

President's Award of Excellence
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Team

ALAMN and its DEI&A Team are dedicated to providing a valuable educational and development opportunity to dozens of Minnesota metro area students of diverse backgrounds who are planning on pursuing a career in which can be utilized in a law firm. An annual Career Fair is held every year that features a dozen of professionals from law firms across the Twin Cities representing a wide array of fields in the legal industry. This event is a great opportunity for high school students to learn about the different career options available in law firms and hear and learn first-hand knowledge from the professionals themselves. We hope to resume the Career Fair in 2022 after a hiatus during the pandemic. The goal is to help the students learn about the different careers and help them analyze and investigate the best fit profession that suits their interests and career goals in the legal profession.

We continue our commitment to investing in the future of Minnesota's legal administrative profession thru learning and scholarships. Every year, the ALAMN in conjunction with the DEI&A Team awards a \$2,000 Diversity Scholarship to a hard-working, with strong academics, and well accomplished Minnesota high school student of a diverse background pursuing a career in the legal administration or a related field. This year's recipient is no exception as Jose Morales of Wellstone International High School in Minneapolis exemplified perseverance as he has shown how he overcame obstacles in his past into an exceptional student while taking college course and working almost thirty hours per week. This scholarship program creates opportunities to access and assistance to thrive in their pursuit of education, training and development in the legal administrative profession and related fields.

In addition to championing for the future generation of Minnesota's legal administrative professionals, ALAMN also creates opportunities for its own members to enhance and further their professional development through scholarship programs. This past year's recipient, Bernadette Theis, is also a member of the DEI&A Committee said "through this scholarship program, I was able to attend the 2021 ALA Conference and Expo in Austin. The knowledge I gained from that experience was invaluable and I truly value the relationships I established with other ALA members. All of which are vital in recruiting and retaining diverse members".

We welcome and support diverse speakers to help facilitate and initiate the difficult conversations surrounding race, equity and diversity as well as ensure accessibility for all our members. This past year, we were honored to have Erin Jones, as our guest speaker at our October General Meeting. Erin is an award-winning educator, well-renowned TEDx Talks and keynote speaker on social justice and racial healing, and published author of "Bridges to Heal US: Stories and Strategies for Racial Healing". It is our mission to provide and continue to invite diverse speakers to promote social justice and racial healing awareness to all our members.

We hope to build on these initiatives and continue to expand our efforts into 2022 and the coming years to grow the association's diverse members, invest in the future generation of legal administrative professionals, and strengthen our scholarship and diversity training programs to keep providing education opportunities that promote awareness of diversity and inclusion.