Since welcoming our first class over 85 years ago, offering equal access to educational opportunity has been essential to the Law School’s mission. Over the decades, we have educated lawyers who have represented the underserved of their time, whether immigrants, women, or members of racial, ethnic or religious minorities.

A commitment to justice is also vital to our mission, and to the Vincentian ethos of St. John’s University. We are a community dedicated to justice under the law. And we believe that legal justice is tied to social and economic justice, and to equal access to the law. Through our clinical programs and many other initiatives, our students not only learn about justice, they experience justice in action.

Our founding mission has become our living mission.
Our Living Mission

Ralph Carter
Evning program student, Class of 2014

At St. John’s School of Law, we seek to foster a diverse community where students engage in issues of economic and social justice while receiving a rigorous legal education that prepares them for leadership in the legal profession and as members of the global legal profession. These issues run through our curriculum. They are the foundation of our clinical programs and academic centers, including the Ronald H. Brown Center for Civil Rights and Economic Development, named in honor of the late Ronald H. Brown ’70. A national political leader, Brown served as Secretary of Commerce in the Clinton Administration and as Chair of the Democratic National Committee, the first African American to hold either post.

Scholarship Programs

Because we are committed to diversity and opportunity, the Law School awards full-tuition scholarships to outstanding students who have an active interest in civil rights can receive full-tuition scholarships and participate in honors workshops.

Summer Institute

Certain promising applicants to the Law School, because of discriminatory, financial or other barriers, may have undergraduate performance or LSAT scores that do not warrant unconditional acceptance into the entering class. Through the Summer Institute, these applicants can demonstrate their aptitude for legal study in a course taught and graded according to the same standards as all first-year courses. Summer Institute students who succeed in the course earn admission to the Law School.

The Center is unique because it not only provides students with the academic theory through conferences, symposia and courses to learn about racial, social and economic inequality, but also provides real-world opportunities through these courses and events and the pipeline programs to help the students to actually change the world. – Ronald H. Brown Prep Program for College Students

The Ronald H. Brown Center for Civil Rights and Economic Development (RHB) has been a force at the Law School since 1999. It conducts legal studies, research and outreach on matters that affect the lives of underrepresented people, preparing law students to be leaders on issues of racial, economic and social justice. The RHB Center also offers specialized outreach and pipeline programs to ensure diversity in the next generation of the legal profession.

The student-run Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development is the Center’s official publication, providing a forum for discussing issues of racial, social and economic justice. This quarterly journal publishes, through the work of legal scholars and law students on such topics as child advocacy, criminal justice and national security. Through the Perspectives on Justice course, the Journal also offers students an opportunity to write notes, blog posts and opinion pieces on topics of social justice under the supervision of the Center’s faculty. The Journal frequently co-sponsors events with the RHB Center.

The ABA award-winning RHB Prep Program for College Students encourages students from underrepresented groups to pursue legal studies and careers. Launched in 2005, the program has grown, and thrived in partnership with St. John’s University, certain CUNY colleges and the United Negro College Fund Colleges.

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