



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

Administrative Office
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East
Bldg. 1, Room E-316
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
(304) 340-2305 Jennifer Bundy
(304) 340-2306 April Harless
(304) 558-4219 / TTY
(304) 558-1212 / FAX
Web Site: <http://www.state.wv.us/wvsca>
Twitter: [WVCourts](http://www.tweet.com/WVCourts)
Information Services Division
Email: Jennifer.Bundy@courtswv.gov
Email: April.Harless@courtswv.gov

Supreme Court Special Projects Counsel wins Young Lawyer of the Year award For immediate release Friday, May 13, 2011

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Jennifer D. Singletary of the Supreme Court of Appeals Administrative Office has been named the 2011 West Virginia Young Lawyer of the Year, an award given annually by the Young Lawyers Section of the West Virginia State Bar.

The award is given annually to an attorney who has brought honor and distinction to the legal profession through a commitment to community service and the citizens of West Virginia. Ms. Singletary was recognized at a Bar reception in Charleston on April 15.

"I was very surprised by the phone call, and, of course, honored in that moment and at the banquet. Then, the more I thought about it, I realized this recognition came from my peers, all of whom are Bar members and know what it took just to get to that point. Couple that with the notion that they thought I brought, 'honor and distinction to the legal profession,' with my service – that's almost too much to take in. It's been the most significant recognition in my adult life so far."

As Special Projects Counsel, Ms. Singletary oversees several Supreme Court projects, including community corrections initiatives, elder law issues, and language access in the courts. She previously was the Court's public information officer, beginning in 2005.

Supreme Court Administrative Director Steve Canterbury described Ms. Singletary as "extraordinarily talented, multi-faceted, and dedicated. She gives a remarkable amount of her time to community projects. The demands of her job at the Court are unique; she wears so many different hats for varying projects. She is a vital member of the Administrative Office."

Ms. Singletary has an undergraduate degree from West Virginia State College. She started her career as a legal assistant at the Kanawha County Public Defender's Office in the 1990s. Ms. Singletary said the supervisors there inspired her to go to law school.

She received her master's degree in humanities from Marshall University Graduate College in 2001. She also worked simultaneously toward a law degree by going to Cincinnati's College of Law from 1998 to 2001. While in law school, Ms. Singletary became an officer in the Law Student Diversity Association, served as a

mentor to visiting minority students, participated in the National Lawyers Guild, and was a charter member of the nation's first chapter of the International Alliance of Holistic Lawyers.

After returning to Charleston, Ms. Singletary began working as an attorney at the Kanawha County Public Defender's Office. She earned an acquittal in her first jury trial only four days after being admitted to the Bar.

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