

# UpFront

By Samantha Meinke

## Governor Snyder Signs Bills Reforming Preliminary Exams



Courtesy photo

Governor Rick Snyder signed House Bills 5154 and 5155 into law May 20, streamlining the process of preliminary hearings in Michigan's district courts. The bills give prosecutors and defendants an opportunity to work out resolutions before preliminary exams, require courts to use teleconferences and videoconferences for certain witnesses, and expand the jurisdiction of district courts to allow for preliminary hearing reforms. The bills have become Public Acts 123 and 124. ■

*Governor Rick Snyder signs House Bills 5154 and 5155 into law surrounded by supporters, including SBM President-Elect Tom Rombach (third from right).*

## African Delegation Visits the State Bar of Michigan

A delegation of lawyers and judges from 11 sub-Saharan African countries visited State Bar of Michigan leaders May 21 in Lansing.

The delegation came to Michigan as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program, a U.S. Department of State professional exchange program that brings almost 5,000 international visitors to the country for short-term visits with their American counterparts. They spent their time in the state learning about the United States justice system and the rule of law. ■



Photo by Tommy Allen

## Florida Attorney Discusses Stand-Your-Ground Laws at Wayne



Courtesy photo

Benjamin Crump, a Florida civil rights attorney who represented the family of Trayvon Martin, spoke at Wayne State University Law School April 14 to discuss his reasons for seeking the repeal of stand-your-ground laws in Florida, Michigan, and 22 other states that have similar laws. The event was sponsored by Wayne Law's Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights, the Wolverine Bar Association, and the Association of Black Judges of Michigan. ■

## Flint High Schooler Named Judge Marable Student of the Year

Brenda Swann, an 11th grade student at Mott Middle College High School in Flint, was named District Judge Herman Marable Student of the Year for 2014. Swann was honored with a \$500 award, trophy, and certificate, and her name has been engraved on a plaque on permanent display at the 68th District Courthouse.

Swann was one of 10 monthly winners chosen by Marable and his Citizens Advisory Committee on the basis of essays detailing

their career goals. Monthly honorees receive a \$75 prize, trophy, and certificate. Judge Marable established the program in 2004 to encourage Genesee County high school students to focus on academic achievement and career goals.

Swann would like to become an anesthesiologist. Her extracurricular activities include participating in Young Women Leaders of Tomorrow and reading to and tutoring elementary school students. ■

## SBM Young Lawyers Host Just the Beginning Foundation

The State Bar Young Lawyers Section hosted a June 24 federal court excursion at the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan for students from the Just the Beginning Foundation High School Summer Legal Institute and the American Bar Association Council of Legal Education Opportunity College Pre-Law Summer Institute. YLS members Choi Portis and Paul Christensen moderated a panel of federal judges, and law clerks spoke to students about their career paths.

The Just the Beginning Foundation was started in 2010 by Hon. Victoria Roberts and Thomas M. Cooley Law School Dean John Nussbaumer. This year, it will provide 35 metropolitan Detroit area high school students with a free week-long program to introduce them to the potential for legal careers. The Council of Legal Education Opportunity program was started five years ago by former Thomas M. Cooley Law School Professor E. Christopher Johnson and Dean Nussbaumer. It will provide 19 college students with more than 100 hours of free law school instruction this year. ■

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