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JOHNSTON ALLISON HORD SUPPORTS DIVERSITY IN LEGAL EDUCATION THROUGH SCHOLARSHIP

Carolina Law 2L Samantha Aparicio has spent time in law school helping others through pro bono work. She's been involved in projects regarding special immigrant juvenile status proceedings within state court, case law related to the president's executive orders concerning immigration, and domestic violence protective orders.

Aparicio's efforts to benefit others have in turn been supported partly by the Johnston Allison Hord Diversity Scholarship, awarded to a 2L student by the Charlotte-based firm known for commitment to pro bono work and community service. Recipients of the scholarship, awarded to a student "who enhances diversity within the law school community," must demonstrate a commitment to such work and be interested in practicing law in Charlotte, the endowment agreement states.

"We believe it is of the utmost importance to have diversity in the legal profession because of its ability to cultivate innovation. Diverse thoughts, ideas and opinions on all sides of a matter are vital in order to progress the practice of law and make an impact on the industry," Johnston Allison Hord managing partner Darrell Shealy '82 says. "UNC School of Law has a highly sophisticated program that we feel fully prepares students for integration into the legal industry upon graduation."

Johnston Allison Hord's leadership in promoting diversity in the legal profession augments Carolina Law's diversity and inclusion initiatives and has helped Aparicio relieve some student debt.

"It is rare to find a large population of minority graduate students. Scholarships like this encourage other minorities to apply to Carolina Law and feel the support they need to get in and succeed within this school," says Aparicio, of Port St. Lucie, Florida.

Her pro bono services have given Aparicio invaluable real-world experience and enabled her to develop skills working with fellow law students and attorneys "toward a common goal of helping others," she says. "I can take those skills wherever my career leads me."

Munashe Magarira's career has led him to the North Carolina governor's office, where he is associate general counsel. He was the first recipient of the Johnston Allison Hord scholarship.

As a pro bono board member at Carolina Law, Magarira '14 did legal research for the UNC Center for Civil Rights as well as wills clinics and drop-in legal advice clinics for Legal Aid of North Carolina.

In addition to skills he gained through that work, Magarira cites UNC's Civil Legal Assistance clinic and Research, Reasoning, Writing and Advocacy program, which gave him experience preparing legal pleadings and representing a range of clients.

The scholarship had significant value beyond financial assistance for him. "It demonstrated Johnston Allison & Hord's and UNC's belief in me and their shared commitment to diversity in the legal profession. The legal profession and society as a whole benefit from having lawyers who reflect their clients and bring their unique experiences to the field and their representation," says Magarira, a 2010 Chapel Hill graduate. He started in a full-time position at Johnston Allison Hord on graduating from Carolina Law.

For Aparicio, the scholarship reinforced her decision to attend UNC. "I chose Carolina Law because the community is unlike any other law school I have visited," she says. "It's truly a family, and I felt that from the moment I walked through the doors."