Ball receives Young Alumni/Alumnae of Excellence Award

The School of Law’s Young Alumni/Alumnae of Excellence Award was presented to Mercedes G. Ball (J.D.’09).

Created by the law school’s Young Alumni/Alumnae Committee, this award recognizes an outstanding young graduate of the law school who gives gifts of time or talent to the law school community or community at large.

The award was presented to Ball by Audrey A. Lewis (J.D.’10), an assistant district attorney for the Augusta Judicial Circuit.

Ball currently ensures attorney compliance with the Georgia Rules of Professional Conduct as the Consumer Assistance Program assistant director at the State Bar of Georgia.

Previously, she was a child advocate attorney at the DeKalb County Child Advocacy Center, where she holistically represented the interests of children who had been abused, abandoned or neglected in civil court proceedings, mediations, panels and administrative hearings. She also worked as a lead trial attorney representing indigent individuals in criminal proceedings at a metro-Atlanta law firm.

Ball is an active volunteer and serves as the executive director of the Sister2Sister Mentoring Program, a DeKalb County and Fulton County Juvenile Court diversion program that focuses on developing court-involved teen girls into purpose-driven young women. She is also vice president of the Junior League of DeKalb’s Community Council. In 2018, she pitched and launched the DeKalb Saturday Scholars Initiative, a literacy-focused Saturday school, through a partnership with Junior League, the DeKalb County Solicitor General’s Office and Oak View Elementary School.

“He truly is a great UGA and law school supporter,” Morton said of Payne. “He’s given in so many ways that are behind the scenes. He also strongly supports the mission of the law school in addition to helping [Dean Bo Rutledge]. He’s been a major force behind the Morton and Payne Scholarship Fund that we created in the 1990s.”

However, Morton said there was one attribute that stands out about his longtime friend: “There are many things, truly, that are admirable about Billy Payne and what he’s done in this world but I will say of all the traits that I really hold the dearest for Billy is his thought that his family is paramount in everything he does. There’s no question.”