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Black Law Students Association (BLSA)

Pamela G. Smith

Penn State Dickinson Law, pgs128@psu.edu

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Black Law Students Association (BLSA)

FEBRUARY 28, 2019 BY [PAMELA G SMITH](#)

185
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As everyone knows, February is [Black History Month](#). We started off the month by paying tribute to our wonderful alum, [Clarence Muse](#). Today, we wrap up the month by recognizing the contributions of the [Black Law Students Association \(BLSA\)](#).

BLSA was founded by Algernon Johnson "AJ" Cooper in 1968 at the New York University School of Law. At the time, the organization was known as the Black American Students Association (BALSA). From there, BALSA grew in scope to become a [national organization](#), and in 1983, the word "American" was dropped from BALSA to include all nationalities. The mission of BLSA is "to increase the number of culturally responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community." [NBSLA](#).

The Law School Archives Collection does not contain any materials indicating when the Law School's BLSA chapter was first established. However, it appears that BLSA was active in the Law School community by at least 1979, based on an article in the student-run newspaper indicating that BLSA was hosting the BLSA Mid-East Regional Convention that year.¹ Today, members of BLSA continue to excel in fulfilling the organization's mission both within and outside the Law School community. This was particularly evident this month through all of the excellent events and programming that BLSA offered to commemorate Black History Month.

More information about NBSLA can be found on the organization's [website](#). More information about Black History Month can be found [here](#). More information about this year's theme, *Black Migrations*, can be found [here](#). For items related to Black History Month within the Law Library's collection, please visit our series of Black History Month blog posts from last year: [Civil Rights Activists](#), [Justices & Judges](#), [Government Officials](#) and [Firsts in Their Field](#).

¹ If anyone knows when BLSA was first established on the Dickinson Law campus or has any knowledge of prior BLSA events, please contact me so that I can add this information to our collection.

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