



2020 Philip L. Burton Memorial  
**SCHOLARSHIP DINNER**

March 25, 2020

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**Letter From President Raina Wagner**

Dear Members & Friends:

In these trying times—when jobs, economic security, and fundamental freedoms are all threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic—we know what matters most: preserving the lives and health of all Americans, including our own. This goal has been at the crux of every closure, stay-at-home-order, and restriction on movement that we have witnessed over the last few weeks at the local, state, and federal level. And as difficult as it has been to first absorb and then comply with this new reality, we understand why health officials are making the recommendations they are, and then we absorb and then comply with the ever-stricter orders and guidelines. To preserve the lives and health of all Americans.

That is why I know you will all understand as I announce that the Loren Miller Bar Association has decided to cancel the May 8th, 2020 Philip L. Burton Memorial Scholarship Dinner. Having the gathering on May 8th at the Sheraton would be impossible under the current guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control, which extend past May 8, 2020. Additionally, Gov. Inslee's Stay Home, Stay Healthy Order, currently due to expire on or about April 8, 2020, could easily be extended past our dinner date. In these circumstances, it is impossible to plan a dinner, sell sponsorships, and appropriately honor our award winners.

Some of you may question why LMBA is not simply postponing the dinner to later in 2020. While it could be possible to postpone our annual scholarship fundraiser until fall, we would be moving to a part of the calendar already busy with similar gala fundraisers presented by other minority bar associations, as well as the November 2020 election. Moreover, LMBA operates on a June-May fiscal calendar. Pushing the dinner to the fall of 2020 would put the burden of presenting the 2020 dinner and the 2021 dinner to next year's board of directors—an inappropriate kicking-of-the can to next year's president, dinner chair and the other volunteer board members who manage this organization.

Therefore, your Dinner Committee, led by Vice President ~ Events Andra Kranzler, is pivoting to presenting an online fundraiser in May. The Loren Miller Bar Foundation will still award scholarships to this year's graduating Washington law students. LMBA is committed to raising funds to support these awards. We hope you will join us and support the law students as the details of the online fundraiser, including sponsorship opportunities, are announced next month.

As we all work together in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, we do well to remember that LMBA is a civil rights and social justice organization. Today, our state and our nation are in the thick of the fight; we will not be able to take stock of the damages or their ramifications for some time. Almost surely, however, we are likely to see radically increased unemployment and, if not an economic depression, a recession greater than what followed the housing crisis. These conditions could devastate the communities we serve. The board and I hope you will remain committed to LMBA and its mission, goals and purpose in these times.

Thank you for your understanding, and for joining me as LMBA commits wholeheartedly toward our common goal during this crisis: preserving the lives and health of all Americans.

Warmly,

Raina V. Wagner  
President  
Loren Miller Bar Association