

## **First-Year Law Student From The John Marshall Law School Wins National Writing Award**

A first-year student at The John Marshall Law School has won a national honor from the Black Women Lawyers' Association acknowledging her writing and legal analysis skills.

Victoria Whiteside bested two third-year students to take first place in the association's Spring Essay Scholarship competition. She will receive \$10,000 toward her legal education.

In her essay, Whiteside used facts provided for a fictitious case that was similar to the circumstances in the case of Trayvon Martin, the young man who was shot and killed in February 2012, in Florida. Accused shooter George Zimmerman used a "stand your ground" defense and was found not guilty after a July 2013 trial.

Whiteside presented arguments for the prosecution, in pursuit of an involuntary manslaughter charge. A graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a bachelor of science in Health Administration and Policy, Whiteside spent five years as a health care consultant servicing state and federal agencies throughout the United States. Before law school, Whiteside worked in Washington, D.C., for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as it established the Health Care Insurance Exchange under the Affordable Care Act.

After law school, Whiteside intends to focus her legal career on health care law.

Whiteside worked on her essay with help from criminal law Professor Kim Chanbonpin, who teaches in John Marshall's Lawyering Skills Program and serves as a board member of the national Legal Writing Institute.

The John Marshall Lawyering Skills Program is the only legal writing program in Illinois' nine law schools to be nationally ranked, according to the latest rankings from *U.S. News & World Report's Best Graduate Schools for Law*.

John Marshall law students put their writing skills to the test as part of the school's rigorous three-credit graduation requirement. The school mandate that students partake in a clinical experience or an externship sometime during their last three semesters of law school. Students can combine experiences to meet the three credit requirement. For example, a student may earn two credits from a clinical experience, and an additional hour or two from an externship in a law office or at a government agency.

To learn more about John Marshall's nationally recognized Lawyering Skills Program visit [www.jmls.edu/lawyering-skills](http://www.jmls.edu/lawyering-skills)