

SHAKIRA D. PLEASANT

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** Bar Admissions: California, District of Columbia, and United States Supreme Court **

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Professor of Legal Writing & Lecturer in Law

University of Miami School of Law

August 2017 – Present

Coral Gables, FL

- COURSES:
 - Legal Communication and Research (LComm I and II) - required first-year course where students develop legal reasoning skills, learn to write objective and persuasive documents, and engage in oral advocacy at either the trial or appellate level.
- SERVICE:
 - Committee and Advisory Service
 - Admissions Committee (2017-2018)
 - Supervisor to three 3L Research Assistants, and one 3L Dean's Fellow

Associate Professor of Law

Savannah Law School

August 2014 – July 2017

Savannah, GA

- COURSES:
 - Legal Writing, Research and Analysis (LWRA I and II) - required first-year course that teaches students legal reasoning, objective written advocacy, persuasive written and oral advocacy at trial and appellate levels.
 - Advanced Appellate Advocacy – required upper level writing course that challenges students to deepen their legal reasoning and expand their writing skills by drafting amicus briefs for current term U.S. Supreme Court cases.
 - Pretrial Advocacy – required upper level writing course using simulated exercises and the recursive writing process to draft client correspondence, demand letters, pleadings, motions, and pretrial orders.
 - Client Interviewing and Counseling – upper level elective that teaches students interviewing and counseling techniques via simulations and other active learning exercises.
- SERVICE:
 - Committee and Advisory Service
 - Faculty Advisor to Mock Trial Advocacy Board (2016-2017)
 - Curriculum (Chair), Admissions, and Assessment Committees (2016-2017)
 - Curriculum (Vice Chair), Admissions, and Assessment Planning Committees (2015-2016)
 - Admissions, Information Technology, and Code of Student Responsibility Committees (2014-2015)
 - Law Review Student Note Co-Advisor with Professor Vinay Harpalani (2016-2017)
 - Faculty Advisor to National Women's Law Student Organization (2015-Present)
 - Faculty Advisor to Black Law Students Association (2014-2015)
 - Faculty Advisor to 1L, 2L, and 3L (day and evening) students (2014-Present)
 - Admissions, Recruitment, and Other Service
 - Faculty panelist during 1L Orientation (2015)
 - Faculty panelist during Prospective Student Open House (2015)
 - Faculty representative at Savannah State Career Fair (2015)
 - Faculty panelist during Accepted Students Day (2014 and 2016)
 - Guest judge for Southeast Regional Mock Trial Scrimmage (2014)

Adjunct Professor of Law

University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law

August 2009 – May 2013
Washington, D.C.

- COURSES: Lawyering Process (LP I and II) – required first-year course teaching legal research, objective and persuasive writing, and analytical skills. The course also taught client interviewing, settlement negotiations, oral advocacy, and client letter drafting.

Adjunct Professor

University of the District of Columbia – College of Arts and Sciences

January 2007 – December 2010
Washington, D.C.

- COURSES:
 - American Government – general education course introducing students to the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.
 - Civil Rights and Liberties – upper-division course that focused on U.S. constitutional rights and liberties
 - Constitutional Law – upper-division course that used U.S. constitutional law concepts to assist students develop critical reading and analytical reasoning skills

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Panelist – Works in Progress. Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference. Boca Raton, FL (July 31-August 6, 2017)
- Presenter – Incubator. Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty, Workshop and Writing Retreat hosted by the University of Michigan Law School. Ann Arbor, MI (July 6-12, 2017)
- Panelist – Works in Progress. Mid-Atlantic People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference hosted by George Washington University Law School. Washington, D.C. (January 27-28, 2017)
- Panelist – “Sharing Strategies for Encouraging Diversity within the Legal Writing Community,” AALS Annual Conference Roundtable hosted by AALS Section on Legal Writing, Research, and Analysis Diversity Committee. San Francisco, CA (January 5, 2017)
- Panelist – Works in Progress. Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty, Tenth Annual Commemorative Workshop and Writing Retreat hosted by the University of Iowa College of Law. Iowa City, IA (July 6-12, 2016)
- Presenter (with Vinay Harpalani) – “DeFacto Segregation, Diversity, and Disparities: Fisher v. Texas, the Remix,” Law and Society Association. New Orleans, LA (June 1-5, 2016)
- Presenter (with Diana Donahoe, Jessica Wherry, and Kristen Murray) – “Using Technology to Teach the Flipped Classroom: A Presentation of Various Tools, Techniques, and Tips,” The Capital Area Legal Writing Conference hosted by University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law. Baltimore, MD (March 11-12, 2016)
- Presenter (with Kosiso Onyia) – “So You Want to be a Law Professor? Understanding the Big Picture on Day One!,” The Capital Area Legal Writing Conference hosted by University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law. Baltimore, MD (March 11-12, 2016)
- Presenter - “Trust Your Instincts-Developing an Upper Division Pretrial Advocacy Course that Incorporates Best Practices and a Practitioner’s Perspective,” LWI One-Day Workshop hosted by University of Denver, Sturm School of Law. Denver, CO (December 5, 2015)
- Presenter – “Trust Your Instincts-Developing an Upper Division Pretrial Advocacy Course that Incorporates Best Practices and a Practitioner’s Perspective,” ALWD Biennial Conference hosted by Memphis School of Law. Memphis, TN (June 3-5, 2015)
- Presenter (with Elizabeth Berenguer) – “Leveraging Uniform Student Outcomes to Prepare Practice-Ready Students While Preserving Academic Freedom,” SE Regional Legal Writing Conference hosted by University of Tennessee College of Law. Knoxville, TN (April 17-18, 2015)

- Panelist – Teaching & Working in the For-Profit Legal Education Arena. Southeast/Southwest People of Color Conference hosted by North Carolina Central University School of Law. Durham, NC (March 19-22, 2015)
- Presenter – “Trust Your Instincts-Developing an Upper Division Pretrial Advocacy Course that Incorporates Best Practices and a Practitioner’s Perspective,” LWI One-Day Workshop hosted by Mercer Law School. Macon, GA (December 5, 2014)
- Presenter (with Kosiso Onyia) – “Predictive Writing, Advocacy + Providing Feedback,” LWI One-Day Workshop hosted by George Washington University Law School. Washington, D.C. (November 30, 2012)
- Panelist – Works in Progress. ALWD Scholars Forum, Third Annual Empire State Legal Writing Conference hosted by the University of Buffalo Law School. Buffalo, NY (June 22-23, 2012)
- Presenter (with Crisarla Houston) – “What’s Your Ranking? The Impact of LRW Pedagogy, Academic Success Strategies, and Bar Passage Rates.” The Capital Area Legal Writing Conference hosted by Georgetown University Law Center. Washington, D.C. (March 10, 2012)
- Panelist – Works in Progress II. Mid-Atlantic People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference hosted by Howard University School of Law. Washington, D.C. (January 27, 2012)

PUBLICATIONS

- [Overcoming Writing Challenges: Counsel for Aspiring, Novice, and Experienced Legal Professionals](#), 13 LEG. COMM. & RHETORIC: JALWD 245 (2016)
- *The Unique Effect of Texas’ Top Ten Percent Law on Fisher v. Texas*, available at <https://casetext.com/posts/the-unique-effect-of-texas-top-ten-percent-law-on-fisher-v-texas> (2016)
- [More Than Just the Numbers: Fisher v. Texas and the Practical Impact of Texas’s Top Ten Percent Law](#), 24 U. OF MIA. BUS. L. REV. 111 (2016)
- *Gaining Exposure to Law Practice through Best Practices*, 93 DENV. L. REV. ONLINE 83 (2016), available at <http://www.denverlawreview.org/dlr-onlinearticle/2016/4/6/gaining-exposure-to-law-practice-through-best-practices.html>.
- [Amicus Brief](#) filed in *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin, et al.* (14-981) (November 2, 2015)

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Southeastern Association of Law Schools Writing Connections Program Committee (2017-2018)
- ALWD 2019 Biennial Conference Site Committee (2017-2019)
- Society of American Law Teachers (SALT) (2016)
- “Faces of LWI / LWI Lives” Committee (2016)
- Legal Writing Institute (LWI) (2012 - present)
- ALWD 2017 Biennial Conference Program Committee (2016-2017)
- ALWD Bylaws Committee (2015-2016)
- Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Diversity and Inclusion Committee (2015)
- Delegate – Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD) (2014-2017)
- Track Leader – Ethics and Professionalism Track, Southeast/Southwest People of Color Conference (2014-2015)
- McGeorge Alumni Board of Directors (2014- 2018)
- Bylaws Committee Chair – Greater Washington Area Chapter (GWAC) Foundation (2011-2012)
- Faculty Advisor/Coach – National Black Law Students Association (NBLSA), Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition. (2011)
- Co-Chair – McGeorge School of Law, Washington, D.C. Alumni Chapter (2008-2010)
- University of the District of Columbia (UDC) Paralegal Advisory Committee (2008)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Information & Privacy Officer

District of Columbia Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS)

April 2013 – July 2014
Washington, D.C.

- Directed the Department's Office of Information and Privacy (OIP) programmatic functions, which included releasing departmental records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Prepared FOIA determination letters, drafted appeal responses, and coordinated with other agencies when open records documents were available from multiple sources.

Assistant Attorney General

Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia (OAG)
Department on Disability Services - Office of the General Counsel (OGC)

October 2008 – April 2013
Washington, D.C.

- Served as Lead Trial Counsel for the Agency's Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS/RSA) in litigation arising under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Workforce Development Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Act. Managed all phases of DDS/RSA's administrative and civil litigation including: drafting dispositive motions, conducting discovery, interview and witness preparation, trial practice, and settlement negotiations.
- Served as a Hearing Officer and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor. Responsibilities included: facilitating informal resolution of labor and employment disputes; investigating alleged claims arising under Federal and District of Columbia EEO laws including the District of Columbia Human Rights Act; interviewing witnesses and interested parties; and counseling complainants throughout the EEO process.
- Conducted legal sufficiency reviews of policy, regulations, and legislation. Presented legal assessments and recommendations to senior administrators, managers and staff. Drafted regulations implementing provisions of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which included post-secondary education services, client participation in the cost of services, and informal due process procedures.
- Collaborated with outside counsel from various government agencies to develop legal documents such as memorandum of understanding, memorandum of agreement, and organizational policy and procedure documentation. Participated in agency-wide projects and meetings on ad-hoc basis.
- Conducted training sessions for DDS/RSA personnel to foster proper implementation of the Agency's post-secondary education, due process, and cost participation regulations.
- Supervised law interns. Assigned and reviewed written legal memoranda and pleadings; coordinated professional development opportunities and completed performance evaluations.

Assistant Attorney General and Dispute Resolution Specialist

Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia (OAG)
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs – Office of the General Counsel (OGC)

September 2006 – October 2008
Washington, D.C.

- Represented OGC in affirmative and defensive litigation matters. Prosecuted housing, business licensing and building code violation cases before the Office of Administrative Hearings. Also, successfully defended the Zoning Administrator's interpretation of the District of Columbia's land use laws in cases involving the First Amendment and a church's matter of right use.
- Provided litigation support to OAG colleagues engaged in defensive litigation and appeals before the District of Columbia Superior Court, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.
- Conducted legal research and drafted internal legal memoranda for issuance by OGC on matters related to the District of Columbia Freedom of Information Act (DC FOIA), fair housing and reasonable accommodations compliance, revenue generating enforcement remedies, and use of an e-signature policy and procedure.

- Participated on an intra-agency task force charged with drafting regulations impacting licensing requirements for individuals with disabilities. Assisted the Agency's FOIA officer by reviewing and redacting documents for privileged/confidential information.

Special Projects and Project-Research Assistant

American Bar Association – Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO)

September 2004 – July 2006
Washington, D.C.

- Co-edited the 2006 edition of the CLEO Edge, an annually published magazine targeting pre-law students. Utilized project management skills by setting deadlines for article submission, printing scheduling, and editing/formatting content and layout in preparation for publication. Also, collaborated with legal professionals in academia and general practice to provide content-specific articles for the magazine.

Certified Law Student / Law Clerk, Civil Division

Law Clerk, Criminal Division

United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California

September 2003 – May 2004
June 2001– August 2001
Sacramento, CA

- Represented the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency in Chapter 13 bankruptcy matters before the United States Bankruptcy Court. Responsibilities included: researching and drafting motions to lift automatic stays and advocating the agency's position during oral argument.

EDUCATION

The George Washington University (Washington, D.C.)

Certified Public Manager (CPM), 2014

Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Certification, 2014

University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law (Sacramento, CA)

Juris Doctor, 2004

- Pacific Regional Champion, Philip C. Jessup Moot Court Team (2003-2004)
- Research Assistant to Professor John E.B. Myers (2001-2002)
- President, Black Law Students Association (BLSA) (2002-2003) and Treasurer (2001-2002)

California State University, Chico

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, 1999

- Legal Intern, Community Legal Information Center (CLIC) (1997-1998)