

**Weissman Center for Leadership
20th Anniversary
Friday, November 8, 2019
“The Future of Leadership” Alumnae Panel Bios**



Courtney Brunson '16 is a first year student at Harvard Law School. She attended Mount Holyoke College as a Posse Foundation Civic Engagement Scholar and held leadership positions in multiple student organizations while on campus, including the Student Government Association, Debate Society, and Model United Nations Club. In addition to working with the Weissman Center and Community Based Learning Program, she also collaborated with the Dean of Students office in creating MoZone, the college's social justice peer education program for students by students. After graduation, Courtney joined Senator Elizabeth Warren's D.C. office as a Staff Assistant. During her three year tenure in the office, she would also work as a Legislative Correspondent on financial and economic policy issues and Investigator for the Oversight and Investigations Team. Since starting school this fall, Courtney has become a Student Attorney for Harvard Law's Tenant Advocacy Project. She hopes to continue working in economic mobility and poverty alleviation issues in the Greater Boston area.



Marcella Jayne FP'13 is an associate with Foley & Lardner LLP. She is a member of the firm's Business Litigation & Dispute Resolution Practice.

In 2017, Marcella worked as a litigation summer associate in Foley's New York office. Prior to that, while in law school, she gained experience working in government offices from the city to the federal level. Of particular note, she received the New York State Bar Association's 2015 Antitrust Fellowship and was placed in the Federal Trade Commission's Northeast Regional Office where she worked on merger review and consumer protection investigations and prosecutions. The following year, Marcella interned at the Security and Exchange Commission's Northeast Regional Office through its student honors program in the Division of Enforcement, where she conducted legal and investigative research assisting in the prosecution of federal securities law violations. Marcella is an ABA Young Lawyer Delegate for the State of New York and a member of the Young Lawyer Committee for the New York State Bar Association's Commercial and Federal Litigation Section.

Prior to law school, following the 2008 financial crisis Marcella was the legal defense coordinator for a nonprofit located in Springfield, MA called "No One Leaves," that challenged foreclosures by raising underlying mortgage title issues through post-foreclosure litigation. She acted as a liaison between volunteer attorneys working on limited-appearance-representation basis and pro se litigants. Marcella co-authored Chapter III of "The Line of Succession" in the

Fordham Law Review report “Fifty Years After the Twenty-Fifth Amendment: Recommendations for Improving the Presidential Succession System.”

Marcella earned her law degree from Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY (J.D., cum laude, 2018) where she was the Stein Scholar Council President and a staffer on the Urban Law Journal. Upon graduation, she received the following accolades: Adele L. Monaco Evening Division Award, National Association of Women Lawyers Award, The Archibald R. Murray Public Service Award, and the Public Interest Resource Center Student Leader Award for her leadership and commitment to public service.

She received her bachelor’s degree in politics, from Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA (B.A., cum laude and distinguished with high honors in the Politics Department, 2013) where she was a Phi Beta Kappa member and a Community Based Learning Fellow.



Angelica Mercado '19 is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Educación sin Límites (EDUSINLI), a community based nonprofit organization focused on alleviating generational poverty in the Dominican Republic. After graduation, Mercado worked at the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) as their Corporate Development Associate where she managed deliverables for partnerships with Fortune 1000 Companies. While at LULAC, Mercado helped fundraise four million dollars and created the LULAC Latin@ Tech Innovators Program to help Latinx students interested in STEM receive mentorship and guidance while navigating the field. During her

two years at Mount Holyoke, Mercado was an active member of MEChA de Mount Holyoke and the Co-Chair of C.A.U.S.E., Creating Awareness and Unity for Social Equality. While on campus, Mercado participated in various fellowships and leadership programs including Leadership in Public Service (LAPS), Community Based Learning (CBL), Kaplan Leadership Program, Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN), and FirstGen Fellowship, and presented her research and writings at the Five College Anthropology Conference. During her last semester, Mercado participated in the first cohort of MHC Semester in D.C. program where she studied International Development and interned at Congressman Jim McGovern’s Office in Capitol Hill. Mercado graduated Cum Laude from Mount Holyoke College with a major in Anthropology and a minor in Education.



Kavita N. Ramdas '85 is director of the Open Society Foundations' Women's Rights Program and is a globally recognized advocate for gender equity and justice. Ramdas previously served as strategy advisor for MADRE, an international women's rights organization. From 1996 to 2010, Ramdas served as the second president and CEO of the Global Fund for Women where she transformed it into the largest public foundation for women's rights in the world. From 2012 to 2015, she led the Ford

Foundation's operations in South Asia and then was senior advisor to President Darren Walker on issues related to the foundation's global strategy. Ramdas also founded a program on social entrepreneurship housed at Stanford University. She is a member of the Aspen Institute's Henry Crown Fellows Program. Ramdas has served on numerous boards including those of Princeton University, Mount Holyoke College, and Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Ramdas currently serves on the Investment Committee of the C&A Foundation, and is a member of the governing boards for the Ploughshares Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. She has appeared on NOW with Bill Moyers, PBS NewsHour, Democracy Now!, and CNN.



Leocadia I. Zak '79 became the ninth president of Agnes Scott College in July 2018. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Mount Holyoke College, which recognized her as a Woman of Influence in 2012, she holds a J.D. degree from Northeastern University School of Law. Zak is treasurer for the Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education (ARCHE). She is a member of the Rotary Club of Atlanta and serves as a trustee of Global Communities. She is a member of the SunTrust Atlanta Advisory Council and also serves on the Metro Atlanta Chamber Innovation and Entrepreneurship Advisory Board (IEAB). With an extensive background in international economic development and international project finance, in 2010 Zak was appointed by President Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as the director of the U.S. Trade

and Development Agency. Before joining the public sector in 2000, Zak spent 18 years at the Boston law firm Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo PC, which she joined as an associate in 1982. At the firm, she practiced in the area of international and domestic project finance, becoming a partner in 1990. Zak has taught international project finance as an adjunct faculty member at the Georgetown University Law Center and the Boston University School of Law.