



## SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO TOP STUDENTS IN LITIGATION SKILLS PROGRAM

Home ([index.php](#)) / News (<http://www.law.miami.edu/news/>) / Scholarships Awarded to Top Students in Litigation Skills Program

Nykeah Cohen tried to hold back tears as she accepted two of the most coveted awards given to students enrolled in the semester-long Litigation Skills I course. On Monday, the second-year student was recognized for accruing the most points throughout the course. The points are heavily weighted on the students' final exam, which took place at the criminal courthouse in Downtown Miami on Saturday. 146 second- and third-year students litigated one of two cases (one civil, the other criminal) for a total of 34 trials, with very different outcomes.

As part of her winnings Cohen received from the law firm of Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton a \$10,000 scholarship, which is awarded to one minority law student who has completed the Litigation Skills program and has expressed an interest in trial advocacy.



Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton  
Scholarship - Nykeah Cohen

Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton have been donating their time and funds to Miami Law's Litigation Skills Program since its establishment in 1995. The law firm has also hired Miami Law graduates who have taken courses the Program offers.

Cohen was also recognized with the Thomas Ewald Memorial Award, which is given each semester to the student in Litigation Skills I who best exemplifies a devotion to high standards and ethical conduct. This award comes with a Montblanc pen - homage to the late Ewald, the Miami Law litigation professor who was known to carry the pen in his shirt pocket. With the award, she was bestowed a guaranteed invitation to teach at Miami Law in eight years.

"It's an honor," said Nykeah Cohen who chose to litigate the criminal case on Saturday. This semester she has been busy juggling this six-credit course while managing cases as part of her involvement with the Children and Youth Law Clinic (<http://www.law.miami.edu/clinics/cylc/index.php?op=2>). The workload, she admits, has been overwhelming and is the reason why she is a bit surprised about her winnings.

"At the same time, it's a motivator to keep honing in on my oral advocacy skills." Before rushing off to call her mom with the good news, and while still trying to catch her breath, she says of her achievement, "It's an affirmation I'm making the right decision."

Beyond litigation training for the courtroom, the Litigation Skills Program incorporates feedback from active serving judges and lawyers. Students even have to dabble in theatrics training. During the art of persuasion portion of the curriculum, students are critiqued by faculty at the University of Miami Theatre department on their ability to put on a good show.

The performance, combined with strategic thinking, is what Professor Lonny Rose (<http://www.law.miami.edu/facadmin/lrose.php?letter=R>), director of the Litigation Skills Program, says are ultimately the variables that made certain student cases more favorable than others.

"You make a difference in the courtroom," said Professor Rose emphasizing to the large room of students the most critical lesson. "Your performance matters."

Additional winners included:

- Cosme Caballero, who took home the Marco A. Vazquez Memorial Scholarship, a \$7,000 award which was established in 1996 in memory of a former Miami Law graduate.
- Stephanie Hauser and Elise Sherr, who each received the John F. Evans Memorial Scholarship, a \$2,000 award, which was established in 1989 in memory of John F. Evans, a criminal defense attorney, former deputy chief of the

US State Department's Miami Strike Force, and founding partner of the law firm of Zuckerman, Spaeder, Taylor and Evans.

- Tyler Kirk, who received the Honorable Theodore Klein Endowed Scholarship, a \$2,000 award, which was established in 2006 in memory of a former Law Professor and Federal Magistrate who was known for being a leader among his peers.
- Nichole Geiger Geary, who took home a \$1,000 cash prize on behalf of the American Board of Trial Advocates. This endowed scholarship is given each spring to the top third-year minority law student who is interested in becoming a civil trial lawyer.
- Sarah Cohen and Anuj Naidu each received \$250 on behalf of the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, which is given each spring semester to the top second-year law student who shows great promise in the practice of criminal litigation.

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