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Black Law Students Hold State Parley Here

In what coordinators called one of the most productive gatherings of its kind, the National Black Law Students Association (BLSA) held its 21st Annual Northeast Regional Conference in Buffalo during the spring semester. The UB chapter of BLSA was host for the four-day event, which attracted about 225 minority students from 20 law schools.

Founded in 1967, the national organization has more than 200 chapters representing almost every ABA-accredited law school in the country, with more than 8,000 members nationwide.

The theme for the conference was "The 1990s: Bold Tactics for Liberation." Activities were held in the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

For the first time, a job fair was incorporated into the conference schedule to enhance employment opportunities for minority law students, according to Mason P. Ashe '89, then a third-year UB Law School student and regional director of BLSA.

Employers from the Buffalo area and other parts of the country attended the convention and interviewed association members. Included were seven of Buffalo's major firms: Cohen, Swados, Wright, Hanifin, Bradford & Brett; Damon & Morey; Hodgson, Russ, Andrews, Woods & Goodyear; Jaeckle, Fleischmann & Mugel; Moot & Sprague; Phillips, Lytle, Hitchcock, Blaine & Huber; and Saperston & Day.

Private and public-interest law firms and state and federal agencies from Buffalo, Albany and Syracuse also participated. Government agencies in attendance included the Federal Bureau of

City Court Judge Rose Seoniers '73 addresses the conference.

Mason P. Ashe '89 served as chairman.
Investigation and the state Departments of Health, Taxation & Finance, Transportation, Worker's Compensation and State Police, plus the Division of Parole.

Audrey Koscielniak, coordinator of the UB Career Development Office, was the host law school representative, and Diana M. Harris '89, BLSA placement representative, was coordinator of the Job Fair.

Tony Brown, television talk show host and civil rights activist, spoke at the Awards Banquet. "We have to support one another," Brown told the students, admonishing them to do business with other minorities. "We can increase our power through our economic impact," he said.

The Hon. Rose H. Sconiers '73, of the City Court of Buffalo and a former president of the UB Law Alumni Association, was keynote speaker for the conference's Judicial Luncheon.

Other conference highlights included:

- Julius Chambers, director and legal counsel, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and Professor Muhammad Kenyatta of the UB Law School presented a panel discussion called "Assessing Civil Rights Litigation — Past, Present and Future."
- Omoye Cooper, affirmative action officer of the New York State Division of Parole, explored the topic "Working for State/Government Agencies."
- A panel on career options included Aundra Newell, assistant dean for admissions; Todd L. Cranford, law clerk, Sixth Circuit; John V. Elmore, assistant state attorney general; Patricia L. Irvin, partner at Mibank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy; and law professor Judy Scales-Trent.
- Twenty-four teams participated in the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition. A team from UB Law School — Emmanuel Nneji and Diana Harris, both 1989 grads — was victorious.
- Installations of new officers were held for the Minority Bar Association of Western New York and the Northeast region of BLSA.

Corporate sponsors of the conference included Barrister Information Systems Corp., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Key Bank of Western New York, Goldome Bank, UB Law Alumni Association, Norstar N.A., Marsh Bakeries and WKBW-TV. Contributing sponsors of the Job Fair were Yale School of Law, the law firm of Maloney, Gallup, Roach, Brown & McCarthy, P.C., and Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled or Disadvantaged of Western New York Inc.

According to Ashe, the success of the conference "was the result of a lot of hard work and many very dedicated boosters."

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Employee interviews were conducted at the conference.