

June 26, 2009

## **Verdina Y. Showell Award and Biography**

The Pennsylvania Bar Association, in conjunction with the Wills for Heroes organization, presents the first annual Verdina Y. Showell Award to Verdina's oldest daughter, Dr. Nakiya Showell, in honor of her mother's spirit, caring nature and determination to provide pro bono services, as well as her commitment to the Wills for Heroes program in Pennsylvania. This award will be an annual award to recognize outstanding community service and the commitment to protecting those who protect us.

Verdina Showell (1959-2008) passed away on Dec. 24, 2008. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1981 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. In 1985, Verdina graduated from Temple University's Beasley School of Law. After graduation, Verdina clerked for the Hon. Maria M. Cabret of the Territorial Court of the U.S. Virgin Islands and subsequently entered private practice in St. Croix. Verdina returned to Philadelphia after six years to accept a position with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC). She concluded her 14-year tenure at the PUC as lead counsel to the chairman of the commission. In 2007, Verdina re-entered the private sector when she joined the legal department of Exelon Business Services Company L.L.C. as an assistant general counsel in the Regulatory Group.

During her legal career, Verdina placed a high priority on an active pro bono practice. She worked with numerous organizations, including Philadelphia VIP (Volunteers for the Indigent Program), Voter Election Protection in the Greater Harrisburg Area, Homeless Advocacy Project and Wills for Heroes. She was a recipient of the Homeless Advocacy Project (HAP) citation in recognition of her service as a coordinator in HAP's Philadelphia Adopt-a-Shelter Program. In 2008, Verdina was selected as Exelon's East Pro Bono Coordinator. In June 2008, Verdina coordinated with the law firm of Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll L.L.P. to conduct Pennsylvania's first Wills for Heroes legal clinic at Exelon's Limerick Nuclear Generating Station. Thirty-nine first responders received free legal services that Saturday in an event driven by Verdina's passion to say "thank you" and express appreciation to the men and women that protect our freedom and safety everyday.