

# Plunkett Cooney names winners of firm's inaugural diversity scholarship program

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Plunkett Cooney, one of the Midwest's oldest and most accomplished law firms, recently selected three diverse law school students to receive \$2,500 diversity scholarships based on their submissions to the firm's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) essay program.

In the face of strong competition and a rigorous selection process, Jasmine Bouche, Zarghoona Sakhi and Frances Silney-Bah were selected as the firm's 2023 diversity scholarship winners. Bouche is a rising 3L at the University of Minnesota Law School. Sakhi completed her first year of law school at Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School and will be spending her next year as a rising 2L at the University of Aberdeen School of Law in the United Kingdom. Silney-Bah is a rising 3L at Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

"The excitement that firm members had with offering this year's scholarship program was matched by the high caliber of submissions we received from law students around the nation," said the firm's Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Laurel McGiffert. "These essays show that diverse students are committed to helping improve diversity and inclusion within the legal industry, and they strongly feel that they can be an integral part of this movement."

To qualify for Plunkett Cooney's scholarship program, "diverse students" included, but were not limited to, applicants based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, LGBTQIA+ identity, disability and neurodivergence.

The firm's essay review panel members were tasked with selecting three finalists from a significant number of high-quality essays. When reviewing submissions, panel members considered the essays based on each author's response to a prompt about life experiences, challenges, triumphs and/or background that influenced their career choice and impacted their approach to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion as they enter the legal profession.

Since 2002, Plunkett Cooney has been among the law firms leading the DEI discussion within the legal industry. As such, the scholarship program is a natural extension of the firm's DEI goals, which include attracting and retaining law school students from diverse backgrounds.



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Plunkett Cooney's DEI Committee members work with McGiffert to coordinate the firm's related activities, which include a focus on recruitment, retention, training, mentoring and community involvement. Each year, Plunkett Cooney supports numerous affinity groups, community organizations and law school student organizations that are focused on advancing DEI.

Established in 1913, Plunkett Cooney is a leading provider of business and litigation services to clients in the private and public sectors. The firm employs approximately 130 attorneys in seven Michigan cities, Chicago, Illinois, Indianapolis, Indiana and Columbus, Ohio. Plunkett Cooney recently received Mansfield Rule Certification for midsize law firms, which recognizes leaders in diversity, equity and inclusion within the legal industry.

*For more information about the 2023 DEI Scholarship Program, members of the media may contact the firm's Director of Marketing and Business Development, John Cornwell at (248) 901-4008; [jcornwell@plunkettcooney.com](mailto:jcornwell@plunkettcooney.com).*

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