



# BLACK LAW LIBRARIANS SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION



## BLL-SIS ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

### BOARD MEMBERS

**Andre Davison, Chair**  
**Yolanda Jones, Vice Chair, Chair-Elect**  
**Le'Shawn Turner, Secretary**  
**John Campbell, Treasurer**  
**Angela Mason, Member-at-Large**  
**Miriam Childs, Member-at-Large**  
**Errol Adams, Immediate Past Chair**

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Bylaws:** Janice Henderson & Allen Moyer  
**Community Service:** Nichelle Perry  
**Education & Annual Programs:** Marjorie Crawford & Zanada Joyner  
**Grants & Awards:** Jane Larrington  
**Marketing & Public Relations:** Khelani Clay  
**Membership:** Gail Mathapo  
**Nominations:** Shamika Dalton

### STRATEGIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Black Law Librarian Special Interest Section had an amazing year. Our accomplishments this year supported our mission to provide a conducive environment for Black Law Librarians and other affiliate law librarian members to connect with one another, to encourage and support each other while developing lifetime learners and innovators in the profession. Membership increased by 9.4%. The BLL-SIS Education fund was established with a generous donation from NOCALL. The Education & Annual programs committee coordinated a wonderful schedule of educational programs throughout the year. The Grants & Awards committee awarded the first grant for a BLL-SIS member to attend the AALL Annual Meeting & Conference in Denver and established awards for the 2022-2023 calendar year. The Membership Committee held a coffee chat to help BLL-SIS members prepare for the AALL Conference. The Bylaws committee finalized the BLL-SIS Handbook of Standard Operating Procedures. The Marketing & Public Relations Committee used our social media platforms to highlight the successes of BLL-SIS and its members. The Community Service committee chose a wonderful partner for our Community Service Project for the annual meeting in Denver. Finally, the nomination committee presented a wonderful slate of candidates and the BLL-SIS members to vote for our new leadership for the 2022 – 2023 calendar year.



**BLACK LAW LIBRARIANS  
SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION**

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### BYLAWS COMMITTEE

**Co-Chairs: Janice Henderson & Allen Moye**

**Members: Margaret Kribble & Tiffani Willis**

**Board Liaison: Errol Adams**

The BLL-SIS Board assigned the Committee the following requests this year: Writing & adding the following responsibility text for the Marketing & Public Relations and Membership Committees in the *BLL-SIS Handbook of Standard Operations & Procedures* manual. The Bylaws Committee was charged with “an annual reviewing and updating as necessary the *BLL-SIS Handbook of Standard Operations and Procedures*.” The Bylaws Committee contacted the Committee Chairs. Each committee member was assigned a committee to contact.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

**Chair: Nichelle Perry**

**Members: Kerri Rowe, Phebe Huderson-Poydras, Khelani Clay, Tiffani Willis**

**Board Liaison: John Campbell**

The Black Law Librarians Special Interest Section (BLL-SIS) of the American Association of Law Librarians proudly supports community organizations located in the AALL Annual Meeting & Conference host city.

This year, BLL-SIS has selected the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library as the BLL-SIS Community Service Partner. The Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library strives to preserve the heritage and contributions of African Americans in Colorado and the West.

As many of you know, BLL-SIS member Tiffani Willis passed away on March 21, 2022. Tiffani was a dedicated member of BLL-SIS, serving on several committees and most recently, a member of the BLL-SIS community service committee. To honor Tiffani’s memory, our community service award will be dedicated in her name, the Tiffani Willis Community Service Award.

### EDUCATION & ANNUAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

**Co-Chairs: Marjorie Crawford & Zanada Joyner**

**Members: Khelani Clay, Phebe Huderson-Poydras, Gail Mathapo, Cassandra Patterson, Brittany Persson, & Kerri Rowe.**

**Board Liaisons: Miriam Childs; Yolanda Jones; & Angela Mason**



## BLACK LAW LIBRARIANS SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION

The Annual Programs Committee continued to build on the success of the dynamic, year-round slate of programs given during our inaugural year in 2021. The Committee planned the Annual Conference programs; convened the remaining three programs in the Data Skills Workshop Series; planned and participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> PLLIP Diversity Summit: The Power of Intersectionality; wrote a proposal for a Bloomberg Continuing Education Grant Program: Pay Equity for Law Librarians: “In their own words”; facilitated a webinar on Critical Race Theory; and co-sponsored with The Asian American Law Librarians Caucus, together with co-sponsors, Government Law Libraries SIS, Social Responsibilities SIS, Federal Law Librarians Caucus, and Jewish Law Librarians Caucus the virtual viewing of [Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066\\*\\*](#), a documentary feature film.

### BLL-SIS Education and Annual Programs Committee Program List 2021-2022

Co-Chair Zanada Joyner announced a call via “My Communities” page to the BLL-SIS Membership for program proposals for the AALL Annual Meeting in Denver on October 25<sup>th</sup>. This call was, then, followed with a Coffee Chat, which was hosted by Gail Mathapo on October 26<sup>th</sup>. With eagerness and enthusiasm, the membership embraced this appealed for programing.

Kirstin Nelson stepped forward with two proposals on the topic of environmental justice:

1. The first was on the expanding definition of “environmental justice” to include more social justice aspects – especially in relation to food systems, sustainability, and food access. Environmental justice examines climate and sustainability, and both are related to food systems/food justice. Related issues are about land access and the move toward creation of agrarian trusts to provide access to land for those that typically cannot afford to lease or buy, they then provide healthy, local food to the surrounding community and help grow the local economy.
2. The second idea was related to heirs’ property. This is an environmental justice issue as well and relates to access to land, healthy food, and growing local economies. This issue impacts Latinx farmers and producers in the Southwest and Indigenous people on tribal lands. The 2018 Farm Bill introduced a program and funding to help with clearing land titles for BIPOC landowners.

The Committee worked with Ms. Nelson to curate these two timely program proposals. Furthermore, the BLL-SIS Executive Board decided to sponsor both of these programs and leave the decision to AMPC as to which one would be accepted. Ultimately, AMPC selected “Black Land Matters: Advancing Justice by Mitigating Generational Land Loss.”

### Diversity Summit

The second annual Diversity Summit “The Power of Intersectionality” was held as a virtual event on Friday, February 25, 2022, with 118 registered attendees from across AALL. The Summit featured Keynote speaker Haben Girma, the first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School and a human rights lawyer advancing disability justice. The keynote was followed by an interactive workshop by Leverage to Lead and concluded with a law librarian panel “Diversity Shares: Initiating Action” moderated by Rachel Lyles and featuring panelists Kristina K. Alayan, Cynthia Brown, Andre Davison, and Cas Laskowski. This event was made possible by PLLIP funding, in addition to a \$1,300 grant from the AALL Continuing Education Grants Program and Bloomberg Law, and a donation of \$1,000 from the Littler Foundation. In addition, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe donated the use of their Zoom account.



**BLACK LAW LIBRARIANS  
SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION**

### **Webinar on Critical Race Theory**

On Monday, February 14, Brittany Persson was the moderator for the BLL-SIS webinar for a discussion on critical race theory—what is it, why are so many people talking about it, and why the answers to both are so important. Professor Mark C. Niles of Hofstra University was the speaker. This CRT program proposal was curated by Errol Adams.

### **Program Collaboration with the Other Caucuses and SISs**

The Asian American Law Librarians Caucus, together with co-sponsors Black Law Librarians SIS, Government Law Libraries SIS, Social Responsibilities SIS, Federal Law Librarians Caucus, and Jewish Law Librarians Caucus, invited BLL-SS members to a **virtual viewing** of [\*Alternative Facts: The Lies of Executive Order 9066\*](#)<sup>\*\*</sup>, a documentary feature film that tells the story of how racial bias, intentional falsehoods, and the suppression of evidence and secret alteration of military reports resulted in the Supreme Court approval of the mass internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

### **Bloomberg Continuing Education Grant**

The Committee crafted a grant proposal from the pay equity proposal that was declined by AMPC for the Denver Conference. The program “Show me the money: How to close the gender and racial pay gap for good” was repurposed into a program “Pay Equity for Law Librarians: In their own words” and submitted for the AALL/Bloomberg Continuing Education Grant. In early June 2022, the committee was notified that the Bloomberg Continuing Education committee accepted our proposal, and we received a grant in the amount of \$3000.

### **GRANTS & AWARDS COMMITTEE**

**Co-Chairs: Jane Larrington**

**Members: Brittany Persson, Tiffani Willis**

**Board Liason: Andre Davison**

The Grants & Awards Committee drafted eligibility requirements and guidelines for the inaugural BLL-SIS Education Fund grant: the 2022 BLL-SIS Grant for Early-Career Professionals & Students to Attend the AALL Annual Meeting & Conference. The Committee prepared a grant application form, solicited, and reviewed applications, and selected this year’s recipient: Le’Shawn Turner.

The Committee sent the following list of recommended Awards to the BLL-SIS Executive Board and the board unanimously approved:

### **BLL-SIS Service Award**

This annual award recognizes one or more BLL-SIS member(s) for exemplary service to the BLL-SIS. It may be based upon a specific recent act of service or years of sustained service (note that there is a separate lifetime service award to recognize a member nearing retirement).



**BLACK LAW LIBRARIANS  
SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION**

### **BLL-SIS Dr. Yvonne J. Chandler Lifetime Service Award**

This award honors a BLL-SIS member at or nearing retirement with a long record of service to the BLL-SIS (or its predecessor BCAALL). A solicitation for nominations shall go out annually, but the award may not be given each year.

### **BLL-SIS Emerging Leader Award**

This award recognizes a BLL-SIS member with a promising future as a leader in BLL-SIS,

### **Tiffani Willis Community Service Award**

This award recognizes a BLL-SIS member who demonstrates commitment to service within their community.

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Chair: Gail Mathapo**

**Members: Shira Megerman, Ariel Scotese**

**Board Liaison: Miriam Childs**

This year, the Membership Committee resumed the efforts to choose fellow BLL-SIS members for the “Member Spotlight” series. The committee reached out to four BLL-SIS members. Each member agreed to participate, and the four bios will be ready for publication on the BLL-SIS social media accounts in the late Summer/Fall 2022. The Membership Committee held a coffee chat title [Destination Denver: On the Road to the Annual Meeting](#) for the BLL-SIS membership on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, about the Annual Meeting. The coffee chat was open to all members but specifically geared towards our newer members who may be attending their first in person Annual Meeting. Each speaker shared their first Annual Meeting experiences and provided tips in the form of Best and Worst Practices for preparing to attend the Annual Meeting. The Membership Committee started posting job announcements to the BLL-SIS communities page in mid-May.

## **MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Chair: Khelani Clay**

**Members: Cindy Hirsch, Kerri Rowe**

**Board Liaison: Errol Adams**

The Marketing & Public Relations committee created awareness for the BLL-SIS by highlighted achievements by our SIS and members on our LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blog, and MyCommunities pages. For Black History month the committee highlighted the National Bar Journal, a



## BLACK LAW LIBRARIANS SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION

scholarly legal journal published in 10 volumes from 1941 – 1952 by the National Bar Association, the national organization of African American lawyers formed in 1925.

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

**Chair: Shamika Dalton**

**Members: Gail Mathapo and Lisa Goodman**

**Board Liaison: Le'Shawn Turner**

The Nominations Committee sent out a 'Call for Nominations' to the BLL-SIS listserv on November 29, 2021, requesting nominations by December 17, 2021. In addition to the 'Call for Nominations,' the Committee reached out to numerous BLL-SIS members individually to encourage them to run for office. The following slate was submitted to and approved by the Board:

- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Mary Godfrey-Rickards
- Member-at-Large: Malikah Hall
- Secretary: Latia Ward, Aaron Retteen
- Treasurer: Andrew Christensen, Brittany Persson

The Committee coordinated with Le'Shawn Turner, BLL-SIS Secretary, and Chris Siwa, Director of Information Technology at AALL, to create the ballot using AALL's online election platform. The election was held from April 25, 2022- May 9, 2022. 44 BLL-SIS members voted in the election. The election results were:

- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Mary Godfrey-Rickards
- Member-at-Large: Malikah Hall
- Secretary: Latia Ward
- Treasurer: Brittany Persson

### INCOMING BOARD 2022-2023

- Yolanda Jones, Chair-Elect
- Mary Godfrey-Rickards, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect
- Latia Ward, Secretary
- Brittany Persson, Treasurer
- Malika Hall, Member-at-Large
- Miriam Childs, Member-at-Large
- Andre Davison, Immediate Past Chair

Submitted by

Andre Davison  
BLL-SIS Chair [2021-2022]