Hello, and thank you for taking a little bit of time to learn why I want to run for the Law Student at Large on the ABA Board of Governors.

Most current members of the Law Student Division began law school during the Covid-19 pandemic. While all our universities handled the pandemic differently, we all became experts in adjusting and advocating for ourselves and our education in especially challenging times. I am sure many of you might resonate with the feeling of frustration about law school in a pandemic, but it truly taught me how to advocate for myself and my classmates. My most recent exercise in advocacy was authoring a letter on behalf of our Student Bar Association to school administration asking for clarification and action on new Covid-19 policies considering the omicron variant. The Law Student at Large is a similar task, listening and understanding the needs of members of the Assembly and advocating for those perspectives to the larger Association.

One specific instance that I feel strongly demonstrates my organizational and advocacy skills was when I founded the International Law Society at my university. My first semester several students approached me about my interest in international law. We were disappointed at the lack of class offerings and lack of a student organization. I spent the next semester learning our university’s systems and in my second semester I chartered our International Law Society and have served as the president for the last year. The organization started with 30 students, and I worked to gather and disseminate the ideas of our organization to the school’s administration. As president, I worked hard to advocate for more international law courses to our administration and the following semester we went from no international law classes to four.

I have spent the last semester serving as the ABA Representative for my school’s SBA. In this role I have served as a liaison between the Assembly and my own law school. This has helped me become more familiar with the mission and interworking of the ABA. Additionally, it has given me the ability to improve my communication skills when sharing ABA information with my student body. I would bring the same zealous advocacy and strong communication to this position when sharing the perspective of our Assembly with the Board of Governors and House of Delegates.

In recent years, the House of Delegates has debated resolutions ranging from allowing individuals to utilize menstrual products unescorted during the Bar Exam, use of proper pronouns in pleadings, all the way to favoring the popular vote if the electoral vote is in dispute and support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The work the Board of Governors and House of Delegates do is critical to not only the legal profession, but also the nation as a whole. If I were elected to this position, I would like to continue the important work of advocating for student debt and Bar Exam reform to ensure both are in sync with the current times. I would like to set up monthly office hours to encourage Assembly members to share their perspectives on upcoming resolutions to ensure all voices have an opportunity to be heard. Finally, I believe I have a unique perspective as a student in a smaller, less known law school. While our fellow members who attend T-14 schools are wonderful, a vast majority of us are attending other institutions. As a student of a small, public law school I can understand the educational experience of students at less known law schools.

I thank you again for taking the time to read my statement, and I would encourage you to scroll down to read my resume. Please remember to vote for Law Student Division Council positions.

All my best,
Kalista Wilson
University of New Mexico School of Law
Class of 2023
Kalista Wilson

kwilson2698@law.unm.edu

EDUCATION

University of New Mexico School of Law - Albuquerque, NM 8/2020 - 5/2023 (expected)
Juris Doctorate Candidate
- Natural Resources Journal - Staff 08/21-Present
- Jessup International Moot Court Team - Member 01/2022-Present

Trinity University - San Antonio, TX 8/2016-12/2019
Bachelor of the Arts: International Studies and Sociology, Minor in Economics

Study Abroad
School For International Training: Jordan Summer Arabic Intensive - Amman, Jordan 06/2019 to 08/2019
Trinity University: International Criminal Justice - The Hague and Bosnia and Herzegovina 06/2018

LEADERSHIP

University of New Mexico International Law Society
Chapter Founding President - 1/2021-Present

University of New Mexico ACLU
Chapter Treasurer - 11/2020- Present

University of New Mexico Student Bar Association
ABA Representative - 5/2021-Present

University of New Mexico Assoc. of Public Interest Law
Chapter Secretary - 5/2021-Present

WORK HISTORY

Legal Assistant, 02/2020-Present
Batley Family Law – Albuquerque, NM
- Aid paralegals in preparation of documents such as pleadings, letters, and settlements
- Ensure there is regular and prompt communication with clients regarding their case
- Schedule appointments for attorneys and clients and display professionalism in all client interactions
- Research pertinent legal issues and provide supervising attorney a summary of research

Summer Law Clerk, 05/2021-08/2021
New Mexico Office of the Attorney General – Albuquerque, NM
- Drafted various motions and briefs
- Performed legal research on novel legal issues presented in cases
- Observed litigation proceedings such as hearings, trials, and pre-trial interviews and provided notes to supervising attorney if needed
- Reviewed discovery and other documents for relevant information pertaining to ongoing cases

Communication Assistant, 08/2019 to 12/2019
Trinity University Office of Admissions – San Antonio, TX
- Served as a positive liaison between Trinity University and prospective students
- Contacted prospective students about upcoming admissions events and deadlines
- Invited prospective students to take advantage of interview and scholarship opportunities
- Shared information about my experience as a student and offer any potential questions
Resident Assistant, 08/2017 to 05/2019
Trinity University Residential Life – San Antonio, TX
• Assisted new students with the transition into college as a mentor and authority figure
• Provided support for freshmen who needed extra guidance for educational and interpersonal challenges
• Received training in conflict and crisis management, sexual assault response, health and safety, basic counseling, and community building
• Conducted educational programming for residents in regard to finances, relationships, media literacy, and study skills
• Enforced university policy within resident halls by making sure policy was understood and violations were reported and dealt with swiftly

Brand Representative, 10/2017 to 01/2019
Altar’d State – San Antonio, TX
• Assisted customers throughout their shopping experience to ensure they find products that met their needs
• Completed sales transactions efficiently and professionally
• Performed any closing and organizational duties as needed by restocking, accounting of sales, cleaning, and ensuring the merchandise was presentable
• Provided professional and helpful customer service

SKILLS
• Intermediate Spanish
• Beginning Arabic
• Legal Research