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## May 2017 E-Newsletter Student Spotlight: Second-year student Shayla J. Bivins

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## Student Spotlight: Second-year student Shayla J. Bivins



**Name:** Shayla J. Bivins

**Age:** 26

**Hometown:** Jacksonville, Florida

**Expected graduation year:** 2018

**Georgia Law extracurricular activities:** President, Davenport-Benham Black Law Students Association; Vice President, Sports & Entertainment Law Society; Chairwoman, Academic Affairs Committee (Student Body Association)

**Undergraduate university / degree(s) / year:** Georgia Institute of Technology / B.S. in Science, Technology, and Culture with a Minor in Law / 2013

**1. What did you do before attending law school?** Before law school, I worked part time at a law firm in downtown Atlanta and spent time volunteering in the Dominican Republic.

**2. Why did you choose to attend the University of Georgia School of Law?** I decided to attend Georgia Law after meeting Dean Bo Rutledge and Executive Director of Admissions Greg Roseboro at an admitted students event in Atlanta. Both were incredibly kind and possessed tremendous charisma. I knew that with such great leadership, UGA was the place for me.

**3. What inspired you to become a lawyer?** As a child, *To Kill A Mockingbird* was my favorite book. The main character, Atticus Finch, was a local lawyer. He personified humility, compassion and bravery. I always dreamed of positively impacting communities in the same way that Atticus did.

**4. Who is your favorite Georgia Law professor? Why?** So, it's actually a three-way tie. (I can't just choose one.) My favorite professors are Michael Wells, Elizabeth Burch and Usha Rodrigues. Both Professor Wells and Professor Burch were two of my 1L professors. So, I spent an entire year with them. I love Professor Wells' humor. As a 1L, I looked forward to his jokes every day. I also enjoyed Professor Burch's Civil Procedure course because she made the subject matter fun. She would bring all kinds of crazy props to class to really get the students involved. More recently, Dean Rodrigues has become another one of my favorite professors. She absolutely LOVES teaching Corporations and her energy is contagious. She undoubtedly makes learning corporate law fun. I guess you could say that's why I really like all three professors. They make learning the law fun!

**5. What are some activities/clubs/clinics you are involved in at the law school?** I am involved with several student organizations including the Black Law Students Association and the Christian Legal Society. I also participated in the Civil Clinic Externship last semester. This fall I'm excited to work in the Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation clinic.

**6. What has been your most rewarding experience through this program?** My most rewarding experience at Georgia Law has been my involvement with the Civil Clinic Externship program. Last semester, I had the great privilege of working with Judge Richard Story of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. I enjoyed being exposed to such a wide variety of legal issues and actually having an opportunity to help the judge make decisions. It was truly an incredible opportunity to not only apply what I've learned in law school, but to also be mentored by the judge and his clerks.

**7. How has this experience affected your career plans?** I came to law school believing that I wanted to do legal work in the professional sports industry. But after three semesters of law school and a host of interesting classes, I am interested in a variety of practice areas ranging from federal litigation to transactional business dealings. If anything, law school has really opened my mind to areas of the law that I never imagined I'd have any interest in.

**8. What are your hobbies?** I enjoy running, working out at Orange Theory and trying new restaurants. This isn't particularly a hobby, but this semester I volunteered at the Athens Area Homeless Shelter in connection with Professor Brown's Ethics class. While my influence there was small, the time I spent there greatly shaped my perspective on Athens and life outside of the law school. I found a community that I hope to continue to be a part of during my last year of school.

**9. Where is your favorite place to study? Why?** My favorite place to study is the outdoor patio at Two Story Coffeehouse. They have amazing coffee and a pretty soothing atmosphere.

**10. What are two things you always have to have with you when you study?** When I'm studying, I always need coffee and headphones.

**11. What do you do to handle the stress of law school?** I found an incredible community of friends at Georgia Law. From my roommate to my 1L study/running group to my weekly dinner group, these people have supported me through the stress of law school. But when things get too overwhelming, I drive to Atlanta and spend some time with my family and friends there. They can usually help me refocus and recalibrate.

**12. What is your favorite place on campus? Why?** Tlaloc! It's not exactly on campus, but it's definitely one of my favorite places in Athens. I love going there after a long week and eating a chimichanga.

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