

Circuit Court of Illinois
Eleventh Judicial Circuit
McLean County

Hon. Scott J. Black
Associate Circuit Judge
Law & Justice Center
Room 323
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-888-5257



COUNTIES
Ford
Livingston
Logan
McLean
Woodford

April 27, 2023

McLean County Bar Association

Re: Letter in support of the nomination of Nicole Mannen as Young Lawyer of the Year

To Whom it May Concern:

I have been asked to write a letter in support of Nicole Mannen's nomination as Young Lawyer of the Year, and I am pleased to do so. Ms. Mannen has been an attorney in my courtroom for approximately one and one-half years. By my count, she has already had at least seven jury trials and two bench trials with me. Six of those trials resulted in a verdict in her client's favor – a fact that is not surprising because of the talent and skills important to a good trial lawyer that she is developing and already possesses at this early stage in her career.

Ms. Mannen's success is a result of her excellent analytical skills. She understands the facts of the case and can dissect them and present them in the best possible light for her client. She speaks plainly and persuasively to jurors and can present the facts and legal concepts in a way that jurors can easily understand. Even in cases where the evidence has been strong against her client, she still is able to find some aspect to present to the jury to make reasonable arguments for acquittal.

Ms. Mannen has a great work ethic. She is always on time and prepared, which lends credibility to her and her positions. Ms. Mannen is confident and has great composure in the courtroom. She thinks quickly on her feet and reacts quickly to unexpected changes during a trial – an essential skill for a good trial attorney. For many young trial attorneys it takes some years of experience before they gain the confidence to have a strong presence in the courtroom. Ms. Mannen already has it.

Ms. Mannen is passionate about her work. I believe this is a large part of her success. She cares about her work and her clients. It is obvious that she wants to do her best for them by the effort that she puts into the cases she is handling. Maybe most importantly, Ms. Mannen is easy to work with and is a joy in the courtroom.

Sincerely,

Scott J. Black
Scott J. Black
Associate Circuit Judge