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# HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION

## OF ORANGE COUNTY

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March 31, 2010

Kimberly Vann

Communications Coordinator, Division for Bar Services

American Bar Association

321 No. Clark Street, 20th floor

Chicago, IL 60654-7598

[vannk2@staff.abanet.org](mailto:vannk2@staff.abanet.org)

Re: ABA Partnership Awards Program Application

Dear Ms. Vann:

We are pleased to submit this application for the 2010 ABA Partnership Awards on behalf of the Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (HBA) and its Wally Davis Scholarship Program.

**1. Program Title.**

The Wallace (Wally) R. Davis Memorial Scholarships

**2. Name of Bar Association**

Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (“HBA”)

**3. Address**

P.O. Box 6130

**4. City/State/Zip Code**

Newport Beach, CA 92658

**5. Phone**

(949) 440-6700, Ext. 253

**6. Email Address**

[Info@ocHBA.org](mailto:Info@ocHBA.org)

**7. Number of Association Members**

120 (as of official figures reported to the Orange County Bar Association in 2009)

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **8. Description of your program to include program's objectives, history of program, number of times presented, targeted audience, number of people participating, measurable results of efforts to date (include statistics, program evaluation and follow-up) and future program plans**

The Wallace (Wally) R. Davis Memorial Scholarship Fund is sponsored by the Hispanic Bar Association and awards scholarships to Orange County Latino law students. Latinos constitute almost 50% of California's population, yet less than 4% of California's attorneys are Latino. The Scholarship Fund provides financial assistance to qualifying students who are currently attending law school and who have demonstrated involvement in the Latino Community.

The Fund was named in memory of Wally Davis, one of the first Latino attorneys in Orange County who fought for the civil rights of all Hispanics. Eligible students must be of Latino origin and involved in the Latino community. Priority is given to students with significant ties to Orange County.

First awarded in 1995, the scholarships have been given out each year to 43 individual recipients, each of whom typically receives multiple awards during their law school careers. Thirty-three of the recipients were young women.

These scholarships help even the playing field so that needy but deserving students from working class roots can have an opportunity to go to law school and they are a very effective tool for empowerment in the local legal community: two recent scholarship recipients have been hired by Latham & Watkins, and by Sheppard Mullin Richter and Hampton (see attachments).

The scholarships also are a crucial part of the HBA's contribution to social justice, as they are awarded to students who can demonstrate a commitment to public service. Five scholarship recipients have gone on to become public defenders; three others work for public entities; and four more have come back to serve on the HBA board, including one who even rose to become HBA president

### **9. Total Program Budget**

This year the HBA awarded \$16,300 in scholarships to five eligible students. Funding varies from year to year based on the economic climate.

### **10. Source of Program Funds**

The principal source of the funds that nourish the scholarship is the HBA's annual scholarship fundraising banquet.

### **11. Other Resources (e.g. inkind contributions, materials, etc.)**

In addition to the scholarship fundraising dinner, the HBA encourages direct donations from members to be made directly to the scholarship fund.

**12. Identify other "partners" who supported your effort (e.g. bar associations, agencies, high schools/colleges/universities/law schools, law firms, etc.)**

In order to facilitate the awards, the HBA works in close coordination with the Orange County Community Foundation and the Orange County Hispanic Education Endowment Fund.

Additionally, the HBA relies on dinner sponsors who underwrite the HBA's annual dinner, which is the largest scholarship fundraiser. In 2010, for example, the HBA attracted twenty sponsors, including the Walt Disney Company and the Jones Day law firm, each of which contributed \$15,000. Other sponsors included the Garden City Group at \$5,000, and fifteen law firm sponsors who contributed \$2,500 each: Adorno & Yoss; Aitken Aitken; Berman More & González; Carlton DiSante; Chapman Law School; Crowell & Moring; Judicate West; Latham & Watkins; O'Melveny & Myers; Sheppard Mullin; Snell & Wilmer; Troutman Sanders; Waldron & Bragg; Whittier Law School; and Wells Fargo Bank.

**13. Note any recognition that these efforts have received (e.g. media coverage, awards, etc.)**

The HBA's scholarship fundraiser has received notable community attention over the years. Attendance of the dinner itself has ranged from 400-500 in recent years. This year, our event was covered in the *Orange County Register*, the *Orange County Business Journal* and the *Orange County Lawyer*.

**14. Could another bar association easily replicate this program? If so, how? Are there materials, checklists, reports that lend themselves to a "how to" guide for other organizations? Please include any pertinent materials with the application form or send separately by e-mail.**

Yes. The model is simple. The scholarships are the centerpiece of the HBA's activities. We put on a great annual dinner. We raise money. And, the lion's share of the money that's left over after we pay for the food and entertainment goes into our scholarship fund (some portion of it goes to our operating fund which allows us to put the whole thing together).

**15. What suggestions or recommendations would you offer to others who might undertake a similar program?**

Set up a program that will make a substantial difference in the community and ask the leaders of business and industry in your community to stand alongside you in support of it.

**16. Program contact person, title, phone number:**

Jacob C. Gonzales, HBA Scholarship Committee Chairman, (949) 760-0204

**17. Program contact person's snail mail and e-mail address:**

Waldron & Bragg LLP  
23 Corporate Plaza Dr Ste 200  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
jgonzales@waldronbragg.com

## **SUPPORTING MATERIALS SUBMITTED WITH THIS APPLICATION**

1) Letter of support from **Norma García Guillén** of Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton, LLP, 2001 Wally Davis Scholar and 2008 HBA President. Ms. Guillén's letter attests to the following facts:

- Ms. Guillén was born to immigrant parents and is a product of the public schools
- Ms. Guillén received a Wally Davis Scholarship to attend the University of Southern California School of Law
- Ms. Guillén fit the Wally Davis Scholarship recipient mold of someone who has demonstrated a commitment to serving the Latino community
- As HBA president, Ms. Guillén was able to appreciate first-hand the unique partnerships that the HBA has forged to make the Wally Davis Scholarships a reality in the community

2) Letter of support from **Mayté Santacruz Benadidez** of Latham & Watkins, 2005, 2006 and 2007 Wally Davis Scholar and 2010-2011 HBA Board member. Ms. Santacruz's letter attests to the following facts:

- Ms. Santacruz migrated to the United States at the age of 11 and never imagined that she would be able to attend a prestigious law school
- Ms. Santacruz received a Wally Davis Scholarship to attend the University of California, Berkeley (Boalt Hall) School of Law
- Ms. Santacruz serves on the HBA Board and has joined the HBA's Scholarship Committee

3) Letter of support from **Israel Claustro** of the Orange County District Attorney's Office, 1999 Wally Davis Scholar. Mr. Claustro's letter attests to the following facts:

- Mr. Claustro received a Wally Davis Scholarship to attend Western State University College of Law
- After law school, Mr. Claustro joined a DA's office that is only five percent Hispanic
- Mr. Claustro calls the HBA "the most active and supportive organization of underprivileged Hispanic law students in our community"

4) Letter of support from **Linda Luna** of Hollins Schechter, 2003 Wally Davis Scholar. Ms. Luna's letter attests to the following facts:

- Ms. Luna received a Wally Davis Scholarship to attend Chapman University School of Law
- Ms. Luna believes that she "learned civic responsibility and the importance of giving back" from receiving an HBA scholarship, and is active in the community

5) Letter of support from **Mario Zapata** of Nicastro Piscopo, 2004 Wally Davis Scholar. Mr. Zapata's letter attests to the following facts:

- Mr. Zapata received a Wally Davis Scholarship to attend Chapman University School of Law
- Mr. Zapata has "witnessed the hard work" of the HBA to raise funds for the Wally Davis Scholarship



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March 31, 2010

Ms. Kimberly Vann  
Communications Coordinator  
Division for Bar Services  
America Bar Association  
321 N. Clark St., 20th Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60654-7598

Re: The HBA's Application for an ABA Partnership Award

Dear Ms. Vann:

I am writing in support of the application for Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (HBA)'s bid for consideration for a 2010 ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship Program.

I was a 2001 Wally Davis Scholar, and a 2008 HBA president. I received my Wally Davis Scholarship while I was a student at the University of Southern California, where I received my JD in 2002. Initially a summer clerk at Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton, I joined the Firm as a full-time associate upon graduating from law school and have developed a successful practice focused in the Firm's Business Trial and Latino Business Practice Groups. At Sheppard, I have handled numerous high profile cases, including business and defamation disputes for Latin American celebrities, claims on behalf of a receiver in a Securities and Exchange Commission enforcement action, and international arbitration disputes.

The Wally Davis Scholarship program seeks out and rewards students who have demonstrated a commitment to serving the Latino community. I have spent much of my time throughout my educational career working to serve the Latino community. As a Santa Ana native, born to immigrant parents, and a product of the public schools, I certainly satisfied the scholarship's needs criteria. While I attended USC Law School, I was a member of the Jessup International Moot Court program, the Immigration Clinic and I was president of La Raza Law Students Association. At the Immigration Clinic, I helped undocumented women victims of domestic violence to obtain legal status. In 2002, USC honored me with the prestigious Shattuck Award for my service to the law school community and profession.

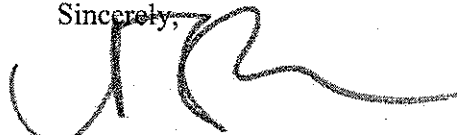
Ms. Kimberly Vann  
Communications Coordinator  
Division for Bar Services  
America Bar Association  
March 31, 2010  
Page 2

I have continued to pursue pro bono work and serve on the board of various organizations, including KidWorks, the Santa Ana Education Foundation, and UCI's Saturday Academy of Law. I also committed my time to the HBA, which had believed in me and supported me by awarding me a Wally Davis Scholarship. I began to serve as a director in 2006. The next year, I was asked to run for the HBA's highest office, and became the first former Wally Davis Scholar to be elected HBA president. During my year as president, I was proud to help the organization set fund-raising records in support of the very scholarship that I had once received.

As HBA president, I was able to appreciate first-hand the unique partnerships that the HBA has forged to make this important tool for diversity a reality in our community. I would argue that the very fact that I rose to be HBA president and to have that perspective is also a measure of the effectiveness of the Wally Davis Scholarship in identifying qualified diverse candidates. Since at least 2006, I believe wholeheartedly that we have done a much better job as an organization to nurture our scholars and help them succeed in the local legal community.

In the intervening years, I have continued to be recognized for my commitment to include public service in my professional endeavors. Particularly meaningful to me is the American Jewish Committee's Emerging Leader Award in 2008, the same year in which *OC Metro* named me among its "20 Women to Watch." Then, last year, the USC Gould School of Law La Raza Students Association presented me with their Inspirational Alumnus Award during its annual Judges & Lawyers' Night. All of these accomplishments also validate that initial measure of trust that the Wally Davis Scholarship, and others like it, perceived in me. I trust you will see the value the Wally Davis Scholarship brings to the Latino legal community in Orange County and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norma García Guillén', with a stylized, cursive flourish extending to the right.

Norma García Guillén

Mayte Santacruz Benavidez  
Direct Dial: +714.755.8267  
mayte.santacruz.benavidez@lw.com

650 Town Center Drive, 20th Floor  
Costa Mesa, California 92626-1925  
Tel: +1.714.540.1235 Fax: +1.714.755.8290  
www.lw.com

## LATHAM & WATKINS<sup>LLP</sup>

March 31, 2010

### VIA MAIL

Kimberly Vann  
Communications Coordinator, Division for Bar Services  
American Bar Association  
321 No. Clark Street, 20th floor  
Chicago, IL 60654-7598

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Houston      Silicon Valley  
London      Singapore  
Los Angeles      Tokyo  
Madrid      Washington, D.C.  
Milan

Re: The HBA's Application for an ABA Partnership Award

Dear Ms. Vann:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the application for the Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (HBA)'s bid for consideration for a 2010 ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship Program.

I am a proud former recipient of the HBA Wally Davis Scholarship. I received the scholarship in 2005, 2006, and 2007 while pursuing my Juris Doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley (Boalt Hall) School of Law, where I served as the Senior Executive Editor of the California Law Review and as the Academic Chair of La Raza Law Students Association. I graduated from Boalt Hall in 2008 and was admitted to the California State Bar that same year.

I am an attorney in the Orange County office of Latham & Watkins, LLP. My practice is focused in general business litigation, ranging from environmental groundwater contamination to securities litigation and professional liability. While at Latham, I have had the opportunity to provide substantial pro bono legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, helping them obtain lawful permanent residence through the Violence Against Women Act.

I am deeply indebted to the HBA for awarding me the Wally Davis Scholarship during the three years I attended Boalt Hall. If it had not been for this scholarship, attending law school would have been much more difficult. Economically, the Wally Davis Scholarship gave me peace of mind because I did not have to worry constantly about how I was going to pay for law school, and as a result, I was able to focus on my studies. More important than the financial support, however, is the invaluable mentoring and networking opportunities the HBA has provided me over the past five years.

LATHAM & WATKINS<sup>LLP</sup>

The HBA has played a significant role in my journey to achieving my academic goals. That journey began in 1993 when I migrated to the United States at the age of 11. As an immigrant from Mexico who faced numerous challenges in my educational career, I never imagined that my dream of graduating from college, attending a competitive and prestigious law school, and becoming a lawyer would ever come true. Thanks to the HBA's financial support and great mentorship from its members, I was able to make that dream a reality.

I have been a member of the HBA since 2005. I was recently elected to serve a two-year term as a board member. As an active board member, I hope to contribute to the HBA's mission of promoting education, unity and excellence in the Hispanic legal community. To that end, I have joined the HBA's Scholarship Committee, which primary role is to review applications and recommend deserving Latino students from Orange County to the HBA Board for selection.

I strongly support the HBA's efforts in obtaining the ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Mayte Santacruz Benavidez  
of LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

Israel Claustro  
401 Civic Center Drive West, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Santa Ana, CA 92701  
(714) 834-3600

March 31, 2010

Kimberly Vann  
Communications Coordinator, Division for Bar Services  
American Bar Association  
321 No. Clark Street, 20th floor  
Chicago, IL 60654-7598

Re: The HBA's Application for an ABA Partnership Award

Dear Ms. Vann:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (HBA) application for a 2010 ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship Program.

I first joined the Orange County HBA as a law student in 1998. I quickly learned of the HBAs annual installation dinner, scholarship fundraiser which raises funds for scholarships to Hispanic law students. In 1999 I was quite fortunate to receive a Wally Davis Scholarship to attend Western State University College of Law.

Since graduating law school in 2001, I have been employed as a Deputy District Attorney in Orange County. My office employs approximately 200 Deputy District Attorneys of which approximately 5 percent are of Hispanic descent. As an HBA member I have enjoyed sharing with my D.A. colleagues my positive experiences about the HBA. In 1998, when I first joined the HBA, only a handful of Deputy District Attorneys attended the annual installation dinner and scholarship fundraiser. As a result of the HBA's commendable philanthropic efforts, my office's participation in the HBA has risen over the years. Sixteen Orange County Deputy District Attorneys, including one who serves on the HBA Board of Directors, recently attended the 2010 HBA Annual Installation Dinner and Scholarship Fundraiser, which demonstrates the strong reputation that the HBA has earned over the years.

The HBA remains near and dear to my heart as the most active and supportive organization of underprivileged Hispanic law students in our community. I offer my full support of the HBA's application for the 2010 ABA Partnership Award.

Sincerely yours,



Israel Claustro  
Deputy District Attorney

# HOLLINS SCHECHTER

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VIA U.S. MAIL

March 31, 2010

Kimberly Vann  
Communications Coordinator, Division for Bar Services  
American Bar Association  
321 No. Clark Street, 20th floor  
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RE: The HBA's Application for an ABA Partnership Award

Dear Ms. Vann:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the application for Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (HBA)'s bid for consideration for a 2010 ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship Program.

I received a Wally Davis Scholarship while pursuing my Juris Doctorate at Chapman University School of Law School in 2003. I graduated from Chapman Law in 2005 and was admitted to the California Bar that same year.

I am attorney with a background in transactional law and civil litigation. I have been at my current firm, Hollins Schechter since January, 2009 wherein my primary focus is in the area of business litigation and employment law. Prior to my current position, I worked as Associate Counsel for Mexicana Airlines, Legal and Corporate Affairs for the United States and Canada for several years wherein myself and the Vice President of Legal and Corporate affairs handled all legal matters for the airline within our region, including transactional work, protection of intellectual property and overseeing litigation and class actions.

The HBA supported my career by providing a community and a source of support in order for me to positively move forward with my legal career. The HBA has provided me with many role models, who have not only been friends and mentors, but who illustrated the greatness of what Hispanics can achieve by the

Luna HBA Support Letter (4)

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Kimberly Vann

RE: The HBA's Application for an ABA Partnership Award

Letter of March 31, 2010

Page 2

impact they have made in our community. I learned civic responsibility and the importance of giving back from my humble experience of receiving support from the HBA, an organization that believed in me along my journey as a legal professional.

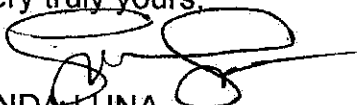
I have been a member of the HBA for several years. I attended the HBA's annual MCLE seminar in Puerto Vallarta in 2008 and was a speaker on the topic of relationships among in-house counsel and firms they hire. That same year I was a member of the HBA's scholarship committee. Most recently I participated in HBA event commemorating The Archbishop Oscar A. Romero Social Justice Volunteer Day wherein I provided pro-bono legal assistance for the Public Law Center. I assisted by doing case intake of a low-income resident's legal matter.

I am currently a pro-bono attorney for an organization by the name of Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) founded by Microsoft and humanitarian actress Angelina Jolie. I have taken on a case to serve as the legal representative of an unaccompanied minor who fled from Guatemala at the age of 16 to escape domestic violence and gang persecution. I am assisting the minor by pursuing Asylum and Special Immigration Juvenile Status on his behalf.

I also provide annual support towards an organization by the name of El Viento wherein my annual contribution assists in providing an at-risk youth with leadership training and field trips, not otherwise available as that child lives in an area permeated with gang violence and teen pregnancy. I have also served as a speaker at a career panel for the children in the El Viento program and have assisted with various other events.

I strongly encourage and wholeheartedly support HBA's efforts in obtaining the 2010 ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship Program. Thank you in advance for your support. If you have any further questions that might assist the HBA in its efforts, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



LINDA LUNA

Attorney

[lluna@hollins-law.com](mailto:lluna@hollins-law.com)

Luna HBA Support Letter (4)

*Fearless Uncompromising Trial Advocacy*

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# NICASTRO PISCOPO

A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

March 31, 2010

Kimberly Vann  
Communications Coordinator, Division for Bar Services  
American Bar Association  
321 No. Clark Street, 20th floor  
Chicago, IL 60654-7598

VIA MAIL

Re: The HBA's Application for an ABA Partnership Award

Dear Ms. Vann:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the application for Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County (HBA)'s bid for consideration for a 2010 ABA Partnership Award for its Wally Davis Scholarship Program.

I received a Wally Davis Scholarship while pursuing my Juris Doctorate at Chapman University School of Law in 2004. I graduated from Chapman Law School in 2006 and was subsequently admitted to the California State Bar that same year.

I am attorney with a background in bankruptcy and immigration law. I have been with Nicastro PiscoPO, APLC since my admission in December 2006. In my practice, I represent immigrants from all countries and assist them to resolve their immigration matter.

The HBA has played a significant role in my career. As a law student, the organization provided me with an outlet to meet great role models and develop relationships with fellow Hispanics in the community. Moreover, I witnessed the hard work by its members to raise funds towards scholarships. The receipt of the Wally Davis Scholarship not only motivated me to push forward but it also allowed me to focus on my career path. I am grateful and indebted to the HBA.

I have been a member of the HBA since 2004. I recently participated in an HBA-sponsored event commemorating The Archbishop Oscar A. Romero Social Justice Volunteer Day. I, along with other fellow HBA members, provided pro-bono legal assistance for the Public Law Center. In particular, I did case intake for several low-income resident's legal matters.

Although most of the work I do is not pro-bono, I can confidently say that we provide expert services to immigrants (legal and illegal) at affordable rates. On a weekly basis, I am providing legal representation to immigrants facing deportation before the immigration court. Additionally, I have assisted hundreds of immigrants acquire their green cards and citizenship.

[www.np-attorneys.com](http://www.np-attorneys.com)

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# NICASTRO PISCOPO

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Lastly, I have assisted immigrants, who have been the victim of abuse, obtain lawful permanent residency under the Violence Against Women Act passed by Congress in 1994.

I strongly support HBA's request to nominate the Wally Davis Scholarship for the ABA Partnership Award. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Very Truly Yours,  
NICASTRO PISCOPO

Mario S. Zapata  
Associate Attorney

[www.np-attorneys.com](http://www.np-attorneys.com)

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