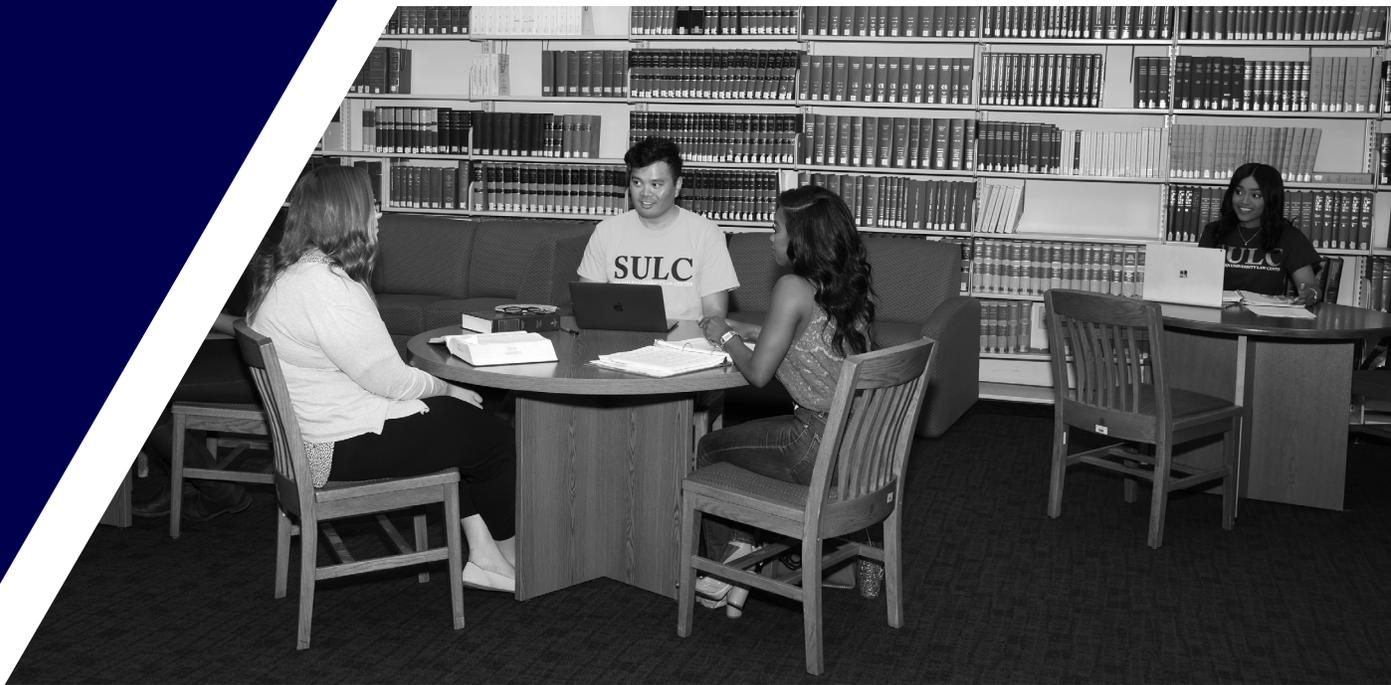


# CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

JUNE 2022



**PRODUCING LAWYER LEADERS**

# NEWS



## NEARLY 200 GRADUATES CROSS THE STAGE AT SULC SPRING 2022 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

On May 21, over 150 graduates crossed the stage during the Southern University Law Center (SULC) Spring 2022 Commencement Ceremony. The ceremony was held at F.G. Clark Activity Center on the campus of Southern University Baton Rouge. Dr. Dennis J. Shields, incoming president of the Southern University System and chancellor of the Southern University A&M College, served as the commencement speaker.

“Today, our lawyer leaders are departing the hallowed halls of the Southern University Law Center and embarking on a journey that will lead them in many directions,” said John K. Pierre, chancellor of the Southern University Law Center. “It is our hope that, in times of joy and trial, they remember the knowledge and wisdom experienced during their law school career.”

Since this year the Law Center celebrates its 75th anniversary, Pierre reflected on the ways the institution has molded countless leaders and change agents within society. He noted that the school’s accomplishments would not exist with the bravery and courage of Charles Hatfield, a Baton Rouge resident that wrote a letter that catapulted a lawsuit in which the Law Center was birthed.

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome opened the ceremony with a welcome. She expressed to graduates how they are part of a brighter future for all of us in America.

“When we think of Southern University Law Center, we know that the graduates of the Southern University Law Center are making an impact in the corridors of congress, in the halls of justice all over the world,” said Broome. “We look forward to you making your mark

# CONT. 200 GRADUATES CROSS THE STAGE

in your sphere of influence and while following your passion.”

Shields shared that he believes the special obligations of a good lawyer are remaining ethical, keeping clients first, being leaders and acting as stewards of the community. He encouraged the graduates to mirror those concepts.

“You are now a part of this great tradition and legacy,” said Shields. “Graduates of programs like this one have paved the way for all of us in the same way that I hope you will pave the way for future generations.”

Shields has spent the majority of his career advocating for better access to higher education.

In addition, he motivated the new alumni to continue the legacy of the aspirers and visionaries who came before them and use the great education and training they received from SULC to be the next group of change makers who influence future graduates.

The ceremony was live-streamed and recorded on the Law Center’s YouTube channel. You can watch the commencement ceremony here: <https://bit.ly/sulccommencement>.



*John Pierre, chancellor; Edwin Shorty, SU Board of Supervisors chairman; Dennis Shields, incoming president and chancellor of Southern University.*



*Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome speaking at commencement ceremony*



*Honors Graduate Braden Darville*



*Graduates Viky McDonald, Jamil Najj and Quiana-Joy Ochiagha*

## LAW CENTER CREATES HEIRS' PROPERTY INITIATIVE TO ASSIST WITH LAND AND HOMEOWNERSHIP



The Southern University Law Center has created the SULC Heirs' Property Initiative to lend its legal expertise and assist those requiring support in this matter. The Huey and Angelina Foundation awarded the Law Center a \$150,000 grant to carry out the initiative.

Through the Office of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives, the Heirs Property Initiative seeks to reduce the barrier to various legal issues that arise from inherited property not being properly passed from the decedent to heirs by providing legal services and filing fees for the creation of wills and preparation of succession pleadings.

The Law Center will partner with community groups, such as Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, Louisiana Appleseed, and Metamorphosis, to host monthly educational seminars and intake sessions regarding wills and preliminary succession information. In addition, it will provide legal services and funding to aid in the completion of successions so that a proper transfer. The initiative will house three in-house attorneys and nine student strategic fellows to conduct research and preparation of pleadings.

## SPLUNK, INC. DONATES \$10K TO TECHNOLOGY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLINIC

SULC alumni continue to show their generosity and appreciation to the institution that poured and molded them into successful and transformational legal professionals. Recently, Trenika L. Fields-Smith ('13), commercial counsel at Splunk Inc., and her team made a donation of \$10,000 to the Technology and Entrepreneurship Clinic.

"In honoring my achievements and those at Southern University Law Center (SULC) who will follow my example, Splunk's Executive Leadership team within the Legal Global Affairs (LGA) department has agreed to make a \$10K donation on behalf of Splunk to



# CONT. SPLUNK, INC. DONATES

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SULC's Technology & Entrepreneurship Clinic," said Fields-Smith. "Splunk believes in the "commitment to cultivating a culture of inclusion and making Splunk a place where everyone can thrive and provide community no matter the background". As such, the donation may be used to contribute towards the student's "continued preparation for the practice of law through real-world experience, seminars, and externship". It is my hope that the donation continues to move the needle forward to increase in-house legal opportunities within the technology ecosystem for talented lawyers who are graduates from Historically Black Law Schools."

The SULC's Technology and Entrepreneurship Clinic is passionately founded on the premise of the "Next Generation of Lawyers Helping the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs."

"The clinic is a transformative training ground where law students are exposed to the world of intellectual property, technology, and other emerging and innovative fields of law," said Marina Biragova, executive director of the SULC Technology and Entrepreneurship Clinic. "While law school courses act as a springboard to shape the minds of future lawyers, law school clinics such as ours provide vital practical training. This gift is particularly special because it comes from one of our alumni who is now a part of an amazing company whose values align with the ongoing efforts of SULC Tech. We greatly appreciate the care you have shown to our clinic. Because of your support, we may continuously serve the Louisiana business community and our students. We look forward to how our services will propel our community forward and will create a pipeline for law students to pursue their dreams and professional aspirations further."

# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

## SHAUL ISRAEL



Law Center student Shaul Israel has been selected as a 2022 Intern at Invictus Law in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

## LANNETTE RICHARDSON

Lannette Richardson has been re-elected to chair the American Bar Association (ABA) Law Student Division Council for a second term.



## BRIA JONES



Bria Jones is one of six law students selected from over 64 different law schools as a legal fellow with NAACP's Kellogg's Summer Law Fellow Internship.

## RAYVON ADDISON

Rayvon Addison has accepted a summer position as a HABA (Harvard Alumni for Black Advancement) Intern: Civil Litigation at ArchCity Defenders, Inc.



# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

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## NYA BRYANT



First year Law Center student Nya Bryant has accepted a position as a law clerk for the City of Alexandria's City Attorney's Office for this summer.

## TYLER OLIVIER

Law Center student Tyler Olivier has accepted an internship opportunity with Taylor Porter and Deutsch Kerrigan LLP.



## JESSICA COOK



Jessica Cook has accepted a summer position as a law clerk at the Office of the Public Defender in Maryland.

## CARLOS POLLARD JR.

Carlos Pollard Jr. has been named named a 2022 Marshall-Motley Scholar through The Legal Defense Fund (LDF).



# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

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## JARED JOHNSON



Law Center student Jared Johnson was named Young Entrepreneur of the Year by the Louisiana Economic Development and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

## CHELSEA GARIN

Law Center student Chelsea Garin has obtained a summer internship at 19th Judicial District Court.



## JAMIL NAJI



The Law Center's Honor Board of Advocates has selected Jamil Naji as the Outstanding Advocate of the Year.

## TIANA THOMAS

Law Center student Tiana Thomas earned a summer internship with the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center at Alcorn State University.



# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

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## DENEEN HODGE



Law Center student Deneen Hodge has been chosen to be a summer intern with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund and Federation of Southern Cooperatives.

## JENNIFER NGUYEN



## ALEXIS MINOR



Law Center students Alexis Minor and Jennifer Nguyen have both joined McGlinchey Stafford as summer associates.

## CEDRIC ANDERSON JR.

Cedric Anderson Jr. earned a summer legal internship at the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office in the Juvenile Division.



# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

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## DEMARIO BUTCHEE



Demario Butchee joined the NAACP Legal Defense Fund as a 2022 Summer Legal Intern.

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## PRENTICE WHITE

Law Center Professor Prentice White has been appointed as the legal advisor of the The Sons and Daughters Special Projects Team (SPT) Fund, Inc.



# ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

## MARK CARVER



Alumnus Mark Carver has joined Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck, LLP, (KDV) as a partner in the New Orleans office, practicing employment law and casualty defense.

# ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

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## CHRISTOPHER JORDAN

Recent Law Center alumnus Christopher Jordan received the Louisiana State Bar Association's 2022 Law Student Pro Bono Award.



## DENNIS BLUNT



Dennis Blunt has been named vice-managing partner at Phelps Dunbar LLP.

## TERREL KENT

Law Center alumna Terrel Kent has been named deputy executive counsel and Criminal Justice Policy advisor for the Office of Governor John Bel Edwards.



## DONALD R. CRAVINS JR.



Law Center alumnus Donald R. Cravins Jr. has been appointed by President Joe Biden to serve as Under Secretary for Minority Business Development within the Department of Commerce.

# ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

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## MATTHEW PERTUIT

Alumnus Matthew Pertuit, an associate at Chehardy, Sherman, Williams, Recile and Hayes specializing in complex personal injury litigation, received the Top 10 Under 40 Attorney Award in Louisiana for 2022 from the National Academy of Personal Injury Attorneys.



## YASHA CLARK

Law Center alumna Yasha Clark was named Outstanding Young Lawyer of Louisiana by the Louisiana Bar Association.



## TYLER BOSWORTH

Tyler Bosworth has joined Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana as advocacy director.



## CHRIS ROY JR.

Bedsore Law adds alumnus Chris Roy Jr. as an of counsel member.



# ONGOING AND UPCOMING EVENTS

11TH ANNUAL NATIONAL  
**CIVIL RIGHTS  
CONFERENCE**  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA      JUNE 20TH - 21ST

**ENGAGE, EDUCATE & EMPOWER**

TO REGISTER OR LEARN MORE VISIT: [SULC.EDU/NCRC](http://SULC.EDU/NCRC)  
PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES JUNE 18TH-19TH NEW ORLEANS, LA

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY**  
LAW CENTER  
Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights & Justice



**M MIAMI UNIVERSITY**  
OXFORD, OH • EST. 1809



**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>**  
L'AUBERGE CASINO

6 P.M. VIP RECEPTION | 7 P.M. DINNER

\$75 GENERAL TICKET | \$250 VIP RECEPTION TICKET

*Black Tie Optional*



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The Southern University Law Center is a unit of the Southern University System

Dr. Ray L. Belton, Southern University and A&M College System President  
John K. Pierre, SULC Chancellor

*Produced by the SULC Office of External Affairs | Photography by Steve Jarreau*