A Diverse Community, Committed to Justice

Honoring our heritage, fulfilling our mission
Since welcoming our first class over 90 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 times, 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.

More at: www.law.stjohns.edu
Our Living Mission

At St. John’s School of Law, we seek to foster a diverse community, where students engage issues of economic and social justice while receiving a rigorous legal education that prepares them to be successful 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 Vincentian and Ronald H. Brown scholarships each year. Outstanding students with an active interest in civil rights can receive full-tuition scholarships and participate in honors workshops.

“The Center focuses on the twin goals of diversity and equality in all the work that we do. From legal scholarship at conferences and in the Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development, to internships and practicums in civil rights, to our summer pipeline program, we work closely with law students on issues of racial, social, and economic injustice and provide meaningful opportunities to effectuate change.”

Elaine M. Chiu, professor of law and director of the Ronald H. Brown Center for Civil Rights and Economic Development
Leah Winfield
Full-time program
Class of 2016

Background
Co-founder of the St. John’s Law Coalition for Social Justice, with aspirations to work in a district attorney’s office and later become a federal prosecutor.

Why St. John’s Law?
St. John’s Law really tries to make you the best lawyer that you can possibly be. You’ll find so many opportunities to find your niche in the law.

What opportunities have you had?
Already in my first year, I was involved with mock trial, where I got my feet wet with litigation. I also became the co-founder of a new student organization called the Coalition for Social Justice. I would have never had that opportunity without the backing of Dean Simons and many of the other administrators here.

What particular skills have you gained?
St. John’s does a particularly great job at giving their students lawyering skills, which include negotiating and advocating for your client. That’s something that a lot of other schools don’t give their first-year students, and they’re very important skills to have moving forward.

“In looking for the best school for you, you have to find the school that gives you the most opportunities. And at St. John’s Law, that’s what they afford you—the opportunities to succeed as a future lawyer.”
The RHB Center

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 while 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.

STUDENT-RUN JOURNAL

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 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 op-ed pieces on topics of social justice under the supervision of the Center’s faculty. The Journal frequently cosponsors events with The RHB Center.

SYMPOSIAS AND CONFERENCES

The Center has recently sponsored the following academic events:

- Legal, Secular, and Religious Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage
- America’s New Class Warfare
- New Challenges and New Approaches to Domestic Violence
- Border Patrols: The Legal, Racial, Social, and Economic Implications of United States Immigration Policy
- Criminal Justice in the 21st century: The Challenge to Protect Individual Freedoms, Civil Rights, and Our Safety

PIPELINE PROGRAMS

The ABA award-winning RHB Prep Program encourages students from underserved 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. College sophomores and juniors participate in a two-summer immersion program to prepare for law school. To date, over 100 RHB Prep Program graduates have been accepted at law schools and graduate schools throughout the country.

Legal Outreach Program

Collaborating with the nonprofit organization Legal Outreach, The RHB Center trains law students to teach New York City high school students legal concepts in a five-week curriculum.

Ronald H. Brown Prep Program for College Students
It is the policy of St. John’s School of Law not to discriminate in its educational program, admissions policies, financial aid programs, employment practices, and other School-sponsored activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.

The School of Law is proud of the distinguished leaders who entered St. John’s from underserved communities. These alumni include:

- Eli N. Avila ’03, MD, MPH, FCLM
  Commissioner of Health for Orange County, NY

- Pierre G. Bonnefil ’88
  Partner, Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.

- Ricardo J. Cata ’75
  Of Counsel, Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP

- Hon. Randall T. Eng ’72
  Presiding Justice, New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Second Department

- John T. Martinez ’97
  Senior Counsel, Raytheon Intelligence and Information Systems

- Lourdes M. Martinez ’92
  Partner, Garfunkel Wild, P.C.

- Jonelle A. Procope ’77
  President and CEO, Apollo Theater Foundation, Inc.

- Hon. Reinaldo E. Rivera ’76, ’06
  Associate Justice, New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Second Department

- Elaine C. Weddington Steward ’87
  Vice President and Club Counsel, Boston Red Sox

- Tracey L. Brown ’92
  Partner, The Cochran Firm

- Elizabeth D. Moore ’78
  General Counsel, Con Edison

Contact

St. John’s University
School of Law
8000 Utopia Parkway
Queens, NY 11439

(718) 990-6474
lawinfo@stjohns.edu

www.law.stjohns.edu