

2026 Unsung Hero Award Nomination - Rita White

From: [State Bar of Michigan](#)
To: [Carrie Sharlow](#)
Subject: Unsung Hero Award
Date: Thursday, February 26, 2026 10:37:12 PM

Name of Nominee: *	Rita White
Title:	Manager Owner
Firm or Organization:	Law Offices of Rita O. White
Address:	43111 Joy Rd #277, Canton, MI 48170
Phone:	(734)262-0650
Email:	attywhite@gmail.com
Name of Nominator: *	Robyn L. McCoy
Title:	Partner
Firm or Organization:	McCoy and Associates, PLLC
Address:	2381 East Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI. 48104
Phone:	734-846-3042
Email: *	robynlegal2019@gmail.com

Explain the merits of your nomination, submit any supporting materials for your nominee by email, fax, or mail. Give specific examples.

Attorney White is a graduate of the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor with a degree in Bio–Psychology. While in college, she served as a member of the University of Michigan Womens' Track & Field team. In 1998 she competed on the Big 10 Championship Team and placed 5th in the Big Ten Championship for Triple Jump. Attorney White earned her law degree from Wayne State University Law School in 2001. Rita White has been in practice for over 25 years. Her legal career began as a Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor in Detroit, MI where she served in that capacity for over 9 years. Rita has handled hundreds of criminal trial and appellate cases involving but not limited to robberies, drug trafficking, financial crimes and juvenile cases. She also regularly handled criminal appellate cases. Rita is a Past President of the Vanzetti Hamilton Bar Association and a Past President of Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan. Rita founded her own law firm, The Law Office of Rita O White in 2011 where she once again hit the ground running and has successfully managed her own firm ever since. Rita White is a very dynamic, always on the go attorney who never stops short of doing what she sets out to do for the betterment of her community. In private practice, Attorney White specializes in criminal, appellate (civil and criminal), transactional, probate, and family law, along with both Juvenile and child welfare matters. Rita is a very experienced, inquisitive lawyer who continuously expands her legal knowledge and scope of practice with regular continuing legal education in various forms. She has developed a sharp legal research ability that allows her to find answers to any legal question(s) she needs answered in order to advance her practice for herself and on behalf of her clients. She is also an active member of several additional local bar associations such as the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, the Washtenaw County Bar Association, the Wayne County Criminal Defense Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association– Eastern District of MI, and the National Black Lawyers Association, Top 100. She also serves as secretary of the Juvenile

Trial Lawyers Association of Michigan and is on the Executive Board. Rita White is a very enthusiastic musician. She is the lead singer in a local band called "Soul What" who performs regularly for charity and special causes. Rita takes music seriously and has realized that music is a powerful way to provide healing and happiness to people as a universal way to experience unity and connectedness. Rita is a tenacious counselor and advocate for all of her clients. She hopes to continue to serve her community with the pursuit of equal justice for all.

Rita is currently a member of the Representative Assembly. Rita has been the bar President for the Vanzetti Hamilton Bar Association and Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan. In her capacity as President of the Vanzetti Hamilton Bar Association, she helped to help with community outreach, efforts to uplift lawyers and judges in the community. As the President of Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan during COVID, she helped to facilitate educational program online to uplift attorneys, the youth and the public at large. She helped to co-host a series of virtual sessions with mental health professional, doctors, and the LT Governor Garlin Gilchrist. She has been the legal singer in a band of lawyers that is committed to uplifting the the legal community with music and raising money for charitable causes. She is the recipient of the Vanzetti Hamilton Bar Association's Frederick Douglass Award. Rita has been a contributor to the ICLE. She is a fellow with the Detroit Bar Association. She is on the board of Character and Fitness for the State Bar of Michigan. Rita received the Vanzetti Hamilton Bar Association's Frederick Douglass Award and the Black Women Lawyer's Association of Michigan President's Choice Award.

Optional: List news, magazine, radio, and TV features about the nominee's accomplishments (do not submit actual articles or DVDs). Feel free to include any hyperlinks to these stories, if they are still online.

She has been a guests on 910am, the Youtube Show on RobynLegal and was a legal analyst on John Conyers TV show in 2010.

State date/page and media e.g.
12/12/07, p. 12, Lansing State Journal, "Lawyer Begins TLC Program in Schools"

Attach Document (Optional)



[letter_of_support_for_rita_o._white.pdf](#)

106.06 KB • PDF

Law Offices of McCoy and Associates, PLLC

2381 E. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone: (734) 769 - 0001 | Fax: (734) 769-0056
Robert I. McCoy* | Robyn L. McCoy | Roderick K. Green - of Counsel
**Also Admitted in Arizona*

February 26, 2026

SBM Awards
State Bar of Michigan
306 Townsend Street
Lansing, MI 48933-2012
Phone: (517) 346-6374

RE: Unsung of Hero Award

Ms. Nominating Committee:

I am writing this letter to nominate Attorney Rita O. White for the Unsung Hero Award. I have known Rita for several years. She is a dedicated, hard working and conscientious attorney and advocate for people in need. She is an active volunteer in her church, a recent mom, an animal lover and a devoted wife. She has been an active member of several bar associations. She has taken on leadership roles with the Representative Assembly, as past president of the Vanzetti Hamilton Bar Association and past President of the Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan.

Rita has participated in educational panels on criminal defense issues, juvenile issues and family law issues for her fellow lawyers, the community at large and the youth. During her tenure as President of the Black Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, she helped to create virtual programming for members of the group and the public at large that was inspiring and uplifting during a difficult Covid. She helped to facilitate programming with mental health professionals, doctors and the Lt Governor Garlin Gilchrist.

She has traveled around the state as the lead singer with the band, "Soul What" using music to uplift her colleagues and the public. She has helped to mentor aspiring

attorneys, new and young attorneys. She has been actively engaged with State Bar Leadership activities, especially activities involving Diversity Equity and Inclusion. She has also been helpful in encouraging her fellow lawyers as they seek to navigate what can sometimes be a difficult and challenging profession.

For the reasons contained herein, I believe that Attorney Rita O. White would be an excellent choice for the Unsung Hero Award.

Sincerely,

Robyn L. McCoy

Robyn L. McCoy