

OUTREACH

Women's Law & Public Policy Fellowship Program
at Georgetown Law

2021 - 2022

FALL | WINTER



The Season of Gratitude

The 2021-2022 LAWA Fellows join program supporter
Sherrell Andrews for lunch on campus.

Meet our 2021-2022 Fellows

WLPPFP is delighted to welcome five US fellows and seven Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa fellows to the outstanding class of 2021-2022.



Prior to becoming a LAWVA fellow, **Semhal Fissehaye Gebrekirstos** served as the Complaint Manager of the Gender Office at Ethiopia's Mekelle

University School of Law, where she obtained her L.L.B. in 2018. During her three years at the Gender Office, Semhal advised on domestic violence cases and worked with a local community-based organization, Mums for Mums, which provides shelter for survivors. Driven by a desire to create pathways to legal aid for low-income women and survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), Semhal plans to one day open the first collaborative legal aid clinic in Addis Ababa. Motivated by her experience working in development organizations, she obtained a Masters in Development & Globalization from the University of Antwerp in 2021.



Georgetown's Domestic Violence Clinic welcomes **Lauren Birzon Harriman** as the Clinical Teaching Fellow. She is a 2009 graduate of George Washington

University Law School, where she was on the International Law Review, and a student attorney in the Jacob Burns Public Justice Advocacy Clinic. She received her B.A. in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland in 2006. Lauren is a passionate and cross-disciplinary learner who takes a holistic approach to securing safety for families. Lauren has extensive experience in

training attorneys to represent clients in family law proceedings. She has held previous internships and volunteer positions with the ABA Commission on Domestic Violence and DC Safe. She most recently served as a Senior Attorney at the Children's Law Center, where she advocated for kinship caregivers and foster parents in custody, neglect, guardianship, and adoption proceedings.



Ngenarr-Yassin Jeng is a human rights attorney and advocate for adult and child survivors GBV in The Gambia. Prior to joining the LAWVA program, Ngenarr was

engaged in strategic planning and public speaking to criminalize FGM and child marriage. This experience informed her work at the United Nations Rule of Law, Access to Justice, and Security Project where she helped develop meaningful remedies for survivors of sexual assault and harassment. Driven by a desire to prevent and provide relief for the intergenerational traumas that stem from GBV, her long-term goal is to develop a model, streamlined, system for handling complaints of GBV. Ngenarr graduated in 2016 with her Bachelor of Laws from The University of The Gambia.



Lily Milwit will spend her Fellowship year with the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. Lily is committed to alleviating the harms caused by capitalism, poverty and systemic racism. She

has held internships at Lawyers for Children, The Poverty & Race Research Action Council, Bread for the City, Equal Justice Under Law, The Aspen Institute, and the National Partnership for Women and Families. She is a 2021 graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, where she was the President of If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice and a student attorney in the Juvenile Justice Clinic. Lily graduated in 2018 with a B.A. in Political Science, English and Communication from Tulane University, where she was also Editor-in-Chief of the Tulane Hullabaloo. She is a co-author of *Global Abortion Law, History, and Practice* in the ABA's Abortion, Medicine, and the Law (2021).



Gloria Ngumi is a Kenya-based attorney and champion for corporate accountability for human rights violations. She has advocated for the

financial inclusion of women and the inclusion of youth in mining governance. She is also a passionate advocate for the rights of those with mental disabilities, and researched the issue of guardianship under Kenya's Mental Health Act for the National Commission for Human Rights. Gloria's experience witnessing local injustices arise in each of these areas has galvanized her work toward reducing the extent to which obstetric violence and lack of economic opportunities hinder access to meaningful equality for women and girls in her community. Gloria holds a Bachelor of Laws

from the University of Nairobi, which she obtained in 2016 and a postgraduate diploma in Law from the Kenya School of Law earned in 2019.



Anna Reed, is the inaugural Maeve McKean Fellow, and will split her fellowship year between HIPS and the O'Neill Institute for National and Global

Health Law. Anna previously worked as a youth organizer and sex education teacher in Paris, Chicago and Seattle. Anna is a 2021 graduate of Georgetown Law, where she led the development of a Reproductive Justice curriculum for the Street Law program. She was also a 2020-2021 Gender+ Justice Fellow, where her project focused on Obstetric Violence. Committed to building space for art and storytelling in advocacy Anna is also one of the Executive Producers of *Self-Managed*, a podcast dedicated to destigmatizing and demystifying the practice of self-managed abortion. She authored a chapter on the same subject for the ABA's *Abortion, Medicine, and the Law* (2021). She holds a B.A. in History from Brown University, and grew up in Rennes, France.



The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs is delighted to welcome **Naomi Rodriguez** as the Small, Webber, Spencer Fellow. Naomi is

excited to bring her experiences in community organizing and education to serving her clients. She has built an impressive civil rights portfolio through internships in the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, the DC Office of Human Rights, the Orleans Parish Public Defenders Office, and the Civil Rights Justice Center. She is a 2021 graduate of Howard University School of Law, where she was Senior Articles Editor of the *Human and Civil Rights Law Review*, and a student

advocate in the Howard Law Human and Civil Rights Clinic. She graduated from the University of Washington in 2018 with a major in Law, Societies and Justice, and a minor in Diversity. Her senior thesis examined legacy of colonialism and the lack of protection of Black women's sexual rights in Haiti.



Bridget Winkler joins the Health Care and Reproductive Rights team at National Women's Law Center, where she previously served as an intern. She

has also interned with Laborers International Union of North America and for Yvonne Williams of the DC Superior Court. Bridget graduated from American University Washington College of Law in 2021. There, she was the Notes and Comment Editor of the *Journal of Gender, Social Policy and the Law* and President of *If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice*. Under her leadership, the Chapter received the Excellence in Organizing Award, gaining 14,000 followers on social media and educating the wider community on the intersections of immigration and Reproductive Justice. Motivated by her work on judicial nominees at the Alliance for Justice prior to law school, as well as the Kavanaugh Supreme Court confirmation hearings, she founded *The People's Judiciary*, a project to educate law students on the consequences of judicial nominations and provide an outlet for them to act.



Eunice Ndingo is an attorney and women's rights advocate based in Malawi. There, she works to advance access to justice for women by prosecuting property grabbers—people who manipulate the laws of inheritance in order to take the property of widows in the wake of their husband's death. Eunice also dedicates much of her legal

practice towards advancing justice for survivors of sexual assault, and serves as the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs' Desk Officer for all rape and defilement cases. She served as the President of the Women Lawyers Association-Lilongwe Chapter, where she helped women and children in rural communities to understand their rights. Eunice holds a Bachelor of Laws obtained in 2015 from the University of Malawi-Chancellor College, and a post-graduate diploma in Women's Human Rights obtained in 2019 from the Bulgarian Women's Human Rights Training Institute.



Eunice Nabakwa has centered her work on increasing access to land and property rights for women in Uganda. Prior to becoming a LAWA fellow, she served as the

Principal Senior Land Officer for the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, where she has worked to advance women's rights by developing new tools and approaches for community engagement in rural development projects. Prior to that, Eunice headed the Ministry's initiative to document best practices on security of tenure and land dispute resolution. There, she witnessed first-hand how centering women's leadership in policy-making is a crucial step for sustainable development world-wide. Eunice received her Bachelor of Laws in 2013 from Makerere University and a diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Center, which she obtained in 2019.



Joining the LAWA Fellowship from Nigeria, **Tosin Yemi Oke** has over a decade of experience in legal practice, academia and community development.

She has worked to advance girls' education, and increase access to justice through organizations such as the Community Girls Secondary School and the Baze University Law Clinic and the Network of Universities' Legal Aid Institutions. Tosin's work as the Coordinator of the Clinic was focused on reuniting survivors of human trafficking with their families and engaging communities in awareness programs and rallies to reduce the prevalence of human trafficking throughout the region. She holds a Master of Laws in Corporate Governance from the University of Portsmouth received in 2010, and a Bachelor of Laws from Madonna University received in 2006.



Julia Zabbu has centered her work around advocacy for climate refugees, women, and children in Uganda.

Prior to becoming a LAWA fellow, Julia was an attorney for the International Justice Mission. There, she was actively engaged in efforts to reduce evictions and property grabbing from widows and orphans in the community. She also served as the Legal Officer at the Refugee Law Project in Kiryandongo District, where she led the Access to Justice department. She has facilitated trainings for police and soldiers on refugee rights, as well as the impact of conflict-related sexual violence. In her most recent role as a consultant at Raising Voices, she helped improve the quality of feminist NGOs' programming on violence against women. Julia obtained her Bachelor of Laws from Uganda Christian University in 2013 and her post-graduate diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Center in 2015.



Celebrating the Season of Gratitude

Jill C. Morrison (US 1998-1999), Executive Director

Things are returning to a new normal here at the Women's Law & Public Policy Fellowship Program. The LAWA fellows are attending classes on campus, and we are even having some in-person (!) seminars. I am inspired by Dr. Amy Uelmen, Director for Mission & Ministry, Georgetown Law (and my dear friend), who has initiated a "Gratitude Fest" here on campus. Despite this long period of difficulty and loss for so many, there is still much to be grateful for. For starters:

- The now three classes of fellows who have endured this pandemic, all with positivity and resilience, and a willingness to support one another. They've all made the best of their fellowship experience, even though it wasn't what they signed up for. They have also kept me going more times than I can count.
- The supportive Alumnae who reach out with a kind word, pass along an invaluable resource for the LAWA Fellows' thesis research, make the time to have virtual coffees with nervous fellows thinking about their next job, provide their expertise at our seminars, or shout out the Fellowship program whenever they are doing public speaking or writing. You are what makes WLPPFP a family.
- The folks around campus who make it possible for me to do my job, like: Virgial in Facilities, who keeps this campus running (but is willing to pop by my office to hang up my pictures); Priscilla and Sarah in Development who are terrific cheerleaders for WLPPFP; Ronnie in the Copy Center who gets it right, every time; Brent, the Director of Design in the Communications Department, who is responsible for this gorgeous newsletter; the Security Team, who now have an important role in our campus COVID management; and Cora in Student Accounts, who absorbs the stress of students with unparalleled grace.
- Each and every donor, who believes in the work our Fellows do during the Fellowship and the years beyond. Every donation enhances the Fellows' experience and I couldn't do this work without your continued commitment to gender equality.

...and that's just for starters. Wishing you the very best in this Season of Gratitude.

Alumnae Spotlight

WLPPFP and LAWA Fellows are finding new ways to improve people's lives, locally, nationally and globally. Read on and be inspired.

Tina Alai (LAWA 2012-2013) provides this update: "I began working with the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan as Transitional Justice Advisor last year February, first based in Addis Ababa, and then I moved to Juba in December 2020. It has been a truly life changing experience to work in the South Sudan context - both at a personal and professional level. I presently support the Commission in offering technical guidance to the Government of South Sudan and other key actors at the local, regional and international levels, to implement transitional justice measures required in the South Sudan 2018 Peace Agreement. Prior to starting with the Commission, I co-founded Utu Wetu (meaning "our dignity/humanity" in Swahili) Consulting and Trust. Utu Wetu is a collective of women's human rights practitioners in Kenya and the African region. Utu Wetu has just started getting off the ground, with our first staff recruited in August this year. I'm very excited that the vision for it is beginning to take shape."

The *Georgetown Journal of Gender & the Law* published **Twasiima (Tricia) Bigirwa's (LAWA 2019-2020)** thesis, *Twice Shamed: The Use of Uganda's Antipornography Act to turn Revenge Pornography Nonconsensual Image Distribution Victims into Villains*.

Maereg Alemayehu (LAWA 2015-2016), has joined USAID's Ethiopia Support Program as Program Development and Research Consultant. The program focuses on creating an enabling environment for national consensus and conflict mitigation. Maereg

also supports the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team. We all wish her the very best in this critically important work.

Sundaiway Amegashie (LAWA 2014-2015) is working with Winrock International/ ATLAS Program (an American NGO with funding from the US Department of Labor) as its Legal Capacity Building Officer. Sundaiway reports, "We are working with the Government of Liberia to combat human trafficking, child labor, and forced labor in Liberia. We are working to strengthen Liberia's legal framework in order to increase enforcement through building the capacity of stakeholders, and raising awareness. I still work as a volunteer with the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia in the promotion and protection of the rights of children and women. I am also a member of the Executive Council of the Liberian National Bar Association."

Congratulations to **Susanna Birdsong (US 2013-2014)**, the North Carolina ACLU, and the other advocates who succeeded in passing legislation banning the shackling of incarcerated pregnant women in the state.

Lisa Bornstein (US 1999-2000) has left the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights to become the COO and General Counsel at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Gillian Chadwick (US 2014-2015) wrote an article for *Ms. Magazine Online* entitled *Race, Disability and Coercive Control: One More Look at the Gabby Petito Case*. Gillian observes that despite the media's obsessive focus on the case (due to the fact that a white woman was missing), Petito's status as a person living with a disability and a victim of coercive control (a specific form of domestic violence), was absent from the coverage.

Blosmeli Leon Depass (US 2019-2020) started a new job at HRSA's Office of Legislation as a Legislative Analyst.

Rehim Elala (LAWA 2020-2021) published an article in *AfricLaw* advocating for the decriminalization of homosexuality in Ethiopia. He identifies religious and cultural norms as a major cause of ongoing discrimination, and urges the government and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission to support both constitutional and human rights for LGBTQ people.

Deborah Epstein (US 1990-1991) has been named Agnes Williams Sesquicentennial Professors of Law.

Amina Ferati (Abbas) (US 2010-2011) serves as President of International Advisory, Products and Systems, a US woman-owned and managed small business. She is also sits on the Board of the Society for International Development, Washington Chapter.

Amy Fettig (US 2001-2002) is now the Executive Director of The Sentencing Project. Amy also presented at an American University, Washington College of Law symposium entitled *Jane Crow: Gender Issues in Incarceration*. **Marya Torrez (US 2007-2008)**, who teaches Reproductive Justice, was the moderator.

What's better than having one WLPPFP fighting for abortion access at Planned Parenthood Federation of America? Having TWO! **Hailey Flynn (US 2016-2017)** and **Juliana Shulman-Laniel (US 2017-2018)** now work together on the Health Center Regulatory Strategy team for the Consortium of Abortion Providers.

Shari Inniss Grant (US 2012-2013) is working with the UN in Barbados after a stint in South Sudan.

Joanna Grossman (US 1995-1996) wrote an article in *Washington Monthly* on the Texas abortion ban and its impact on teens, especially in light of the parental involvement law and the judicial bypass process.

Jennifer Hunter (US 2004-2005) wrote a hilarious and highly-informative article for *Balls and Strikes* entitled, *Inside the Miserable Experience of Visiting the Supreme Court*.

Rose Wangui Kimotho (LAWA 2009-2010) co-authored an article, *Exploring the Drivers of Gendered Grievance Mechanisms: Examples from the Agribusiness, Extractive and Wind Power Sectors in Kenya*, published in the journal *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*. She continues with her PhD program at the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland, focusing on business and human rights

This update comes from Her Worship, **Pamella Lamunu (LAWA 2015-2016)**: "I was promoted from Chief Magistrate to Deputy Registrar in the Judiciary of Uganda, in June 2021. A Deputy Registrar is at

Director level, for those who might not be acquainted with the position. I am currently deployed at the Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court of Uganda, where I manage the affairs of three judges, four magistrates and thirty-one support staff. I am very grateful to our own Prof. Jill Morrison who, upon my request, wrote a powerful recommendation for me to the Judicial Service Commission of Uganda. Her letter no doubt played an important part in my being selected as one of the best candidates. I have assumed my new role now. I will continue holding our LAWA torch high and I am eternally grateful for the opportunity and the training I received during the Fellowship that prepared me for greater heights. It suffices to say that since graduation in 2016, I have been promoted twice."

Desireé Luckey (US 2019-2020) is now the Policy Director at URGE: Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity.

We are wishing a wonderful new life chapter to **Laura McFarland (Bornstein) (US 2010-2011)**, who has left the legal profession. She reports that she is now living in Seattle with her husband, dog, and cats, and would love to reconnect with any WLPPFP/LAWA alums who are located in Seattle or traveling through!

Joan Meier (US 1985-1986) is now the "National Family Violence Law Center Professor of Clinical Law" at George Washington University Law School. Her Chair is endowed, guaranteeing that the impactful work that she's done at the Center will continue on. Congratulations Joan!

We are so proud to report that Lady Justice **Vera N. Nkwate Ngassa (LAWA 2011-2012)** was appointed to the Supreme Court in September 2020 and inaugurated November 2020.

Beverline Ongaro (LAWA 2012-2013) has been quite busy! She published two articles for the Africa Centre for Ideas and Dialogue Programme. The first is *Erasing*

the Error of Inequality: Expanding Spaces for Women's Participation in Decision-making and Governance in Kenya and the second is *Reparation to the Victims of Gross Human Rights Violations is the Key to Building Bridges*.

Lynn Paltrow (US 1984-1985) was quoted in the *New York Times* in a piece by Michelle Goldberg on the Brittney Poolaw case in Oklahoma. "The effort to add fetuses to the Constitution is increasingly an idea picked up by prosecutors to justify essentially removing the constitutional rights of pregnant people." Ms. Poolaw received a sentence of four years despite their being no evidence that her substance use caused her to miscarry at seventeen weeks of gestation.

Karin Raye (US 1998-1999) recently launched *The Lasell Survivor's Guide to Healing and Reporting*. Karin is working to develop this resource with students to identify the needs of those impacted by sexual violence at Lasell University.

Jennifer Schingle (US 2008-2009) is now the Chief Labor Relations Officer and Director of the Office of Labor Relations of Montgomery County, Maryland.

Muluka Hussen Shifa (LAWA 2017-2018) is a regional coordinator at a USAID-funded project called *Feteh (Justice) Activity in Ethiopia*. She manages the implementation of all the project activities to develop the capacities of regional supreme courts and attorney generals' offices. Muluka was also elected and became a board member of Lawyers for Human Rights. Congratulations Muluka!

Hilda Stuart (LAWA 2012-2013) continues her advocacy in Tanzania, where she facilitated a training on movement building, defining the feminist agenda, and leadership.

Shanta Trivedi (US 2020-2021) published a powerful piece on the Britney Spears conservatorship case in *Ms. Magazine*. Shanta explored the issue through the Reproductive Justice lens, highlighting how the child welfare system limits the right to raise children, especially for Black and Indigenous families.

Mary Whisner (US 1984-1985) received the Marian Gould Gallagher Distinguished Service Award from the American Association of Law Libraries. Congrats Mary!

Pela Boker Wilson's (LAWA 2017-2018) is leading complaints, investigation and monitoring at Liberia's Independent National Commission on Human Rights. In this capacity, she: oversees the investigation, monitoring and reporting of all human rights incidents within the fifteen political subdivisions of Liberia; leads national efforts in preparing monthly human rights situation reports, quarterly reports and annual report; and prepares thematic reports on various human rights issues such as rape, sexual and reproductive health, harmful traditional practices and the right to education. Pela has also been accepted as a full time Assistant Professor of Law at the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law, where she teaches International Humanitarian Law and Torts. Her LAWA Thesis, *Increasing Accountability for Rape in Liberia: The Need for a Forensic System to Increase the Success Rates of Prosecution*, was recently published in the *William & Mary Journal of Race, Gender & Social Justice*.



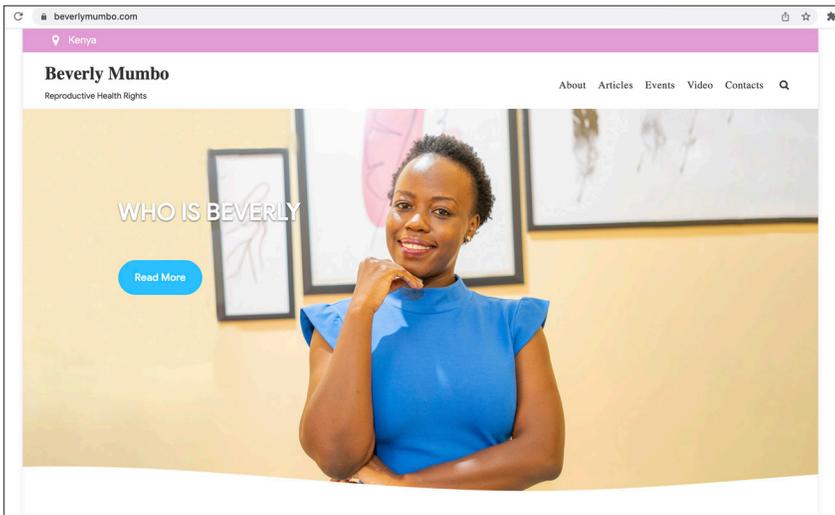
Amy and Christine with the statue of Alice Paul.

Remembering those who fought for the right to vote

Christine Webber (US 1993-1994)

The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial in Occoquan Regional Park (VA) opened this summer, though it has been in the planning stages for at least six years. It is down the road from the Occoquan Workhouse, part of the old Lorton prison complex, and the location where the women who protested in DC for the right to vote in the early 1900s were imprisoned and force fed ("Ironjawed Angels").

This was a long-planned visit, as, shortly after the death of Lisa Small (US 1993-1994) a donation was made in her memory to support construction of the Memorial. Amy Spencer (US 1993-1994) and I visited on August 29, the day after the most recent March on Washington for voting rights. The Memorial captures one part of a long and ongoing history of the fight for voting rights.



Check out **Beverly Mumbo's (LAWA 2019-2020)** eponymous website, where she posts honest and timely discussions on sexual and reproductive health issues like menstrual health and the rights of those engaged in sex work.



Margaret Johnson (US 1995-1996) moderated and **Jill Morrison (US 1998-1999)** presented on a panel at the University of Baltimore School of Law on the Texas and Mississippi abortion bans.



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