made it possible for our Alumnae from Africa to attend the Anniversary events. ■

2002-2003 LAWAs Complete Program

Our “senior” LAWAs received their LL.M. degrees at Georgetown University Law Center in May of 2003 and completed their internships before returning home in November where they will use their Fellowship training and experiences as they continue to improve the lives of those less fortunate:

Belquis Ahmadi will continue her groundbreaking work on behalf of women in Afghanistan. Belquis completed her major research paper on *Women in Decision-Making and Leadership in Muslim Countries* in association with the International Human Rights Law Group.

Mercy Garkwe completed her major paper on *The Economic Status of Women in Botswana as an International Human Rights Concern*. Placed with Women’s Edge, she worked on outreach programs and trade issues for Southern Women’s Organizations. Upon returning home to Botswana, Mercy will resume running her law firm. She intends to work to reform discriminatory laws and to empower women economically. In Mercy’s words, “Economic empowerment and independence is a key to most problems women in Botswana and around the world face.”

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also worked as a magisterial assistant at the Ministry of Justice, Division of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. In February 2002 Ruvimbo was a finalist in the worldwide “Stop Rape” writing competition organized by a New York organization called Equality Now. Ruvimbo earned her law degree and a Diploma in Women’s Law from the University of Zimbabwe. She is interested in the intersection of cultural identity and gender equality.

Elise Roy graduated from Northeastern University Law School in May 2003. While in law school she volunteered with the Center for the Study of Sport in Society’s Disability Research Initiative, was the Program Leader of the Disability Caucus, and was a member of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Straight Alliance. Elise received her undergraduate degree from Brown University where she was a varsity soccer and lacrosse player, and she went on to help coach the women’s soccer team at Brown after her graduation. Elise is this year’s Harriet Burg/Rita Charms Davidson Fellow, working at the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs on disability and employment discrimination with a special emphasis on discrimination against low-income women.

Naomi Stern is this year’s Economic Literacy Fellow. For her fellowship, Naomi coordinates the Domestic Violence Project at the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. Prior to her fellowship, Naomi clerked for the presiding judge of the Domestic Violence Unit at D.C. Superior Court. She received her A.B. *cum laude* from Harvard in 1997 and her J.D. from Georgetown in 2002, where she co-chaired the Equal Justice Foundation and earned the Outstanding Public Service Award

Keneilwe Lekoba addressed violence against women in her paper, *Domestic Violence Against Women as an International Human Rights Issue in Botswana*. Keneilwe worked at the Future’s Group Project on HIV/AIDS, where she shared her expertise on the linkages between domestic violence and HIV/AIDS in Botswana. Keneilwe returns home to accept a position as a lecturer at the University of Botswana Faculty of Law, where she will focus on human rights and gender equality.

Teresa Mugadza focused on land issues for her graduate work, authoring *A Case Study of Zimbabwe’s Compliance with CEDAW in Relation to Women’s Access to Land*. She interned with OxFam America, where she focused on agriculture and food security. Upon her return to Zimbabwe, Teresa plans to continue advocating for women’s access to land as a means of ensuring their economic independence.

Tandazwa Ndita wrote her major research paper on *Inheritance Rights and Rural Women in South Africa*. She completed her internship at the Whitman Walker HIV/AIDS Clinic, where she advised clients on issues related to their HIV/AIDS status. Upon return to South Africa, Tandazwa will join the Law, Race and Gender Unit of the University of Cape Town both as Senior Researcher and Trainer, where she will work to promote judicial ethics rule of law and racial and gender equality. ■

and a Dean’s Certificate for Special and Outstanding Service. As a law student, Naomi participated in Georgetown’s Federal Legislation Clinic, where she received the International Academy of Trial Lawyers’ Student Advocacy Award for her work on child welfare. Also during law school, Naomi worked for the Family Violence Prevention Fund, where she later did policy consulting work; the domestic violence legal clinic at Ayuda, Inc.; the Children’s Law Center; and the Legal Aid Society of D.C. Naomi’s publications include *Battered by the System: How Advocates Against Domestic Violence Have Improved Victims’ Access to Child Support and TANF*, 14 *Hastings Women’s L. J.* 47 (2003), and *The Challenges of Parental Leave Reforms for French and American Women*, 28 *Vt. L. Rev.* (forthcoming 2004).

Quyen Ta received a B.A. from UCLA in 1999, majoring in English literature and minoring in Scandinavian literature. She received her J.D. from UC Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall) in May 2003 where she was the Community Service Chair for the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, the Symposium Editor for the *Asian Law Journal*, a Street Law Instructor, and an Admissions Committee member. During law school, Quyen worked at Equal Rights Advocates, the ACLU Immigrants’ Rights Project, and served as an intern for Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Prior to law school, Quyen was a community organizer for the Asian Law Caucus, the first organization in the United States committed to advancing and representing the legal and civil rights of the Asian Pacific Islander communities. Quyen is placed at the National Partnership for Women and Families concentrating on issues facing working women and their families, including poverty issues and family leave. ■

SEMINARS AND EVENTS

Fellowship Seminars. Seminars continue to take place bi-weekly. Recently, **Marisa Demeo** from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund spoke on the reproductive rights and health care challenges of Latinas, and Elaine Gardner and Sue Huhta from the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs discussed employment discrimination and disability rights. In November, this year's Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa Fellows gave their U.S. colleagues a glimpse into their work at home and sharing aspects of their cultures.

LAWA Fellows Illuminate Human Rights in Africa. Inspired and informed by their personal experiences at home in Africa, our 2002-2003 Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa Fellows presented their L.L.M graduate papers to a group of interested scholars, practitioners, foreign officials, and GULC faculty and staff at the end of October.

* **Mercy Garekwe** from Botswana persuasively made the case for improving women's economic status of women in Botswana, citing over 25 laws that discriminate against women and discussing prohibitions on married women acting without their husband's consent.

* **Keneilwe Lekoba**, from Botswana, explained the prevalence and circumstances of domestic violence in her home country, arguing for a new law specifically criminalizing domestic violence and providing the particular remedies needed by domestic violence survivors.

* **Teresa Mugadza**, from Zimbabwe, gave a brief history of the land crisis in Zimbabwe while showing women's absence from land reform processes, noting, "The land question in Zimbabwe has never been about women. It has always been about men. Either white men pre-2000, and black men post-2000. It has really never been about women."

* **Tandazwa Ndita**, from South Africa, explained the discriminatory inheritance system under South African customary law, arguing that the South African Constitutions actually protects women's right to inherit.

These LAWA Fellows graduated with their L.L.M degrees from GULC in May and then worked at non-profit organizations in the District of Columbia on women's rights. They returned home this fall, each to new positions offering extraordinary opportunities to promote the rights of women. For more information on the LAWA Fellows, please see the article *2002-2003 LAWA Up-Date* on p. 4 in this issue.

2002-2003 LAWA Farewell. At a farewell dinner hosted by Executive Director **Mary Hartnett**, Fellows gathered for a bitter-sweet celebration to wish the 2002-2003 LAWA Fellows a safe trip home and to herald the opportunities that they face upon their return.

Comings and Goings

Executive Director **Mary Hartnett** will be taking a two-year sabbatical/leave beginning at the end of this year to join her husband who is posted at the U.S. Embassy in Latvia. Mary, who will work on a book and also teach human rights law at the Riga Graduate School of Law while she is away, will remain involved with the Program in an advisory capacity.

We are delighted to report that **Johanna Bond**, familiar to many of you through her service as Alumnae Co-Director, will serve as Executive Director beginning January 1, 2004. Johanna, a star alum of the Fellowship Program, brings her own deep connection to the Program and its issues, together with her experience as an international women's rights activist and scholar. Formerly Assistant Director of Georgetown University Law Center's International Women's Human Rights Clinic, a Senior Fulbright Scholar, consultant to the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and former law clerk for Judge Ann Montgomery on the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota, Johanna has written extensively on and advocated for women's human rights around the globe. Welcome Johanna!

We are delighted that recent Georgetown Law graduate **Vanessa Brocato** has returned as our Program Assistant. Vanessa worked as the WLPPFP Research Assistant for two years during law school, and is an avid women's rights advocate.

We are pleased to welcome **Lisa Stockwicz** as our Research Assistant. A 2L at Georgetown and a 2002 graduate of Bryn Mawr College, she has been WLPPFP's research assistant since May and is particularly interested in reproductive rights issues. ■

Thank you Fellowship Supporters

A heartfelt thank you to all of our supporters who make our work possible, and a special thank you to the following funders who support specific fellowships:

Harriet Burg Memorial Fund; Robert Sterling Clark Foundation; Rita Charatz Davidson Memorial Fund; D.C. Women's Bar Foundation; Fannie Mae Foundation; W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Overbrook Foundation; Charles H. Revson Foundation; Sandler Family Supporting Foundation.

Also, our most sincere thanks go to our wonderful alumae who generously gave of their time to speak at law schools for our 2004-2005 Fellowship recruiting. Your efforts are greatly appreciated, as always!



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