

RONALD H. BROWN CENTER FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW



RON BROWN CENTER

WELCOME LUNCHEON

The Ron Brown Center hosted the annual Welcome Luncheon for incoming and returning Ron Brown Scholars on September 18, 2019. Dean Simons provided introductory remarks to greet attendees to kick-off the academic year. Director Kamille Dean welcomed students to this innovative learning community by highlighting the life and legacy of Ronald H. Brown. Students had the opportunity to fellowship with one another and engage in community building during the luncheon.

ABOUT THE RHB CENTER

Established in 1999, the Ron Brown Center has been a force at St. John's University School of Law in its research efforts, legal studies, and outreach on matters that affect the rights of underrepresented people. It leads several path-breaking initiatives designed to increase the pool of qualified students of color in law schools, to teach law students how to be leaders in social justice as they enter the legal profession, and to support lawyers of color pursuing careers in academia. The ultimate mission of the Ron Brown Center is to open the door of opportunity to communities that are traditionally shut out from the mainstream.



SOCIAL JUSTICE LISTENING SESSION WITH SPECIAL GUEST ANTHONY RAY HINTON

On September 3, 2019, the Ron Brown Center welcomed Anthony Ray Hinton of the Equal Justice Initiative to St. John's Law for a social justice listening session with students, faculty, and staff. The event was hosted by the Dean's Office and co-sponsored by the Journal for Civil Rights and Economic Development (JCRED) and the Coalition for Social Justice. Mr. Hinton shared his insights on criminal justice system as a former death row inmate in Alabama. He was convicted of murder and later exonerated and released from prison after being incarcerated for 29 years. Bryan Stevenson, attorney and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, obtained post-conviction relief on Mr. Hinton's behalf for a crime he did not commit. Mr. Hinton later published his best-selling book, *The Sun Does Shine, How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row* recounting his experience through this ordeal. This critically acclaimed book was an Oprah's Book Club selection and serves as a call to action for criminal justice reform.

Three students were selected to provide commentary on social justice issues pertaining to concerns about civil rights before an audience to start the dialogue with Mr. Hinton. Jillian Fitzpatrick, 3L and JCRED member, presented on her paper entitled, *Reframing the Monuments: How to Address Confederate Statutes in the United States*. Daniela Nauffal, 3L, presented on the topic, *Racial Bias in Judicial and Prosecutorial Discretion*. Emmanuelle Yeremou-Ngah, 2L and Ron Brown Scholar, recounted her internship experience in presenting a talk entitled, *Invisible Chains in Society and How they Influence Recidivism*.

RON BROWN SCHOLARS

The entering class of Ron Brown Scholars included 16 students in the Class of 2022. These talented 1L's came to St. John's Law from near and far. We welcomed exceptional students from a number of distinct institutions including Wellesley and Xavier University. We also have notable students joining us from the tri-state region who now make their home at St. John's Law. The new class of Ron Brown Scholars joins a thriving learning community of over 50 current Ron Brown Scholars to add to the rich tradition of excellence at the Law School. Please join us in supporting our next generation of diverse attorneys committed to social justice and civil rights.



SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT ON JASMINE BROWN (LEFT) & EMMANUELLE (EMMA) YEREMOU-NGAH (RIGHT)

Jasmine Brown, 2L and Ron Brown Scholar, joined St. John's Law from California as a graduate of the University of Southern California. Jasmine is an integral part of our learning community as a member of the St. John's Law Review, executive board member for the Black Law Students Association (BLSA), and Ron Brown tutor. She was awarded the prestigious NYC Bar Diversity Fellowship to partake in a coveted summer internship at Fried Frank. Jasmine represented what it means to be a Ron Brown Scholar as a speaker at the St. John's Law Diversity Gala this past spring.

Emma Yeremou-Ngah, 2L and Ron Brown Scholar, joined St. John's Law from Florida as a graduate of the University of Tampa. Born and raised for the first half of her life in Cameroon, Emma always dreamed of becoming a lawyer. Emma plays a fundamental role in our community, serving as a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute (ABI) Law Review, Moot Court Honors Society, Black Law Students Association (BLSA), and Phi Alpha Delta (PAD Law Fraternity). She was also awarded the prestigious NYC Bar Diversity Fellowship to partake in a summer internship at the New York County District Attorney's Office. Emma will be working at Norton Rose Fulbright this upcoming summer 2020. She has expressed that being a Ron Brown Scholar "truly set her up for progress and success in the legal field. Not only did it make attending law school feasible, but also it made the transition smoother by providing [her] a network of students, professionals, and tools to succeed...and [she is] well on [her] way to making [her] childhood dream come true."



SCHOLAR EVENTS



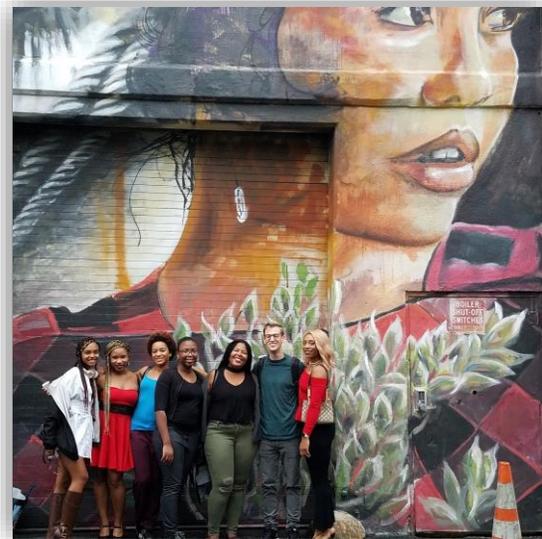
GRADUATION PARTY

The Ron Brown Center celebrated the Class of 2019 at a reception for graduating Ron Brown Scholars on May 14, 2019. Please join us in congratulating our newest attorneys!

STREET ART WALK

Dean Susan Landrum led 1L Ron Brown Scholars on a Street Art Walk around Long Island City

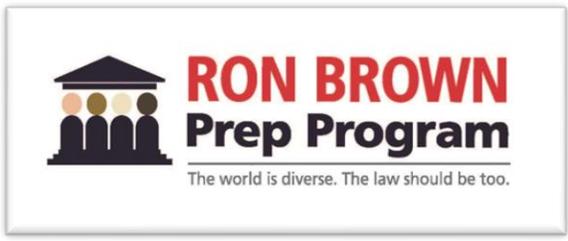
last fall to welcome them to Queens. Upon viewing the sites, students met with a prominent artist who displayed his mural for the students. The tour ended with a reception for students to network with each other in the local community.



HCZ VOLUNTEER DAY

Ron Brown Scholars celebrated Black History Month in 2019 with a visit to the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) where they met with high school students in the arts to discuss copyright law and introduce them to the day in the life of a law student. The enthusiastic youth in attendance appreciated the mentorship provided by our Ron Brown Scholars and invited them to return in the near future. HCZ is a partner of the Ron Brown Prep Program.





ABOUT THE RON BROWN PREP PROGRAM

Established in 2005, the Ron Brown Prep Program has partnered with colleges and universities across the country as well as corporate sponsors, law firms, and nonprofit organizations to help students from traditionally underserved and underrepresented groups—who are often the first in their families to attend college—apply to law school and pursue legal careers. What started as a four-day summer workshop evolved into a multifaceted program that spans over two or three consecutive summers. The Prep Program features academic boot camps, legal internships, mentors, a speaker series, events at firms and bar associations, customized LSAT test prep, support groups, diversity and personal statement workshops, and resume and interview counseling by career professionals. An estimated 300 alumni have gone on to more than 50 different law schools nationwide, including Harvard, Yale, Boston College, Columbia, Cornell, Fordham, Emory, Georgetown, Howard, NYU, St. John’s, UC Berkeley, UCLA, University of Michigan, and Vanderbilt. Together they’ve earned millions of dollars in law school scholarships. In 2016, The Access Group Center for Research & Policy Analysis® awarded the Prep Program a \$125,000 grant through its Legal Education Diversity Pipeline, which was used to introduce the 2017 inaugural class of Prep Program Foundations. In 2017, the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) awarded the Prep Program a total grant of \$300,000 through the DiscoverLaw.org Prelaw Undergraduate Scholars (PLUS) Program to fund a new all-male Foundations cohort for underrepresented students, which will be funded through the year 2020. In 2019, through the Diversity Pipeline Research Grant from the AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence®, we were once again awarded a grant of \$125,000 to fund the Weekend LSAT Boot Camp for non-traditional students. Our curriculum is strategically planned to fill gaps in the diversity pipeline by focusing on the academic and professional skills required to successfully complete law school. Our pipeline program continues to clear the way for alumni to attend the law school of their dreams. We are honored to have a number of alumni practicing as attorneys across the country.



OUR SUMMER 2019

FOUNDATIONS PROGRAM

The LSAC DiscoverLaw.org Prelaw Undergraduate Scholars Program (PLUS) at St. John’s University School of Law (SJU Law) was once again a successful seven-week residential-based program. We welcomed a new class of underrepresented men of color for our Foundations cohort. This is the second summer for the all-male cohort where we welcomed a class of rising sophomores. Our students began the program with a three-week academic boot camp that offered courses to hone their skills in areas such as reading comprehension, critical thinking, logical analytical reasoning, and writing. Those three weeks are followed by a four-week judicial internship within New York City. Students in the Foundations cohort were able to exclusively partake in the mentoring reception at Latham & Watkins LLP, our Men of Color Reception at Mayer Brown LLP, a mock trial at the law firm Harris Beach, and participate in a scavenger hunt, developed by Dean Susan Landrum, for legal landmarks around New York City. We considered each





student's interests and background in making meaningful connections with attorneys of color, particularly with minority men who are established in the legal profession. We included more minority attorney role models this year, including St. John's Law faculty, Dean Kimathi Gordon-Somers, and Professors Kayonia Whetstone and Sheldon Evans.

BRYAN STEPHENSON & JUST MERCY BOOK CLUB

Students in the Foundations cohort engaged in an interactive book club on *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. The author, Bryan Stevenson, is a recognized educator and leader in the legal field as the founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and distinguished law professor at NYU. Students were presented with compelling prose to navigate a path towards social justice. Several of our Foundations students hold a strong commitment to civil rights, which aligns, closely to the topics presented in the book. The book highlights a skillful lawyer, who is a man of color, as he grapples with the consequences of the criminal justice system. We introduced the students to critical race theory in the law through the book. The book club was led by Professor Sheldon Evans, a faculty member at St. John's Law. They were able to share candid stories of the legal barriers that minorities face in the criminal justice system and discuss ways to overcome them. The Writing Workshop, led by Professor Boyle, also covered the book, *Just Mercy*, which lent itself to illustrate the types of skills necessary to achieve the specific learning objectives of the course.



BUSINESS CLOTHING DRIVE

Ron Brown Prep Program students encountered a need to wear professional clothing at evening events, during their internships, and at interviews. During the entire summer, we provided access to donated clothing from Macy's as well as from faculty at SJU Law to supply disadvantaged students with professional attire.



CLOSING CEREMONY WITH ATTORNEY TRACEY BROWN

JULY 22, 2019

The Closing Ceremony serves as our graduation for students of the Ron Brown Prep Program. This year we recognized the largest class in the history of the program. The event was held at our Manhattan campus and was well-attended by judges and their staff, attorneys including law firm



partners, alumni of the Prep Program, and the St. John's Law community. We began the evening with opening remarks from our Executive Director, Kamille Dean, highlighting the contributions of the late Ronald H. Brown. This year, we were honored to have Tracey L. Brown, SJU Law alum and daughter of Ronald H.

Brown, at the Closing Ceremony. As a civil rights attorney and managing partner of The Cochran Firm, Ms. Brown confirmed that there are justice imbalances attributed, in part, to race in this country. She spoke about her father's legacy as the first African American to serve as the U.S. Secretary of Commerce and the important steps he took to level the playing field for minority professionals. She concluded with a sentiment for the students to set high goals

and work



hard towards accomplishing them. Highlights of the Closing Ceremony include: a noted spoken word artist performing a poem about social justice; the featured student reflections in which students presented their experience, stating how this summer positively impacted their lives; the keynote address provided by Attorney Juan Gonzalez, who serves as a Vice President at Mastercard in the patent law division, encouraging the next generation of attorneys as he spoke about of his personal and professional journey as an immigrant from Ecuador; and inspirational remarks from Attorney Antavius Weems, a first-generation student who rose to become a leading entertainment and sports lawyer, addressing the triumphs, trials, and tribulations that he experienced.

FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS CONFERENCE WITH SECRETARY JEH JOHNSON

JUNE 13, 2019

The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission of the New York State Unified Court System held an innovative conference on Race, Ethnicity and the Impact on immigration at SJU Law this summer during the Ron Brown Prep Program. The goal of the judicial conference was to address the legal disparity on race, gender and views by bringing together a group of diverse judges, attorneys, and staff to discuss and promote racial and ethnic fairness in the courts. Part of the symposium consisted of an exclusive Ron Brown Prep Program Speed-Mentoring session between judges and students. Over 90 judges served as mentors for the event. The keynote speaker, Jeh Charles Johnson, former U.S. Secretary of Homeland





Secretary Johnson, personally met with our Foundation students from Morehouse College. Secretary Johnson is currently a partner at the law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rafkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP. He was elected the firm's first African American partner in 1994. Secretary Johnson is a graduate of Morehouse College (1979) and Columbia Law School (1982). We received exemplary reviews about our students' professionalism during the conference. The Honorable Janet DiFiore, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and a graduate of St. John's Law, also provided remarks at the conference.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PATHWAY & MERCK FIELD TRIP

JUNE 15, 2019

This year, we created a new pathway to introduce our students to Intellectual Property (IP) careers and provide an opportunity for early exposure to the study of IP law. We offered an Intellectual Property course, led by Professor Jeremy Sheff, the Faculty Director of St. John's Law School Intellectual Property Law Center. Students were particularly interested in how the legal regimes applied to areas of their experience (such as fashion, film and television, music, and internet technology). We also featured IP lawyers to serve as luncheon speakers. Students had the opportunity to hear from Jennifer Wu, a patent litigation Partner at Paul Weiss, and Adolpho Birch of the National Football League who oversees



IP operations for the NFL. Lastly, we strengthened our partnership with Merck, a premier biopharmaceutical company and IP firm, to expand the pipeline of minorities into trademark and patent law. Our new IP pathway culminated in a field trip to Merck. Students of our 2019 class have expressed great interest in serving as leaders in corporate and IP law.



MEN OF COLOR IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION RECEPTION

JULY 18, 2019



This year, our signature Men of Color Reception, an exclusive event for our students, featured leading attorneys in various fields served who as facilitators for a two-hour roundtable discussion. This year, the event was hosted by one of our new law firm partners, Mayer Brown. It was once again a huge success in providing our students with meaningful access to influential minority male attorneys. Partner and Chief Diversity Officer at Mayer Brown, Jeremiah DeBerry, served as our host and keynote speaker. Attorney Tahir Boykins, from Kelley Drye, once again served as the lead facilitator. The discussion portion of the evening concentrated on the unique challenges faced by men of color in the legal profession. There was



a healthy mix of entry-level, mid-level, and partner level attorneys who attended this event. Our attorney facilitators included professionals who practice corporate law, litigation, intellectual property, international law, immigration law, criminal law, insurance law, environmental law, and engage in financial services. The men had a robust and honest conversation about the adversities they face while giving each other hope to press forward. The facilitators were transformational in letting our young men know that they could pivot and recover from any setback in staying on track to fulfill the goal of becoming an attorney. Our students found the experience invaluable and look forward to next year's event.



11TH ANNUAL LAW SCHOOL MEET & GREET

OCTOBER 12, 2019

We convened a well-attended law school fair in early October for recent Ron Brown Prep Program graduates. This exclusive Meet & Greet provided our students, who are currently college seniors and applying to law school, the opportunity to personally meet with the admissions committees at over 50 ABA-accredited law schools across the country. Our students found the event to be very beneficial in the application process and look forward to matriculating in the fall of 2020.



COALITION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

DIALOGUE DAYS

In the fall of 2019, the Ron Brown Center for Civil Rights and the Coalition for Social Justice, a student organization, hosted the Law School's Biannual St. John's Law Dialogue in partnership with peer facilitators to discuss Climate Change and the impact it has in the United States and the wider global community. We heard from an expert in the field, Attorney Kashif Hussain, who is the NYC Deputy Public Advocate for Infrastructure and Environmental Justice. He gave a brief analysis of the domestic and international environmental policies currently in place to effectively combat climate change. The audience members were then assigned to small group discussions to further delve into their views about the subject.

In the spring of 2019, we hosted a Dialogue Day entitled "Let's Open Up about the Shutdown" to explore various perspectives on the federal government shutdown. We heard from St. John's Law professors, Rosemary Salomone and Elayne Greenberg, who addressed this issue from a constitutional law and dispute resolution perspective. St. John's Law





student, Czareena Dotchev, who served as an aide for U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, provided the historic and practical approach of federal government shutdowns. We then engaged in small group discussions on what led to the government shutdown and how to move forward.

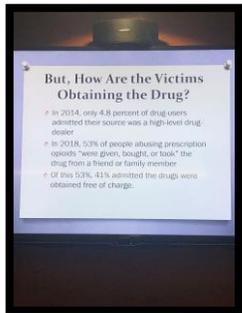
In the fall of 2018, we gathered as a community to discuss another important issue impacting the nation: Perspectives on Family Separation at the Border. During this event we sparked public dialogue and debate about immigration and national interests. We invited the Law School community to come together to share and consider diverse perspectives on family separation and related government and citizen action.



JCRED ANNUAL BEST NOTES CEREMONY & SYMPOSIUM ISSUES

The *Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development* (JCRED) published a recent symposium issue, *The Kavanaugh Hearing: An America Divided* ((2019) "Volume 33, Summer 2019, Issue 1," *Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development*: Vol. 33: Iss. 1, Article 1. Available at: <https://scholarship.law.stjohns.edu/jcred/vol33/iss1/1>).

This collection features pieces from law professors and legal practitioners across the country, including Professor Hadar Aviram of U.C. Hastings Law. Professor Aviram visited campus on April 3, 2019 to lecture on her piece about progressive punitivism in response to the Kavanaugh Hearing. The collection is available on St. John's Law online scholarship repository.



On October 16, 2019, JCRED held its Eleventh Annual Best Notes Ceremony. This year's winner was Jennie Miller for her note *Save a Friend's Life or Risk Your Freedom: The Dilemma Too Many People Face When Witnessing an Overdose*. This year's runner-up was Jillian Fitzpatrick for her note *Reframing the Monuments: How to Address Confederate Statues in the United States*.



This year's staff members are publishing works ranging vastly diverse topic areas, be it surrogacy laws, disability rights in employment, police violence, incarceration, autonomous vehicles, and more. Next semester, JCRED will be publishing another symposium collection about personal appearance in the legal workplace. This collection will span two issues and will feature works from domestic and international professors.

JCRED SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE & BOOK SIGNING: TANYA K. HERNANDEZ

Professor Tanya K. Hernandez, a former SJU Law faculty member, recently published a book with NYU Press called *Multiracials and Civil Rights: Mixed-Race Stories of Discrimination*. Professor Hernandez visited campus on March 18, 2019 as a JCRED Symposium Scholar to discuss her book, which highlights multiracial discrimination cases and illustrates that civil rights law does not need to be reformed for those identifying as mixed-race but rather reinforced, focusing on racial privilege and bias.





Law School
Admission Council



ST. JOHN'S
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

ANNUAL APPEAL CAMPAIGN

MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY MAKING A GIFT

Please consider supporting the future of our students as we embark on the Ronald H. Brown Law School Prep Program for College Students and welcome the next class of Ron Brown Scholars at St. John's Law for 2020. Your generosity in making a difference in the lives of our students can contribute to sustainable growth and development of the Ron Brown Prep Program. The following is a link to our Give Campus portal to donate to the Ron Brown Center: <https://www.givecampus.com/campaigns/10665/donations/new>. This page may also be accessed through our website: www.stjohns.edu/ronbrownprep. Once on the Give Campus page, under **Designation**, you must select **Ron Brown Prep Program** from the dropdown menu.

THE RON BROWN PREP PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS:

♦St. John's University ♦7Sage ♦Access Lex Institute ♦Asian American Bar Association of New York ♦AXA Foundation ♦AXA Equitable Life Insurance Company ♦Bank of China International Ltd. ♦CUNY Black Male Initiative ♦Dillard University ♦Duane Morris LLP ♦Fridolin Charitable Trust ♦Harlem's Children's Zone ♦Harris Beach LLC ♦Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP ♦Joan Capps Foundation ♦John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Department of Latin American and Latina/o Studies ♦Kelley Drye ♦Kramer Levin ♦Latham & Watkins ♦Law School Admissions Council, Inc. ♦Mayer Brown ♦Merck & Co., Inc. ♦NAPABA Law Foundation ♦Paul Hastings LLP ♦The United Negro College Fund ♦White & Case LLP ♦York College

CALLING ALL MENTORS!

Our legal mentors are the pillars of the Ron Brown Prep Program community. You provide valuable feedback in building rapport with students to administer guidance to them as they pursue a career in the legal field. You can be an integral part of our 2020 year by serving as a mentor.

RON BROWN PREP PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS

Please consider becoming a program sponsor. Your support can provide much needed assistance to Prep Program students on their journey to attend law school by donating a partial or full tuition scholarship (up to \$3,000.00).



APPLY NOW!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBPAGE!

For the year 2020, the Ron Brown Prep Program offers the following three divisions: LSAC PLUS Prep Program Foundations, the Summer LSAT Boot Camp, and the Weekend LSAT Boot Camp. Applications for the 2020 Ron Brown Prep Program open in December of 2019 and are accessible through our website, which includes program dates and curriculum, as well as the components of the applications: www.stjohns.edu/ronbrownprep

INTRODUCING THE NEW WEEKEND LSAT BOOT CAMP!

This weekend prep program will feature a new cohort dedicated to college graduates from diverse and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. We welcome adult learned to apply for this free program, sponsored by AccessLex, who are interested in going to law school and pursuing a law degree. The Weekend LSAT Boot Camp program will offer resources on all aspects of the law school admissions process, comprehensively designed LSAT Prep, motivational and meaningful instructional workshops, and individualized advisement. The weekend schedule is designed to accommodate college graduates who are working full time and/or have family obligations, as well as college seniors.