

Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc.

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**New Black Women Lawyers' Association President Reaffirms Organization's
Commitment to the Community-At-Large**

Chicago, IL: Opting to speak from her heart (despite the written remarks that she had meticulously prepared), new BWLA President Kalia Coleman passionately pledged the organization's renewed commitment to making an "impact" on the legal profession, as well as the general community-at-large.

Draped in white (as was each of the installed members of the 2019-2020 BWLA Board of Directors and Scholarship Fund Board), Ms. Coleman's heartfelt words inspired all who were in attendance at the BWLA Board Installation Ceremony, held at the Chicago offices of Kirkland & Ellis LLP on June 3, 2019.

"We can accomplish this by (1) focusing on professional development of the membership; (2) partnering with other bar associations and organizations whose mission is to support diversity and inclusion initiatives; (3) extending the pipeline beyond law students, to high school and college students; and (4) expanding our presence in the community-at-large," the Assistant U.S. Attorney declared.

Vice President Kenyatta Beverly's remarks similarly demonstrated an immense respect for BWLA's founding principles, and the organization's intent to make BWLA a more prominent fixture in the community.

"This is a big moment," one of the officers proclaimed. "There are so many people we can touch...so many lives we can change..."

The 2019-2020 BWLA Officers and Directors are as follows:

BWLA Board of Directors

1. Kalia Coleman, President
2. Kenyatta Beverly, Vice President
3. Nakhia Morrissette, Parliamentarian
4. Amber Bennett, Treasurer
5. Bianca Brown, Recording Secretary
6. Drahcir Smith, Corresponding Secretary

7. Elsa Andrianifahanana, Board Member-At-Large
8. Mary Melchor, Board Member-At-Large
9. Michelle Speller Thurman, Board Member-At-Large
10. Ashley Varnado, Board Member-At-Large
11. Chastidy Burns, Ex-Officio

BWLA Scholarship Fund Board

1. Tondalaya Lloyd, Chair
2. Elsa Andrianifahanana
3. Amber Bennett
4. Kenyatta Beverly
5. Bianca Brown
6. Chastidy Burns
7. Sharon Ferguson
8. Andrea Flynn
9. Sarah Hawkins
10. Mercedes Hill
11. Ashley Jackson
12. Nakhia Morrissette
13. Drahcir Smith
14. Carrera Thibodeaux
15. Michelle Speller Thurman
16. Ashley Varnado

The Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc. ("BWLA") was founded in 1987. Its mission includes identifying and addressing issues unique to African-American women lawyers, judges and academics; improving the administration of justice by increasing the participation of African-American women and other minorities throughout the legal system; and advancing civil and human rights.

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If you would like additional information about the Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc., please call Corresponding Secretary Drahcir M. Smith at 704-501-7943, or email administrator@bwla.org.