

UMass Law student receives scholarship from Hispanic New Bedford Police Officers

A UMass Law student has received a scholarship from the “Hispanic Police Officers of New Bedford” organization.

Judith Patricia Cruz Caballero, JD candidate, 22, a native of Bolivia, was named the second recipient to have ever received the 5-year scholarship which is presented to Hispanic UMass Law students who are also residents of Bristol County and have demonstrated a financial need. Nineteen New Bedford police officers donated.

“Being in law enforcement and members of the Hispanic community, we know firsthand the value of having strong legal representation in the criminal justice system,” said Sgt.

Samuel Ortega of the New Bedford Police Department who also serves as the police department’s outreach coordinator.

Caballero plans to become an attorney focusing on either criminal or immigration law following graduation. She is currently the vice president for UMass Law’s “Latinx American Law Student Association.” In addition, she continues to serve the community and develop her legal skills as an intern for the MA Department of Children and Families in Boston.

Caballero is also an intake member for the “Telephone to Access Justice Center for the Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid”, which is the second-largest legal aid provider in the country, and the largest provider in Texas. Of her work for these organizations, Caballero stated that it has allowed her to help community members who have a difficult time obtaining access to justice.

“As an intake worker, I help low-income individuals by guiding them through the process of obtaining legal aid through TRLA or by providing other resources that can help them obtain legal guidance,” she said.

“The scholarship is important to me because of the current economic situation of my family due to Covid,” added Cruz Caballero. “As a Latina law student, it’s motivational to know that other Hispanics are committed to protecting our community and enforcing our laws. The more we support diversity in our institutions, the better off our society will be in the future.”

In addition to supporting law students financially, the New Bedford Police Department offers mentoring and networking opportunities to scholarship recipients throughout the many agencies that comprise the criminal justice system.

“I am grateful to the officers for their service to our community and contributions to my education. I hope that, moving forward, I will make them proud,” Cruz Caballero added.

For further information on the “Hispanic Police Officers of New Bedford” organization, please contact; Samuel.ortega@newbedfordpd.com.

Credit: Debra Hazian for original story appearing on the UMass Law website:
<https://www.umassd.edu/law/features/hispanic-police-officers-of-new-bedford-scholarship.html>.



UMass Law photo.