



Amy Garrett to Speak at Southwestern Foundation Dinner and Auction

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Southwestern graduate Amy Garrett, who now serves as an attorney with the Simmons Browder Gianaris Angelides & Barnerd law firm, will be the guest speaker at the Southwestern School Foundation dinner and auction on Saturday, March 8, 2014. The event will be held at The Commons at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey at 6 p.m.

Garrett, a 1991 graduate of Southwestern High School, has a leadership role on the asbestos management team at the law firm, and was part of an Illinois Supreme Court case that established precedent for people injured by second-hand asbestos exposure. Her work has helped secure millions of dollars in verdicts and settlements on behalf of individuals and families suffering from asbestos-related diseases such as mesothelioma. She also helps manage the firm's intake process and client relations department.

Garrett serves as the director of the Simmons Employee Foundation, which has donated more than \$1 million to charities in the St. Louis area. She also founded and is the coordinator for the firm's Pro Bono Program and serves on the 3rd Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee in Madison County. In 2008, Garrett collaborated with the Veterans' Legal Support Clinic at John Marshall Law School to facilitate training for downstate volunteer attorneys who were willing to represent veterans in their Veterans' Administration claims. Following this success, she was instrumental in the formation of Simmons' formal pro bono program, and collaborated with Chief Judge Ann Callis of the 3rd Judicial Circuit Court and the Illinois State Bar Association to identify the community's most needed services. As a result of her efforts, ISBA awarded the firm the John C. McAndrews Award in 2009. The award honors members of the legal profession who have shown extraordinary commitment to providing free legal services to the poor.

Garrett graduated with a B.A. in English from the University of Illinois-Champaign /Urbana in 1995 and the Washington University School of Law in 1998. She worked as a staff attorney for Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation in Alton, representing indigent clients and domestic violence victims in divorce, custody, and protective order cases. She then moved to the Madison County State's Attorney's Office, where she handled hundreds of cases, many of which involved helping women who were victims of domestic abuse. Garrett also served on the 3rd Judicial Circuit Court's Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and the Phoenix Crisis Center Board of Directors. After leaving the State's Attorney's Office, she worked with the Alton law firm Mendenhall & Selby before joining the Simmons Firm in 2003. She was promoted to shareholder in 2009 and continues to oversee the firm's Madison County docket.

While at Southwestern, Garrett was a member of the basketball, volleyball, and softball teams for four years, was editor of the yearbook during her senior year, and was involved with several student organizations.

This is the 12th anniversary of the Southwestern Foundation's dinner and auction. The annual event has helped generate \$213,250 in scholarships that have been awarded to 221 Southwestern graduates since 2001. The Foundation has also awarded mini-grants totaling more than \$38,000 to help enhance learning opportunities in the Southwestern District.

Tickets to the event, which are \$25, are available through any Foundation board member or by calling the Southwestern School District office at 729-3221.