

CARDOZO LAW

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW • YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

MELANIE LESLIE
Dean
Dr. Samuel Belkin Professor of Law

Phone: 212.790.0310
Fax: 212.790.0203
EMAIL DeansOfficeCardozo@yu.edu

February 27, 2023

Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Scholarship Committee
New York State Bar Association
1 Elk Street
Albany, New York 12207

RE: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Scholarship

Dear Scholarship Committee,

Cardozo Law School is pleased to nominate Shelley Wu for the New York State Bar Association Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Scholarship. Inspired by Justice Ginsburg's steadfast commitment to women's rights, Shelley has dedicated my career to providing legal services for women and children who have experienced violence and discrimination.

Shelley's commitment to protecting the rights of women and children, especially those who have experienced domestic violence and discrimination, has informed all of her practical experiences. Before law school, Shelley was a paralegal for two years in the Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Units of the New York County District Attorney's Office. Her commitment to women's rights seamlessly continued into her law school career. During her time at the Urban Justice Center's Domestic Violence Project, Shelley worked one-on-one with survivors of domestic violence, providing civil legal services to help survivors regain independence.

In addition, Shelley coordinates the Courtroom Advocates Project, a pro bono, student-led program which allows students to work in family courts to assist survivors of domestic violence with obtaining orders of protection. Her Note, *Mission Impossible? The Case for Municipal Tort Liability Reform in a Post-Valdez World*, which will be published in Volume 44 of the Cardozo Law Review, argues that New York's special duty doctrine leaves no legal recourse for survivors of domestic violence when officers negligently fail to enforce mandatory arrest laws. Additionally, as treasurer of the Cardozo Law chapter of If/When/How, Shelley helped fundraise for the Indigenous Women Rising Abortion Fund, as well as organized panels and community-focused discussions regarding reproductive rights. Throughout her experiences, Shelley has cultivated a service-oriented mindset and a commitment to advancing women's rights.

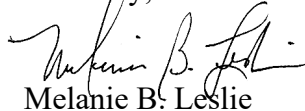
JACOB BURNS INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

BROOKDALE CENTER • 55 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, NY 10003-4391

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW • YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

We are pleased to nominate Shelley because of her passion and experience advocating for women's rights and gender equality. Her resume, transcript, personal statement and two letters of recommendation are attached. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie B. Leslie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "L".

Melanie B. Leslie

Dean

Dr. Samuel Belkin Professor of Law

Shelley Wu

I am a proud daughter of working-class parents. My parents emigrated from rural China to Brooklyn, with nothing but a suitcase and some family photos. Due to their language and financial barriers, it was not always easy to make ends meet, and growing up, I helped them navigate situations where their language and cultural customs were frequently misunderstood. As a result, early on, I learned how to be an advocate for others. My upbringing instilled in me a strong sense of justice and a commitment to helping those who have faced discrimination.

Throughout my professional life, I have sought to apply my skills and experiences in service of communities in need, with a focus on the rights of women and children. In college, I served as a community liaison for my local State Senator and helped resolve quality of life concerns for constituents. After graduating college early with honors, I served as a paralegal in the Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Units of the New York County District Attorney's Office, where I learned how legal services can be a powerful tool to protect women and children. I worked closely with attorneys to understand and hear the experiences of survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, so that we could corroborate their testimony with evidence and hold their abusers accountable. My experience inspired me to become an attorney to further advocate for women's rights and gender equality.

During my time in law school, I have actively pursued opportunities to advance the rights of women, children, and underrepresented communities. Beginning in my first year, I helped survivors file for orders of protection through the Courtroom Advocates Project, in response to the increased rates of domestic violence during the COVID pandemic. I also volunteered with the Asian American Bar Association of New York to help non-English speakers apply for COVID rent relief programs. Through my summer internship at the Urban Justice Center, I developed extensive experience interviewing survivors of domestic violence and providing counseling and civil legal services.

Shelley Wu

In my second year of law school, I participated in a year-long internship at the Bet Tzedek Civil Litigation Clinic, where I had the amazing opportunity to assist with writing an amicus brief in support of a disabled student who had been denied sign language access, a case which was then granted certiorari and heard by the Supreme Court this past January.

Additionally, on behalf of a disabled client, I successfully appealed a state agency's reduction of their public benefits without notice. My continued interest in civil rights advocacy led me intern for the United States Attorney's Office of the Southern District of New York, where I assisted in the enforcement of civil rights laws. My legal research contributed to a voluntary compliance agreement where a major university committed to increasing accessibility for students with disabilities. Throughout my second and third year of law school, I continued my commitment to advocating for women's rights through various student leadership roles, where I lead pro bono programming, community organizing, and fundraising in support of advancing gender equality.

In my final year of law school, I have focused on work in chambers, including as a full-time legal intern for Judge Joseph A. Greenaway Jr., of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. I received this opportunity through the Alexander Fellows program, which places outstanding second- and third-year students as junior clerks with prominent federal judges. After I graduate in May, I will be clerking for Judge Greta Gooden Brown on the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division, where I will continue to work in the judiciary. With my experiences and demonstrated commitment to advancing and strengthening women's rights, I hope to pursue a career in civil rights and public service. My career and aspirations would be impossible without Justice Ginsburg's tireless fight for gender equality, which paved the way for generations of women like me to pursue our dreams.

CARDOZO LAW

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW • YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

Stewart Sterk
H. Bert and Ruth Mack Professor of Real Estate Law

PHONE: 646-592-6464
E-MAIL: Sterk@yu.edu

February 27, 2023

Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Scholarship Committee
New York State Bar Association
1 Elk Street
Albany, New York 12207

RE: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Scholarship

Dear Scholarship Committee:

I write on behalf of Shelley Wu. Shelley is an outstanding student who has all of the qualities necessary to make her worthy of the Ruth Bader Ginsberg Memorial Scholarship. I recommend her with enthusiasm.

I first came to know Shelley when she was a student in my first-year Property class. Because the class was held entirely over zoom I did not get to know the students as well as I might have in other circumstances, but Shelley nevertheless stood out. I conducted the class socratically, even over zoom, and when I called on her, Shelley was always prepared for a thoughtful discourse. I required all of the students to prepare a written exercise during the course of the term, and Shelley's was one of the best in a class of more than 100 students. Not only did Shelley hit the major issues, but the paper was well written. It was not at all surprising that Shelley wrote an "A" exam in the course.

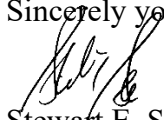
Last year, I asked Shelley to serve as a teaching assistant. When I select teaching assistants, I look for a variety of qualities. Analytical ability is critical, but I frequently pass over excellent students when I don't think they will be able to develop a rapport with the students they will be helping. I had no such concerns with Shelley. Although she demands a lot of herself, she is also personable and engaging. Her performance over the course of the semester vindicated my faith in her. The feedback I received from the students she worked with was extraordinarily positive. I would have no hesitation in asking Shelley to serve again.

Shelley has played an active role in the law school community. This past fall, she recruited me to participate in a panel on the eviction moratorium. The panel was well attended, but my basic point is that Shelley is not a passive law student; she has tried to make the most of her law school education outside, as well as in, the classroom.

I have also had occasion to read Shelley's Law Review Note, which explores and critiques New York law on municipal liability to victims of police failure to enforce mandatory arrest laws. The Note does an excellent job of synthesizing existing New York law, and then proposes reform. The Note demonstrates that Shelley's analytical abilities are matched by her ability to write clearly and concisely.

In short, Shelley Wu has all of the skills necessary to make her a worthy scholarship recipient and she merits your careful attention. If you have any questions about Shelley, please do not hesitate to call me at 646-592-6464.

Sincerely yours,



Stewart E. Sterk

H. Bert and Ruth Mack Professor of Real Estate Law

CARDOZO LAW

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW • YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

BET TZEDEK LEGAL SERVICES

Rebekah Diller
Clinical Professor of Law
Co-Director

Tel: 646-592-6572
Email: Rebekah.Diller@yu.edu

February 27, 2023

Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Scholarship Committee
New York State Bar Association
1 Elk Street
Albany, New York 12207

RE: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Scholarship

Dear Scholarship Committee,

I write to offer my highest recommendation for Shelley Wu for the Ruth Bader Ginsberg Memorial Scholarship. I co-direct a clinic that represents older adults and people with disabilities in a range of civil matters, including civil rights impact litigation. Shelley was a student in the clinic last year and was easily one of the best in the class.

Shelley distinguished herself as an excellent researcher and writer. She is thorough, pays attention to detail, and has strong analytical skills. Her writing is clear and well-organized, and she works through legal issues systematically and swiftly.

Shelley worked on several major clinic matters during the year. In the first case, she drafted parts of an amicus brief in a case concerning the intersection of two federal statutes that protect the rights of children with disabilities: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which governs special education, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The question in the case was whether a deaf student who had suffered years of disability-based discrimination in school would be barred from bringing an ADA claim for damages against the school district due to an exhaustion requirement in the IDEA special education statute. The issue was complicated, technical, and unsettled. Shelley quickly grasped the statutory schemes and wrote an outstanding memo surveying the circuit case law on the application of a futility exception to the IDEA's exhaustion requirement. Shelley also researched a number of other discrete legal issues for the brief. Out of the four students who worked on the project, all of whom were also very high-achieving students, Shelley was the only one whose work required minimal editing before being incorporated into the brief.

In her second major project, Shelley worked on a case representing individuals with disabilities who had been receiving certain state-funded housing subsidies that enabled them to live independently in the community and avoid institutionalization. The state agency had cut our clients' subsidies without providing them with notices explaining the reductions and without providing them an opportunity to contest the reductions at a hearing. Shelley researched the

JACOB BURNS INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

BROOKDALE CENTER • 55 FIFTH AVENUE • 11th Floor • NEW YORK, NY 10003-4391

statutory, regulatory and sub-regulatory authority governing the subsidy and investigated the facts concerning our clients' underlying entitlement to the subsidy. She drafted parts of a substantive appeal letter for one client and did comprehensive research on the due process standards that govern this type of entitlement program. Her work was excellent and she took the initiative to go beyond her discrete tasks to think more globally about strategy for the case. In this way, she functioned much more like a fellow lawyer than a second-year law student.

Shelley's work on the housing subsidy case also involved intense attention to detail, as part of her task was to figure out whether the agency had properly applied its formula to calculate our clients' subsidies. She had to compile evidence of various expenses that our clients incurred and had to ensure that receipts and other documentation supported our claims. I could trust that Shelley's work was thorough and accurate.

In addition to these two main projects, Shelley also worked on a community outreach project involving a presentation on advance directives at a local senior center. She did a very strong job distilling legal concepts concerning powers of attorney and health care proxies into clear, understandable explanations for the attendees. She took the time to master the underlying statutes, read various practice commentaries, and plan for anticipated questions in advance. Her thorough preparation ensured that she was able to field the audience questions with relative ease.

Shelley's final project in the clinic involved assisting an individual in prison with his parole interview. This work on behalf of people in prison was new for the clinic and Shelley was able to forge ahead with minimal supervision. She compiled an impressive packet for the parole board on the client's behalf and left no stone unturned as she assembled support letters for her client.

In all her clinic work, Shelley was methodical and highly productive, and consistently produced drafts at a very high level. She sought guidance when appropriate but always took initiative to try to figure things out, even when they were unfamiliar. She is a very hard worker and is eager to do a good job in everything she undertakes. She also responds very well to feedback and incorporates it immediately—one never has to tell her anything twice.

Along with the casework, students participate in a year-long civil litigation seminar, which takes students through simulations covering the major phases of litigation. Shelley's performance in the seminar was consistently excellent. She drafted parts of a preliminary injunction motion in a simulated case concerning benefits under the Medicaid program. She readily identified the most important facts, made the wise choice about which claim to foreground as likely to succeed on the merits, and drafted persuasive papers.

At the end of the year, students conduct a simulated trial in the seminar. Shelley delivered a very strong performance. She had good judgment about which facts were important and which were superfluous. She also wrote a thoughtful and insightful reflection memo after the hearing that identified areas for improvement and the pros and cons of the various strategic decisions she had made in approaching the trial.

Shelley accomplished all of this in the clinic while taking a demanding course load, serving as an active member of the *Law Review*, working on her note, serving as President of the Public Interest Law Students Association, and engaging in other student activities at the law school. She has excellent time management skills and balanced all of her obligations gracefully.

Finally, Shelley was a pleasure to work with. She was dedicated, professional, and responsible. She understands what it means to be professional in a legal setting, how to be a good colleague, and how to manage projects. Much of her clinic work was done within a team of four, which created some challenges in coordination. Shelley always kept her eye on the ball and made sure to move the work forward and keep the group organized.

For all these reasons, I recommend Shelley without a single hesitation and would be happy to discuss Shelley's qualifications further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebekah Diller', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rebekah Diller