

**BLACK WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES, INC.
LAW STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP/BAR GRANT APPLICATION**

Eligibility: Eligibility is limited to second-year and third-year law students, and fourth-year law students enrolled in part-time or evening programs. Students must be in attendance at an accredited law school. Successful candidates should expect to practice law in the Southern California area.

The Application and Attachments: Please provide detailed answers to the application questions and required attachments. BWL will maintain all information received from applicants in confidence.

Selection Criteria: BWL awards its scholarship/bar grants on the basis of financial need, community service, academic achievement and legal writing ability.

Instructions: Please return completed applications along with the required documents to **Mika M. Hilaire, Appell | Hilaire | Benardo LLP, 15233 Ventura Blvd., Suite 420, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403**. Applications may also be submitted via email to mika@ahblegal.com. Applications should be either typed or handwritten in black or dark blue ink. Completed applications and all related documents **must be postmarked by April 5, 2011**. **Interviews will take place on April 16, 2011**. If you have questions, please contact Mika Hilaire at mika@ahblegal.com or Karen Pointer at KPointer@lplawllp.com.

BWL SCHOLARSHIP/BAR GRANT APPLICATION

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

Personal Information:

1. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss
(Circle One)
2. Marital Status
() Married () Single
Dependent Children _____
Ages _____
3. Name _____
4. Address _____

5. Telephone:
Home _____
School _____
Work _____
6. E-mail _____
7. Current Employer:
Name _____
Address _____
Title _____
Gross wages per month \$ _____

Academic Background:

8. SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING ATTACHMENTS WITH YOUR APPLICATION:
 - A. Current official law school transcript, including school grading scale;
 - B. Letter from law school verifying your current academic status; and
 - C. Resume

9. Institutions Attended:

A. Law School(s):

Name of School _____ G.P.A. _____

Month/Year Attended _____ Year Graduated _____

Name of School _____ G.P.A. _____

Month/Year Attended _____ Year Graduated _____

B. Undergraduate/Graduate School(s):

Name of School _____ G.P.A. _____

Month/Year Attended _____ Year Graduated _____

Name of School _____ G.P.A. _____

Month/Year Attended _____ Year Graduated _____

C. Honors and Awards (Undergraduate and Graduate School):

Honor/Award	Year
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Community Service

10. **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES:**
Describe in detail. Please use additional pages if necessary.

13. **INCOME AND EXPENSES STATEMENT:** Please estimate your income and expenses for the period from January 2011 through December 2011.

<u>EXPENSES</u>		<u>RESOURCES</u>	
Tuition & Fees	\$ _____	Scholarship	\$ _____
Educational Supplies	\$ _____	Loans; NSDL, FISL, Other	\$ _____
Rent/Mortgage	\$ _____	Wages: Applicant, Spouse, Other	\$ _____
Utilities	\$ _____	Gifts: Parents, Friends, Other	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____	Investments: Stocks, Bonds, Realty	\$ _____
Personal Expenses (e.g. monthly credit card payments)	\$ _____	Current Balance in Bank Accounts:	\$ _____
Medical/Dental	\$ _____	A. Checking	\$ _____
Transportation	\$ _____	B. Savings	\$ _____
Child Care	\$ _____	C. Other	\$ _____
Bar Expenses	\$ _____	Child/Spousal Support	\$ _____
Child/Spousal Support	\$ _____	Miscellaneous	\$ _____
Miscellaneous	\$ _____		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ _____	TOTAL RESOURCES	\$ _____

14. **PERSONAL STATEMENT:** Please provide a typewritten, double-spaced personal statement that is between 1-2 pages and that tells us about your background, your extracurricular activities, why you have chosen a legal career, and what you hope to contribute to the profession.

15. **ESSAY:** All applicants must provide a response to the essay question below. Please submit typewritten, double-spaced responses. You should cite legal authority in support of your position when appropriate. Essays must not exceed five pages.

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BLACK WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES, INC.

2011 LAW STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION ESSAY

Below is an essay question presented for your analysis. Please submit a typewritten, double-spaced analysis, citing legal authority in support of your position when appropriate. Please apply California Law. Essays must not exceed five pages.

* * * * *

You work as an associate at the employment law firm of Bigger & Badder, located in California. One of our clients, the California law firm of Dewey, Cheatem and Howe (DCH), has decided to undertake a major overhaul of its personnel policies. Below is a memo from the managing partner of DCH requesting our legal advice on a series of questions related to this overhaul of its personnel policies. Please write a memo analyzing the legal issues presented by each of the three questions our client has posed. If you perceive any legal problems with our client's proposals, please also suggest alternatives that would allow our client to achieve its objectives with less problematic legal consequences.

* * * * *

To: Bigger & Badder
From: DCH Managing Partner
Re: Personnel Policy Overhaul: Legal Questions

We have set forth below three proposed policy changes we would like to implement at DCH. Please provide an analysis of any employment discrimination law issues raised by each of the three proposed personnel policy changes.

Dress Code Policy

We have become appalled at the personal appearance and dress habits of many of our associates and would like to institute a mandatory grooming and dress code for all lawyers at the firm. We currently have in place a dress code that states that lawyers in our firm should, "while at work, conform to a conservative business standard in grooming and dress." We have found, however, that many of our associates do not adhere to our partnership's interpretation of what this standard means. We would therefore like to add more specificity to our grooming and dress standard by adding a number of additional provisions.

Some of these provisions would be gender neutral. For example, we would like our new code to include provisions banning both men and women from wearing nose rings or pants that sit on the hips as opposed to close to the waist line. We would like to include a provision banning braided hair for either male or female lawyers.

Some of the provisions of our proposed new grooming and dress code would be gender specific, though we believe these provisions are aimed at maintaining comparable professional appearance

standards for both male and female lawyers in our firm. The new proposed provisions would ban male lawyers from wearing their hair longer than ear length and require them to be clean shaven with no beards, mustaches, sideburns, or other facial hair arrangements. The new proposed provisions would require female lawyers to apply facial makeup to achieve a professional appearance, by wearing lipstick in a natural shade and liquid or powder foundation on the skin. At the same time, the provisions would prohibit female lawyers from over-applying makeup in such a way as to undermine a modest professional appearance, such as the wearing of unduly heavy eye makeup or bright lipstick colors.

We would not impose these standards on staff other than lawyers because we believe that our non-lawyer staff does not need to adhere to the same standards of professional appearance as our lawyers.

We would make available a professional appearance counselor with whom our lawyers could consult if in any doubt about the application or interpretation of our proposed new grooming and dress code. This counselor would monitor our associates' compliance with this code by discretely observing and taking notes on a regular basis on our associates' grooming and dress. These evaluations would factor into each associate's annual performance review to determine pay raises and progress towards partnership.

Reduction in Force

In light of the current economic climate, we have determined that we have too many senior contract lawyers. These lawyers hold an "of counsel" title and are employees of our firm. Many of our "of counsel" lawyers started as associates here and later left partnership track, either at the suggestion of their associate review committee after determining that they were unlikely to make partner, or at the lawyers' own initiative. Because these senior "of counsel" lawyers have worked here many years, they have, through our modest gradual pay raise system, come to earn yearly salaries that are unsupportable in the current economic climate.

Our internal self-study has shown that these lawyers tend to be rather unproductive workers. They tend to suffer from diminished creativity and a lower ability to retain and synthesize legal information. We are not sure why this is. It may be that they have not received the higher quality, more innovative law school training that our younger lawyers possess, and it may also be that they are suffering from typical age-related cognitive decline. We have compiled hard data showing that this group of lawyers -- whom we have defined as all contract lawyers 40 or more years old who have worked here for ten years or more -- produce less work, bill fewer hours, and, most importantly, often do not earn their yearly salaries when their salary levels are compared to their profitability to the firm.

Accordingly, we would like to institute a major reduction-in-force through which we would terminate the employment of all contract lawyers who have worked here for 10 years or more and whose salaries are higher than their profitability as shown by their billable hours charged to clients in 3 of the past 5 years.

We decided to include the criteria of 10 years or more of employment at the firm, instead of just terminating the employment of all non profitable lawyers, for two reasons. First, looking at the data, it appears that this standard will succeed in removing all of the least creative and least “cognitively able” contract lawyers we have on staff, who currently spend too much time hanging out in the coffee room. We need to get rid of this old codgers club!

Second, most of our junior associates do not yet “earn their salaries” in terms of their profitability to the firm. Nevertheless, we recognize that we must subsidize their training period by paying them more than they are worth to the firm in order to keep our entry-level salaries and early pay raise steps competitive with market prices for junior associates. We know that many of our junior associates will become profit centers for the firm by the time they reach senior associate status.

Diversity Hiring Initiative

As we become a more global law firm, we are finding a need to increase our appearance of being a diverse and multi-national institution. Accordingly, we would like to institute a new hiring policy that would grant a hiring preference to persons with foreign-origin backgrounds, provided that they have native language fluency in one or more languages of their country of origin. We would apply this hiring preference only to persons who were otherwise well qualified for lawyer positions in our firm.