



LegalWriting
institute

2022 Courage Award Recipient



Nantiya Ruan
University of Denver Sturm College of Law

The Board of Directors of the Legal Writing Institute (LWI) announces with enthusiasm that Professor Nantiya Ruan is the recipient of the 2022 Terri LeClercq Courage Award. She is a Professor of the Practice of Law and Director of the Workplace Law Program at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.

The Courage Award is aptly named by pioneering and courageous legal writing colleague Terri LeClercq, who founded the award to recognize "courage writ large" concerning legal writing. This award honors members of our community who have "demonstrated courage by doing, despite fear, something that most people would not do."

Professor Ruan's recognition is based on her courage in two spaces — her courage demonstrated in her scholarship on hierarchical microaggressions as well as her courage demonstrated in her work for the homeless. Professor Ruan's article *Papercuts: Hierarchical Microaggressions in Law Schools*¹ is a fascinating recount of microaggressions often faced in

¹ 31 Hastings Women's L.J. 3 (2019), available at <https://repository.uchastings.edu/hwlj/vol31/iss1/3>.

academia (including those personally experienced) and provides recommendations to combat them. Additionally, Professor Ruan has worked tirelessly for the homeless of Denver. She advocated for proposed legislation known as “Initiative 300,” which would have allowed all unsheltered individuals the right to eat, sleep, and rest on public areas in Denver. While the initiative did not receive sufficient votes to become law, due to the efforts of Professor Ruan and other community advocates like her, it was on the ballot in 2019. Undeterred, Professor Ruan has now proffered expert testimony in a civil rights action challenging the constitutionality of the current law barring urban camping. Indeed, this is the courage writ large that Terri LeClercq envisioned when she created the Courage Award. For those reasons, the Board is proud to announce Professor Nantiya Ruan as recipient of the 2022 Courage Award.

The LWI Board is grateful for the work of the LWI Awards Committee in identifying nominees and making recommendations to the Board. The Committee includes Chair Brenda Gibson, and members Andrew Carter, Janet Dickson, Kathryn Mercer, Samantha Moppett, Dyane O’Leary, Suzanne Rowe, and Mark Wojcik.

The Courage Award will be given during the 2022 LWI Biennial Conference at Georgetown University Law Center.

