

Layli Miller-Muro '93 celebrated for work on behalf of others

Layli Miller-Muro '93 was awarded the Diane Von Furstenberg People's Voice Award in March in New York in recognition of her work to transform the lives of other women. Miller-Muro, an attorney, founded the Tahiri Justice Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting immigrant women and girls in the United States from human rights abuses. She is also the center's executive director. In accepting the \$50,000 prize, she said the money will be used "to save the lives of courageous women and girls who come to us seeking legal protection." At the awards ceremony, Miller-Muro introduced herself to Oprah Winfrey, who said, "I know [who you are]." Remembering that moment and her surprise, Miller-Muro said, "Oprah remembered my client appearing on her show in 1996 and said that I did great work. I was shocked by her memory." Miller-Muro described Von Furstenberg as "lovely, poised and elegant."

At Agnes Scott, Miller-Muro was an integral part of founding and presiding over the Racism-Free Zone Project. "The ASC environment is so small that there are a lot of leadership opportunities, plus you aren't competing with men," Miller-Muro said, adding that these two factors ingrained initiative in her. After graduating from ASC, Miller-Muro received her J.D. and M.A. in international relations from American University in Washington, D.C. While working as an attorney for a D.C.-based law firm, she represented a 17-year-old girl who had narrowly escaped genital mutilation and forced marriage in Togo. "That case sparked my passion but also opened doors to what



is my legal career in gender-based issues," she said. She said that since 2001 the center has helped more than 12,000 and grown to a staff of more than 30. "It's styled as a personal award, but I see it as a reflection of the great work the organization is doing," said Miller-Muro, who lives in Virginia with her husband, Gil, and their three children.

With an intense work schedule focused on the mistreatment of others, Miller-Muro stays grounded by her Bahá'í faith: "When I am feeling particularly depressed about suffering, my spirituality helps me see the long-term process in place."

—Andrea Lynn '00

The book cover for "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot. The cover features a black and white photograph of Henrietta Lacks in a dark dress. The title is in large, white, serif font. The author's name is at the bottom. There are several quotes and endorsements on the cover, including one from Entertainment Weekly. The book is shown resting on an open book.

SAVE THE DATE

October 2012 is Scottie Book Month!

Join fellow alumnae in your community for a discussion of the first-year common-reading selection, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. This exciting but controversial story details how one woman's cancer cells have gone on to contribute toward scientific research long after her death and without her permission.

Invitations for specific Scottie Book Month events will be sent in the late summer. Contact the Office of Alumnae Relations with any questions at alumnae@agnesscott.edu or 404 471-6323.

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