VANTAGE POINT

MEMBER PROFILE

MALIKAH HALL-RETTEEN

- ASSOCIATE LAW LIBRARIAN
- CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW LIBRARY
- LONG ISLAND CITY, NY

SUPERPOWER YOU WISH YOU HAD AND WHY?
I wish I could play any instrument just by picking it up. I tried to learn to play the piano in undergrad, but it was a colossal failure. Reading music and playing music are just two skills I have never been able to master.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?
Teaching. I am neurodivergent, so I have a wild imagination. It helps with developing hypotheticals and coming up with different ways to present information. Helping students gain information literacy in the time of “quick and dirty” research tools, search engines, and AI-generated briefs can be tough. I strive to help students reach the “ah-ha” moment where they understand that these resources are just tools that spit out what you told them to do. Their jobs as legal professionals is to find out what the law says about their issue—the good, the bad, and the ugly. If you have not told the machine what you need in a way that the machine understands, you might miss out on a wealth of resources that can, may, and will be used by the opposing party. Do the work!

WHAT’S YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT AND HOW HAS IT SHAPED YOU?
I am a first-generation college graduate, graduate school graduate, and law school graduate. To date, my name appears as an author in two textbooks, Integrating Doctrine and Diversity: Inclusion and Equity in the Law School Classroom and Integrating Doctrine and Diversity: Beyond the First Year. I hope to continue writing about diversity in the legal profession in the future.

WHAT IS ONE GOAL YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN YOUR LIFETIME?
I would like to retire before I’m 60. I would like to spend the rest of my life traveling as much as possible, touring Africa, Asia, and Europe. I have only been to Denmark and Sweden. I would also like to immerse myself in the culture, the food, the history, and of course, the people. Perhaps I will write a blog called Malikah Making Moves or something cool like that.

IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH ONE HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?
Beyonce, for obvious reasons.