

March 23, 2009

## ASU senior makes plans for law school, career in corporate law

As Albany State University prepares to release another batch of young, bright minds into the world on May 2, one political science major already has plans of making her presence felt in corporate law.

Terri Benton will soon say her farewells to Albany State as an undergraduate student and enroll in law school as she continues her pursuit of becoming a lawyer. In her four years at ASU, she has built an impressive résumé as a Presidential Scholar, Velma Fudge Grant Honors Program member, and one of the top students in her major.



She was recently awarded the George W. Woodruff Scholarship from Mercer University's Law School.

"I was chosen as one of 13 finalists for the Woodruff Scholarship in which you receive full tuition and a \$5,000 stipend each year as long as you remain in good academic standing," Benton explained. "The scholarship is wonderful. Considering the economic hardships we are living in, I would only have to take out a small loan for living expenses."

"At Albany State I received a full scholarship as well, so not having loans has really prepared me for law school because if I have to take out loans now, it will be fine since I do not have any previous loans."

Last summer Benton was one of four students who attended a pre-law summer institute at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Nebraska. While there she received the confirmation she needed in settling her mind on a career as a lawyer.

"I went because I knew I wanted to be a lawyer, but I wanted to make sure before I put in all the time, effort and sacrifice, not to mention the cost," she said. "I enjoyed all the classes and actually received an award in one of the classes for having the highest average."

The classes focused on torts, contracts and employment discrimination. Benton was paired with two mentors, one of which worked in corporate law and explained the day-to-day transactions to her and allowed her to meet some other lawyers in the firm. "Instead of me being nervous about law school, now I'm more excited because I know I can handle the workload and I know a little bit more about how to read cases," Benton said.

Benton, a Macon native and graduate of Central High School, knew as early as seventh grade that she wanted to be a lawyer after participating in a mock trial. She enjoys the art of persuasion as well as the volubility that comes with the legal profession. She does, however, admit to not wanting to be in the courtroom every day. Benton stated that much of her success at Albany State is a result of the mentorship she received from Nyota Tucker, ASU professor, legal counsel and pre-law adviser.

“I have had a valuable experience at Albany State because of the courses I took and having the opportunity to interact with Ms. Tucker and understand what is expected of me in a law class,” she said. “If it wasn’t for me having her as a mentor, I would not be here. I definitely feel like we will still have a close relationship even after I leave.”

After establishing herself as an attorney, Benton hopes to one day start a few non-profit mentoring organizations promoting academic achievement and success for young women.