

Harvard Law Graduate Defies Odds to Become an Example



Summary: *One Harvard Law School graduate is not like the others, setting an example to all that anything is possible with hard work and determination.*

A single mother and now a Harvard Law School graduate. The path to becoming a lawyer has not been easy for Briana Williams, 24, who even took a final last April while in labor. Even though things have not always been easy for Williams, she knows it has all been worth it, according to Simplemost.

Williams took to Instagram to share her joy of walking across the stage to receive her juris doctorate. In a photo, along with her 1-year-old daughter Evelyn, who wore a matching graduation outfit, Williams wrote: “I went into labor in April- during final exam period. I immediately requested an epidural so that my contractions wouldn’t interfere with my Family Law grade. And, with tears in my eyes, I finished it. This “biting the bullet” experience is quite quintessential of my time at Harvard. To say that my last year of law school, with a newborn, and as a single mom was a challenge would be an understatement. Some days I was so mentally and emotionally fatigued that I did not leave my bed. I struggled with reliable childcare. It was not atypical to see me rushing through Wasserstein to the Dean of Students’ office with Evelyn in her carriage, asking DOS can they keep her for a few until class was over. If not, she’d just have to come with me to class. Evie attended classes often. So I’m going to be honest with you guys.. I didn’t think I could do it. I did not think that, at 24 years old, as a single mom, I would be able to get through one of the most intellectually rigorous and challenging positions of my life. It was hard. It hurt. ...I am happy to say that I DID do it. Today, Evelyn in my arms, with tears streaming down my face, I accepted my Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School...”

Williams explains that she was terrified to start law school because her background was so different from most of the students at Harvard but her dad explained that her “street smarts” set her apart and gave her an edge. She explained in a previous post, “I could look at the law through the lens of a black woman, and (eventually), a financially independent single mother. I used this to my advantage. I made sure to engage in courses that contextualized the law with my blackness, femininity, and income strata. I joined organizations, clinics, and fellowships that would allow me to advocate on behalf of those who, like myself, had trouble navigating their way into higher education.”

Williams is preparing for the July bar exam and will start a position with a Los Angeles law firm in their litigation department soon.

Do you think Williams’ background and obstacles she has already overcome make her even more valuable? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

To learn more about law school graduates who have beat the odds, read these articles:

- [Single Mom of 5 Set to Graduate from Law School](#)
- [Court Explains Why Seattle University Law Grad with Criminal Past Could Take the Bar Exam](#)
- [Drug Program Participant Turned Law School Student](#)

Photo: [estudiant.lefigaro.fr](#)