

# 2026 Fellows Nomination Form

COMPLETE

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The Michigan State Bar Foundation is currently seeking nominations for the Class of 2026 Fellows. ONLY active Fellows are eligible to complete the nomination form. Nominations may not be submitted by persons related by blood or marriage to the nominee.

Following is the criteria for the Fellows Program:


- \* Attorneys who have demonstrated professional excellence.
- \* Attorneys who serve their community.
- \* Attorneys who practice law for a minimum of 10 years.
- \* Attorneys who are in good standing with the State Bar of Michigan.

Please answer each question as thoroughly as possible.

### CREATED

 PUBLIC  
May 23rd 2026, 8:48:18 am

### IP ADDRESS

 75.128.113.24

### \* Nominee's Name:

Abril V. Siewert

### \* Nominee's P Number (please enter number only):

77865

### \* Nominee's Email Address:

abrilsiewert@gmail.com

### Nominee's Address:

(No response)

### \* Total Years Admitted to Practice Law (a minimum of 10 years required). Also, include in your total the years practiced out of state.

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### Do you have a vitae, resume or bio for your Nominee? If not, you will be asked to answer additional questions below.

Yes

### Upload Your Nominees Bio

[abril\\_v\\_siewert\\_cv.pdf](#)

### Provide below a link to your nominee's bio:

(No response)

### Please list State Bar, local or affinity bar associations and other community activities:

(No response)

### Please list legal teaching, publications, professional recognition and/or memberships:

(No response)

**\* PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF WHY YOU BELIEVE THIS CANDIDATE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FELLOWS PROGRAM:**

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Abril is committed to the legal community through service and excellent casework. Abril currently serves as the Vice President of the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan but has held officer positions with WLAM for the past five years as well. As her vitae shows, she has been appointed to the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan and is the corresponding secretary for the SBM Immigration Law Section. She is dedicated to upholding the integrity of the profession and mentoring newer lawyers through those associations but also speaks out for her communities via publications, media appearances and speaking engagements. Her commitment to service is also highlighted by her past work experience at Lakeshore Legal Aid and the American Civil Liberties Union. Her career includes vast experience across different legal spheres from private practice to academia, and she is licensed in Michigan and California. Abril supports the work of the Foundation and would be a wonderful addition to the fellowship. Thank you.

**\* Nominator's Name:**

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Emily A. Calabrese

**\* Nominator's P Number (please enter number only):**

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73812

**\* Nominator's Email Address:**

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emilyacalabrese@gmail.com

## BAR ADMISSIONS

State of Michigan & State of California

## EDUCATION

### **University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, JD, 2013**

- Presidential Scholarship Recipient
- Environmental Law Seminar Book Award Recipient
- Co-Editor of Law Student Magazine Publication
- G. Mennen Moot Court Quarterfinalist
- CALI Excellence for the Future Award Recipient

### **California State University Los Angeles, BA, English Language and Literature, 2009**

- Dean's List 2008-2009

## PROFESSIONAL LEGAL EXPERIENCE

### **Oakland University, *Adjunct Professor*, 2024 – Present**

- Immigration Law instructor for paralegal program.
- Develop and implement comprehensive curriculum on foundational principles of immigration law, including visa categories, adjustment of status, naturalization, and deportation proceedings

### **The Siewert Law Firm *Managing Attorney*, 2023 – Present**

- Project based immigration expert assisting in-house counsel with immigration policies, procedures, and trainings.
- Represent clients in various district courts in criminal proceedings including, arraignments, pretrials, sentencing, probation violations, and trials. Attend pre-sentencing screening interviews and draft sentencing memorandums.

### **State of Michigan, *Administrative Law Specialist*, Unemployment Insurance Appeals Comm., 2023 – 2024**

- Provided independent analysis of the record and law.
- Researched and drafted opinions with factual accuracy, legal correctness and procedural propriety.
- Succinctly drafted legal findings and conclusions in a manner that was readable by litigants of widely varying literacy, as well as legal professionals.

### **Birach Law, PC, *Senior Associate Attorney*, 2020 – 2022**

- Researched and analyzed complicated regulations, statutes, policies, memorandums, and case law to develop specific case strategies for immigration clients.
- Drafted motions, briefs, and appeals in representation of individuals in removal proceedings before Immigration Judges, the Board of Immigration Appeals, and the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals.
- Prepared witnesses for trial; prepared requests for prosecutorial discretion; drafted labor certification applications; responded to Request for Evidence and Notice of Intent to Deny; negotiated cases with opposing counsel
- Counseled clients by interpreting highly complex immigration laws including comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of statutory, regulatory and case authorities.
- Developed case strategies for litigation; including, pleadings, motions, pre-trial briefs, stipulations,

affidavits, and other necessary evidence and legal documents.

- Drafted immigrant and nonimmigrant visa applications and screen potential client for eligibility.

**Honigman LLP, Staff Attorney, 2019 – 2020**

- Drafted visa applications and supporting documentation for companies sponsoring foreign nationals.
- Researched and analyzed complicated regulations, statutes, policies, memorandums, and case law to develop specific case strategies for corporate clients.
- Drafted immigrant and nonimmigrant visa applications; including, H-1B, Labor Certification, O, E, U, VAWA, L, TN, J waivers, and deferred action requests.
- Communicated with various governmental agencies on behalf of corporate clients.
- Advised clients on the legal impact of highly complex immigration laws, regulations, memorandums, and policies.

**American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan, Immigrant Rights Attorney, 2017 – 2019**

- Developed and executed company-wide strategy relating to immigration advocacy, education, and impact litigation.
- Screened clients for immigration civil rights violations in preparation of class action litigation.
- Maintained cordial and professional relationship through immigration related trainings to law enforcement and community advocates.
- Managed, maintained, and developed an infrastructure system to deploy volunteer attorneys to most effectively advance constitutional rights.
- Recruited, trained, mentored, and supervised law students and volunteer attorneys on their assigned cases and projects.
- Developed and managed outreach to partner organizations, schools, law enforcement, government employees on immigrant rights issues.
- Developed programming, training, and mentorship for 200+ attorneys on pro-bono and legal advocacy matters.

**Clement & Hurst, PLC, Associate Attorney, 2015 – 2017**

- Critically evaluated legal disputes to advise clients on the best possible solution and outcome through analysis of legal and risk-related issues.
- Represented clients in immigration court, district court, circuit court, administrative hearings, and at secondary inspections with the Department of Homeland Security.
- Litigated criminal defense cases at the district and circuit court level including; arraignments, pretrials, sentencing, and probation violations.
- Represented individuals in domestic relations proceedings dealing with divorce, custody, paternity, parenting time, and child support.
- Drafted immigrant and nonimmigrant visa applications; including, H-1B, Labor Certification, O, E, U, VAWA, L, TN, J waivers, and deferred action requests.
- Counseled clients by interpreting highly complex immigration laws, regulations, memorandums, and policies
- Develop case strategies for litigation; including, pleadings, motions, pre-trial briefs, stipulations, affidavits, pre-sentencing reports and other necessary legal documents.

**Lakeshore Legal Aid, Attorney, Counsel & Advocacy Law Line, 2014 – 2015**

- Resolved consumer, education, employment, health and housing disputes, public benefits, and guided pro per litigants through domestic and civil actions.
- Counseled litigants in contract disputes and litigation processes.

**Triumph Law, PLC, Managing Attorney, 2014 –2015**

- Managed caseloads ranging from family law, family-based immigration, criminal defense.
- Represented defendants at district court in arraignments, pretrial hearings, settlement conferences, trials and sentencing hearings.
- Researched and analyzed complicated regulations, statutes, policies, memorandums, and case law to develop specific case strategies for clients.

## **OTHER LEGAL TRAINING**

### **Oakwood Healthcare Systems, *Corporate Compliance Extern*, 2013 – 2014**

- Drafted complex rules and regulations into lay terms and effectively communicated basic legal principles to medical staff and management.
- Examined the effectiveness of established policies, standards, and procedures in assisting management in their obligation to comply with all applicable regulatory standards.
- Conducted extensive research of the Code of Federal Regulations, the public health code, and conditions of participation for acute care and psychiatric hospitals.

### **Fraser & Souweidane, P.C., *Law Clerk*, 2012 – 2013**

- Conducted substantive legal research; drafted case evaluation, facilitation, and arbitration summaries; and prepared motions for summary disposition in various District and Circuit Courts.
- Gained knowledge and familiarity with the Michigan Court Rules and Court Procedures.

### **Oakland County Circuit Court, *Law Clerk*, Summer 2012**

- Coordinated Personal Protection Court daily docket for visiting judges.
- Conferred with judges concerning legal questions, petitioner and responded inquiries, and the necessary requirements for granting Personal Protection Orders.

### **Wayne County Prosecutors Office of the General Counsel, *Law Clerk*, Summer 2011**

- Reviewed and drafted responses to Motions for Relief from Judgment from incarcerated individuals.

## **LANGUAGES**

Spanish, native fluency (spoken and written)

## **AWARDS**

State Bar of Michigan Regeana Myrick Outstanding Young Lawyer Award, 2016

## **COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Governor Appointed Commissioner for the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan (2019-2025)

Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, *Vice President*

- Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair, 2024-2025
- Pro-Bono Committee Chair, 2024-2025
- Secretary, Communications Chair, 2023-2024
- WLAM's *Working Towards Nine* Podcast, Content Creator (2021-2025)
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee Co-Chair 2023-2025
- Domestic Violence Committee Co-Chair (2020- 2022)
- Director at Large 2020-2023

State Bar of Michigan's Immigration Law Section, *Corresponding Secretary*

State Bar of Michigan's Criminal Law Section, *Member*

Oakland County Bar Association, *Member*  
American Immigration Lawyers Association of Michigan, *Member*  
Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan, *Member*  
City of Huntington Woods, Planning Commission Advisory Boards, *Member*

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Siewert, Abril, Hobballah, Farah, & Wall, Pamela. “Avoiding common mistakes where immigration and domestic cases intersect.” *Michigan Bar Journal*, Vol. 102, No. 8, September, 2023, pp. 20-22.

Siewert, Abril, & Khavajian, Mani. “Banishment from the kingdom: Criminal pleas, convictions, and immigration.” *Michigan Bar Journal*, Vol. 102, No. 8, September, 2023, pp. 24-26.

Siewert, Abril, Abrutyn Russell, Robinson Ruby, Kulhanek Samantha. *Immigration Consequences of Criminal Convictions in Michigan*, ACLU of Michigan, American Immigration Lawyers Association of Michigan, State Bar of Michigan’s Immigration Law Section, 2020.

## **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

Host, *What should non-immigration attorneys know about Trump 2.0*, Susan Reed and Sarah Yore-VanOosterhout, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, April 1, 2025.

Host, *A Conversation with Fair Michigan’s Director of Transgender Advocacy, Julisa Abad*, Working Towards Nine Podcast, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, December 10, 2024.

Host, *Setting Yourself up for Success with Political Consultant Loida Tapia*, Working Towards Nine Podcast, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, May 4, 2024.

Host, *MIRC: Fighting for Immigrant Rights in Michigan*, Working Towards Nine Podcast, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, July 24, 2023.

Host, *ACLU of Michigan Update*, Working Towards Nine Podcast, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, June 6, 2023.

Invited Presenter, *Immigration 101: Basics & Myths*, State Bar of Michigan Labor and Employment Law Section, September 15, 2021.

Invited Co-Presenter, *Immigration Consequences of a Criminal Charge*, Joint Annual Program of the Criminal Law, Immigration Law and Prisons & Corrections Sections of the State Bar of Michigan, October 17, 2020.

Invited Presenter, *Immigration Enforcement Know Your Rights*, multiple locations, 2016 – 2020.

Invited Presenter, Immigration Town Hall, Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence, 2019.

Invited Presenter, Cesar Chavez Academy, Law Day Mentor, Detroit Bar Association, 2014 – 2017.

Invited Speaker, *Immigration Basics and Myths*, Nuestra Familia Centro Multicultural, 2018.

## **MEDIA ACTIVITY**

Quoted in *The Detroit News*, April 3, 2019 (discussing 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment and local school enrollment requirement)

Quoted in *Fox 2 Detroit*, June 19, 2019 (discussing the Trump administration's family separation policy)

Quoted in *The Detroit News*, July 15, 2019 (discussing ICE visiting restaurant in Dearborn, Michigan)

Quoted in *NPR Michigan Public*, Aug 8, 2019 (discussing local law enforcement's cooperation with ICE)

Quoted in *The Arab American News*, Aug 17, 2019 (discussing Dearborn police cooperating with ICE)

Quoted in *Detroit Free Press*, May 21, 2018 (discussing CBP racially profiling Latinos in Michigan)

Quoted in *CNN*, July 11, 2018 (discussing the process of family reunification after ACLU sues ICE for separating families at the U.S/Mexico border)

Quoted in *CBS News*, July 11, 2018 (discussing ICE missing deadline for reuniting separated children at U.S/Mexico border)

Quoted in *Detroit Free Press*, July 10, 2018 (discussing the reunification of father and son after separation at U.S/Mexico border)

Quoted in *The Associated Press*, July 10, 2018 (discussing the reunification of client after separation at U.S/Mexico border)

Quoted in *Battle Creek Enquirer*, Oct 3, 2018 (Calhoun County Jail not allowing in person contact to ICE detainees)



# WLAM Board of Directors

## Officers



President Kirsten J. Silwanowicz



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Vice President Abril Valdes Siewert

Abril Valdes Siewert has dedicated her career to social justice. Ms. Siewert specializes in immigration law at Valdes Law, PLLC. She is also an instructor for Oakland University's paralegal program teaching immigration law. She has worked with small and large firms, as well as non-profit organizations such as Lakeshore Legal Aid; and as the Immigrant Rights Attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Michigan. During her time at the ACLU, she co-authored the Michigan Crimmigration resource guide which was distributed throughout the state. Ms. Siewert is licensed in the states of Michigan and California. She received her J.D., from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. She is the secretary and co-chair of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion committee for the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, and corresponding secretary for the State Bar of Michigan's Immigration Law Section.



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