

Good Evening everyone, my name is Aryanna Islam and I am happy to be speaking to you all once again as the recipient of the Larry Starcher Public Service scholarship. I again want to thank the Bar Foundation for providing such a great scholarship for students like me who are interested in pursuing public service work with their law degree. So thank you all for your investment in me and paying my tuition.

Last year I was speaking to you all as a 1L finishing up my first year of law school at the WVU College of Law, and now I am wrapping up my 2L year. During this past year, I have grown a lot both professionally and personally and have a continued interest in public service both during school and after graduation. And it is my hope to use every new experience and skill I have learned and picked up to help me in serving the public with my degree.

How do you serve West Virginia and its people? That's a question I have grappled with before and try to answer through my work. Many of you all are great examples of public servants to this state and I hope to emulate each of you.

I love many things about this state, its beauty, its charm, but my favorite thing is that West Virginia and public service are so heavily intertwined with each other that they are essentially one in the same. West Virginians serve each other, we lift each other up, and take care of one

another. And as lawyers we have a heightened responsibility to serve the public and do right by them.

For all of us, over the course of our lives we have people who change us, help us see things in a new light, and provide a model for who we strive to be. For me that person was my grandmother, who passed away last year. My grandmother embodied West Virginia values and I hope all of us can be like her. To me, she was the best of what our state stands for and her life was one filled with public service.

She was born and raised in Fairmont. She lived in a pink house that you couldn't miss and like any teenage girl growing up in the 50's, loved Elvis. She was the greatest woman I've ever known. She taught me a lot of things growing up, but the most important thing she taught me was how to be a West Virginian.

She never met a stranger, she was so full of love for everyone no matter who you were, and she helped everyone no matter the circumstances. She taught me how to lead a life full of love and grace. I'm optimistic that everyone can love and help people like she did.

As a young West Virginian, I am extra aware that our state has its problems and faults. For my peers it is a hard choice to stay or leave. All of us in this room can acknowledge that we have room for improvement, that is certainly no secret, but that's okay. We can solve a lot of our issues by

working together, lifting each other up, and taking care of one another. Just going back to our state's core values.

Part of the reason why I chose to pursue the legal profession and why I am sure that many of you did too, is that your job can have a great impact on people. It is critical for our society to have professionals who are passionate about serving the public and are not afraid to speak up for the voiceless and provide justice for all.

West Virginia may be changing in different ways, some good, some bad, but it is a beautiful thing that our values never change, never falter. We always serve each other. Going back to the question of what it means to serve West Virginia and its people, in the context of the legal profession it just means practicing with West Virginia values in mind

I am excited in the fall to be starting my last year of law school and being involved in Moot Court as Chief Justice as well as participating in the General Litigation Clinic. This summer I was chosen as one of the recipients of the Sprouse Fellowship so I'll be interning at the Mon County Public Defender's office. Once again thank you all for providing such a great scholarship and I hope it continues for many generations of young West Virginia lawyers looking to serve the public. Have a great rest of your evening. Thank you!