2009 WLC SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTED BY JUDGE SAUNDRA BROWN ARMSTRONG TO MAYA KEVIN

On Nov. 12, U.S. District Court Judge Saundra Brown Armstrong ’77 presented the USF Women Lawyers Committee's Scholarship for Transitional Students to Maya Kevin, IL. This event was sponsored by and held held at Hanson Bridgett in San Francisco.

Each year, the committee awards a partial tuition scholarship to a "transitional student," a male or female first-year law student who is making the transition to law school. The Committee looks for a student with at least a five-year gap between college and law school; previous involvement with community service, parenting, or other employment; financial need; and an expressed commitment to the community in the future. This year's scholarship of $6,600 will cover 18 percent of Kevin’s tuition.

In addition to the scholarship, the committee, in conjunction with the student Women Law Association, sponsors a JD Mentor Program that matches practicing attorneys with JD students.

In her remarks at the scholarship reception, Judge Armstrong praised the committee's emphasis on community service, which she characterized as "at the heart of USF" and a defining characteristic of USF lawyers.

Judge Armstrong said that, although she would not have been eligible for the committee's scholarship given her four-year hiatus between college and law school, she would have benefited greatly from having a woman lawyer as a mentor. A mentor would have provided "valuable perspective," which would have facilitated her transition to USF and acted as a buffer to the "normal" stresses associated with acclimation to law school. She observed that the value of the Committee's JD Mentor Program is found in the program's capacity to expand the experiences and exposure of law students beyond those which the students have personally experienced. This enables students to place challenges and opportunities in the proper perspective.

Judge Armstrong said the importance of the Scholarship for Transitional Students goes beyond dollars and cents. The scholarship, she said, recognizes the recipients' life achievements thus far, their maturity to face law school, and their enduring commitments to improving the quality of life of the communities they serve. Transitional students have encountered and successfully surmounted their own problems and, as a result, transitional students make law school discussions richer. They bring their life experiences to the classroom and have learned to be focused in a way that enables them to see the big picture. A transitional student is more likely to become "a lawyer with a heart. Lawyers that are smart are important, yet plentiful; lawyers with hearts are priceless."

During her presentation of the Scholarship to Maya Kevin, Judge Armstrong encouraged Kevin to pursue her goal of practicing public interest law, noting that "Maya has been an

educator. She has demonstrated a strong sense of social justice and has legal aspirations. She is poised, articulate, mature, and she has a heart."

Judge Armstrong noted that the Committee has awarded its Scholarship since 1987. Prior Scholarship recipients have gone on to distinguished legal careers. These recipients have included Mary Jan Delisi Lofthouse ’87, Patricia Simmons ’91, Lyn Harlan ’93, Laura Lederer DePaul ’94, Cynthia Levin ’98, Diane Webb ’98, Kristin Lamson ’99, Shannon Thorne ’01, Jie Zhou ’01, Diana Carabajal-Strait ’02, Kate Flick ’04, LaRon (Doty) Hogg-Haught ’04, Jennifer Lynch Boalt ’05, Charlotte Westfall ’06, Stanley Radtke ’07, Brenda Balzon ’09, Michell Nuňez ’09, Nichole Knudsen 3L, and Sheila Husting 2L.

Judge Armstrong also highlighted the legal careers of three of the past Scholarship recipients:

Lyn Harlan, who received the scholarship in 1990, worked as waitress, host, and bookkeeper for Chez Panisse before enrolling at USF. She received a JD in 1993 and a master’s in city planning in 1994. After spending five years at a large Washington, D.C. law firm, she joined the California State Attorney General's Office, where she has practiced since 1998. She is currently a deputy attorney general in the department's Employment Section. She is lead counsel for state agencies in all aspects of employment matters, advises upper management, and serves as lead counsel on internal employment matters. She is also a past president of the USF Women Lawyers Committee.

Laura J. Lederer, who received the scholarship in 1989, worked for 12 years as a program officer for a small family foundation in California before enrolling at USF. After her first year at USF, she transferred to DePaul University for family reasons and graduated in 1994. She went on to found and direct The Protection Project (TPP), where she oversaw research on the trafficking of women and children, including foreign and national laws on trafficking and surrounding activities, country-by-country human rights reports on trafficking, and survivor stories. For seven years Laura served as senior advisor on human trafficking at the U.S. Department of State Office for Global Affairs. She currently is an adjunct professor at Georgetown Law Center and vice president for policy and planning at Global Centurion, a new NGO dedicated to ending child sex slavery.

Stanley Radtke, who received the scholarship in 2004, worked for United Airlines as an Aviation Maintenance Technician at San Francisco Airport. During his career with the airline, he worked as a mechanic, aircraft inspector, maintenance trainer, and flight line technician. During law school, he clerked for Judge Armstrong. Since graduating in 2007, he has worked as an attorney in the Law Offices of Haitham Edward Ballout. He primarily practices in the areas of immigration and deportation defense, personal injury, and civil litigation.

Tax deductible contributions to the USF Women Lawyers Committee's Scholarship for Transitional Students can be sent to: USF Women Lawyers Committee, c/o Erica Levison, Office of Development and Alumni Relations,

USF School of Law, 2130 Fulton St., San Francisco, CA 94117.