



Commencement

FALL 2024

Commencement **FALL CEREMONY**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025 • 10 A.M.
F.G. CLARK ACTIVITY CENTER
BATON ROUGE, LA

History

ON DECEMBER 16, 1946, IN RESPONSE TO A LAWSUIT BY AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN RESIDENT SEEKING TO ATTEND LAW SCHOOL AT A STATE INSTITUTION, THE LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TOOK “POSITIVE STEPS TO ESTABLISH A LAW SCHOOL FOR NEGROES AT SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY...TO BE IN OPERATION FOR THE 1947-1948 SESSION.”

PLANS FOR THE LAW SCHOOL WERE APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AT ITS JANUARY 10, 1947, MEETING. ON JUNE 14, 1947, THE BOARD OF LIQUIDATION OF STATE DEBT APPROPRIATED \$40,000 FOR THE OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL. THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 1947 TO PROVIDE LEGAL EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS.

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER GRADUATES, BEGINNING WITH THE LEGENDARY CIVIL RIGHTS ATTORNEY, POLITICAL LEADER, AND EDUCATOR JESSE N. STONE, JR., ALVIN BASILE JONES, LEROY WHITE, ELLYSON FREDRICK DYSON, AND ALEX LOUIS PITCHER OF THE CLASS OF 1950, HAVE SPREAD ACROSS THE STATE AND NATION AS TRAILBLAZERS IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION, SECURING EQUAL RIGHTS FOR OTHERS. TO DATE, THE LAW CENTER HAS MORE THAN 5,000 GRADUATES AND IS ONE OF THE NATION’S MOST RACIALLY DIVERSE LAW SCHOOLS.

AFTER 38 YEARS OF OPERATION AS A SCHOOL OF LAW, THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RE-DESIGNATED THE SCHOOL AS THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER, ENHANCING ITS IMAGE IN THE REGION AND THE NATION. THE LAW CENTER STRESSES LEGAL EDUCATION OF HIGH QUALITY FOR STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS.





Mission Statement

THE MISSION AND TRADITION OF THE LAW CENTER IS TO PROVIDE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY TO A DIVERSE GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS TO OBTAIN A HIGH-QUALITY LEGAL EDUCATION WITH TRAINING IN BOTH CIVIL AND COMMON LAW. ADDITIONALLY, OUR MISSION IS TO TRAIN A CADRE OF LAWYERS EQUIPPED WITH THE SKILLS NECESSARY FOR THE PRACTICE OF LAW AND FOR POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP IN SOCIETY.

Meet the Chancellor

ALVIN WASHINGTON



Alvin Washington currently serves as the Interim Chancellor at the Southern University Law Center. Before this role, he was the managing professor for the law center's mediation clinic. He has taught various subjects, including Torts, Legal Research, Statutory Analysis, Alternate Dispute Resolution, and Legal Negotiations. Additionally, Washington has been an adjunct professor at the Southern University Graduate School, instructing in conflict resolution courses.

As a registered civil and family law mediator with the Louisiana State Bar Association, Washington has mediated hundreds of cases. He has been appointed by the United States Eastern and Middle District Courts to mediate hurricane-related claims. He has also mediated cases for the USDA, the Louisiana Department of Justice, the EEOC, and the Baton Rouge Family Court. Furthermore, he has served as an arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau and the Baton Rouge City Court.

Washington earned his undergraduate degree from Grambling State University and his Juris Doctor from Southern University Law Center. After law school, he served as a Naval JAG officer in Long Beach, California, as a military trial lawyer, and as Department Head for the Claims Division of the United States Navy. He was also appointed as a special assistant to the United States Attorney General for the Central District of California. Following his military service, he returned to Louisiana and worked as an assistant attorney general handling general liability, road hazards, and civil rights cases.

Before joining the Southern University Law Center in 2003, Washington served as the Section Chief of the Civil Rights Division at the Louisiana Department of Justice for four years. Engaged in the community, he has been actively involved in organizations such as the 100 Black Men of Metro Baton Rouge, Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and Baton Rouge Branch NAACP. His contributions have been recognized with the Century Club Award for pro bono legal services and the Pillar Award from the Southern University Law Center's National Lawyers Guild.

Ceremony Program

PRESIDING

Interim Chancellor Alvin Washington

PROCESSIONALInstrumental Music

NATIONAL ANTHEM - *THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER*Nancy Armstrong

MUSICAL SELECTION - *LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING*Alana Singleton

INVOCATIONW. Marshall Myles
Pastor Emeritus, New St. John Baptist Church

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER Alvin Washington
Interim Chancellor of the Southern University Law Center

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS..... Judge Erica L. Green
East Baton Rouge Parish, Family Court Judge, Division B

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES Shawn D. Vance
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

ALUMNI OATH..... Cynthia N. Reed
*Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Support,
Counseling and Bar Preparation*

BENEDICTION.....W. Marshall Myles
Pastor Emeritus, New St. John Baptist Church

RECESSIONALInstrumental Music

Commencement Speaker

HONORABLE ERIKA L. GREEN



The Honorable Judge Erika L. Green was elected to the Family Court for East Baton Rouge Parish, Division B, in November 2021. Prior to being elected, Judge Green was a solo practitioner at her law firm, Law Office of Erika Green, LLC, handling estate, family, and civil matters. She also was employed as a Child in Need of Care Attorney for Southeast Legal Services, a Foster Care Provider for the Department of Children and Family Services, and an Administrative Hearing Officer for the Louisiana Workforce Commission,

all while working as an adjunct professor for Southern University Law Center.

Beyond her legal practice, she has an extensive history of community service, including serving six years as the East Baton Rouge Metro Councilwoman for District 5. She is an active member of the Baton Rouge Delta Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., NOBLE, Top Ladies of Distinction Nonpareil Chapter, Greater Baton Rouge Chapter of the Louis A. Martinet Society, Louisiana Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges, Louisiana Judicial Council/National Bar Association, American Judges Association, Louisiana District Judges Association, National Bar Association, Louisiana State Bar Association, and Baton Rouge Bar Association. In 2017, she founded Imagination Leads a nonprofit whose mission is to connect and promote cultural and literary experiences and leadership development programs in communities of color.

Judge Green has received a number of awards including the PVAMU Humanitarian Award, the Lottie B. Shackelford Award for Community and Political Involvement Award from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and the Baton Rouge Business Report's 40 Under 40.

Judge Green is a 2010 graduate of Southern University Law Center, and a 2007 graduate of Prairie View A&M University with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and a specialization in Juvenile Justice. She is also the proud mom of an energetic puppy, Thurgood.

*Candidates for
Juris Doctor Degree*

Fall 2024

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Phenix City, AL

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Terre Haute, IN

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Lorisa Gayle Bentley
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Jhavani Roussel Mezier
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Wagner, SC

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Marylyn Height Creer
Tuscaloosa, AL

Hannah Nicole Siebeneicher
Deville, LA

Sherifat Olamide Magbade
Springdale, MD

Jessica Alexandra Fuqua
Nashville, TN

Amanda Faye Asberry Smith
New Iberia, LA

*** *summa cum laude*

** *magna cum laude*

* *cum laude*

List and academic standing at press time.

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