

# ANNOUNCING THE 2025-2026 MINNESOTA NATIVE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION LAW STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

**DEADLINE: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2025**

To be eligible for the MNABA (formerly known as the MAIBA) Law Student Scholarship you must:

- Be an Associate Member of MNABA as a law student (If you are not an Associate Member of MNABA, you can become a member by completing a membership application at <https://mnabar.org/join-maiba-renew-membership/>;
  - MNABA Bylaws, Article III, Section 1 (b), define “Associate Members” as (1) enrolled members/citizens of any federally or state-recognized Tribal Nation, including American Indians, Alaska Natives, and First Nations; (2) persons with ancestry from the original Native Hawaiian families as verified by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (e.g., with documentation showing that the applicant is eligible for enrollment in any federally recognized Tribal Nation, including American Indians, Alaska Natives, and First Nations, or eligible for registration with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs); (3) descendants of a Tribal Nation who are recognized by their community; or (4) other Indigenous persons as reviewed and determined by the Board of Directors for associate membership.
  - For all categories above, Associate members are also defined as legal professionals who are not regular members as they are not admitted to any state bar. This includes law students, JD graduates prior to admittance to any state bar, and those Tribal Court advocates, prosecutors, or judicial officers not admitted to any state bar.
- Demonstrate that you are a second, third or fourth-year law student at a Minnesota law school (during the academic year in which the scholarship is to be awarded);
- Submit a signed scholarship application form (attached; pdf is fillable)
- Submit additional optional materials if applicable. Please note that the Scholarship Committee requests that you submit additional materials if you would like to be considered for the Jodi Drews Scholarship. The Jodi Drews Scholarship is an additional amount of scholarship funds donated to the MNABA Scholarship Committee from the family of Jodi Drews and is awarded to an eligible student in addition to the amount the MNABA Scholarship Committee awards.
  - The nonbinding selection criteria for this additional amount may include (but is not limited to): the applicant's interest in working for the betterment of the Native community; the applicant's interest in serving as a public defender; and the applicant's interest in working with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Please review Jodi's biography in the attached memorial and consider submitting material which highlights ways in which you embrace Jodi's values.

**Please email completed form and materials to [veronica.newcomer@whiteearth-nsn.gov](mailto:veronica.newcomer@whiteearth-nsn.gov).** The subject line should be: “2025-2026 MNABA Scholarship Application – [last name]”.

To be considered, your application must be complete at the time of submission consisting of required documents and any other necessary attachments listed in the Application Cover Form. ***Please try to include all application materials in one email if possible.*** The deadline is **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2025**.

If you have any questions, please contact Roni Newcomer at the email address above. Thank you.

Roni Newcomer  
MNABA Scholarship Committee Chair, 2025-2026

# In Memorial

## Jodi Drews

March 1, 1980 – December 1, 2012

“...there is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children...” Indian Child Welfare Act

Jodi Drews was integrally connected with the American Indian community. From the beginning of her professional career, she integrated her love of community with her evolving legal skills.

At Hamline University of Law in St. Paul, she twice competed in the National Native American Moot Court Competition. She was involved in the Minnesota American Indian Bar Association (MAIBA), serving on the MAIBA board, and chairing the MAIBA Scholarship Committee. Jodi was also a recipient of the MAIBA scholarship. In addition to her scholarly involvement, she stayed connected to real people and their problems. Jodi ran a transitional living program for homeless American Indian youth at a native culturally based shelter, Ain Dah Yung Center. She continued working at this job even after she became a public defender, spending her evenings and weekends serving the needs of children.

As a public defender, Jodi gravitated toward working with children and families. She regularly volunteered to handle additional cases. She worked with children in long-term foster care whose cases were governed by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). She also volunteered to represent both parents and children in ICWA cases. This was in addition to her already crushing caseload!

After her cancer diagnosis, Jodi didn't immediately tell all her friends and colleagues that she would be out of the office. At the same time, several colleagues were leaving juvenile court. Several of them stopped by her office, asking her to represent clients about whom they were particularly worried. Jodi enthusiastically agreed. To the end of her time in our office, she gladly assisted clients and colleagues.

Jodi had a unique ability to touch everyone she encountered. From clients to colleagues' adversaries to judicial officers, everyone felt a special connection to her. Perhaps it was her spirituality and inherent kindness. Whatever it was, many people considered Jodi to be their best friend. This was evident throughout her career, her battle and her ultimately too early death and the age of 32.

Jodi was blessed with a wonderful family. In addition to those who preceded her in death, she is survived by her parents, Richard, and Betty Stark; twin sister, Heidi; brothers, Jason Roger, Shane, and Joe; and her in-laws, Donna, Norman and Danny Drews, as well as all her other extended family. Jodi's colleagues will particularly miss seeing all the wonderful photos of her husband, Tony and her beautiful daughters, Angelina, and Lillian. Her skills with photography and Shutterfly are legendary.

Jodi, on behalf of all your friends and colleagues in the juvenile and criminal justice system

“Miigwech!”

**MINNESOTA NATIVE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
(MNABA) 2025-2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION  
DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 3, 2025**

LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ CURRENT HOME ADDRESS (list below):

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CURRENT E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

TRIBAL AFFILIATION: \_\_\_\_\_ ENROLLED (check one): ☐ yes ☐ no

LAW SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS YEAR (Check one): 2L ☐ 3L ☐ 4L ☐

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE (month/year): \_\_\_\_\_

UNDERGRADUATE/OTHER - Name(s) of College/University, Year, and Degree:

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MNABA ASSOCIATE MEMBER (check one): ☐ yes ☐ no

Are you interested in mentoring by a MNABA member(s)? (check one): ☐ yes ☐ no

**REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

**Attachment A:** Provide a letter from the Minnesota law school you are attending indicating you are a second, third, or fourth-year law student during the academic year in which the scholarship is to be awarded;

**\*ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL MATERIALS (recommended, if applicable):**

**Attachment B (optional):** Provide a brief statement of circumstances further explaining your financial need (*e.g.*, extenuating financial obligations, scholarships/grants not reflected on the Financial Aid Statement, or other pertinent financial information).

**Attachment C (optional):** Provide a brief list of your community service and extra-curricular activities.

\*Please note that the Scholarship Committee requests that you submit additional materials if you would like to be considered for the **Jodi Drews Scholarship**. The Jodi Drews Scholarship is an additional amount of scholarship funds donated to the MNABA Scholarship Committee from the family of Jodi Drews and is awarded to an eligible student in addition to the amount the MNABA

Scholarship Committee awards. The nonbinding selection criteria for this additional amount may include (but is not limited to): the applicant's interest in working for the betterment of the Native community; the applicant's interest in serving as a public defender; and the applicant's interest in working with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Please review Jodi's biography in the attached memorial and consider submitting material which highlights ways in which you embrace Jodi's values.

### **AUTHORIZATION**

By submitting this application, I authorize the Minnesota Native American Bar Association (MNABA) (formerly known as the Minnesota American Indian Bar Association or "MAIBA") to verify any of the information provided by me in this Form or the attachments thereto with the law school that I attend and/or the Native Community or Tribe with which I am affiliated. I acknowledge and understand the requirements articulated herein for consideration as a possible scholarship recipient. I represent that all statements herein, as well as in the documents attached hereto, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I am solely responsible for any taxes, if applicable. I authorize MNABA to release to the public my name, tribal affiliation, year in school and image or picture.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit by e-mail to: [veronica.newcomer@whiteearth-nsn.gov](mailto:veronica.newcomer@whiteearth-nsn.gov)  
Subject line: "2025-2026 MNABA Scholarship Application – [last name]."  
Please include all application materials in one email if possible.