SUMMER 2021

#### **TDECU Names Alum, Isaac Johnson President and CEO**



Thurgood Marshall School of Law alum **Isaac Johnson** has recently been selected as President and CEO of Texas Dow Employee's Credit Union (TDECU). TDECU Board Chairman Dick Smith said "Isaac has a proven and respected history as a leader with TDECU, in the banking industry, and in serving our nation. After a diligent search, we couldn't be more pleased with the outcome." Thurgood Law is extremely proud of Isaac's hard work and growth at TDECU. Isaac stepped into this new role of "Interim CEO" in April of 2021, Isaac has a tenured history with TDECU which includes his most recent position as SVP, Chief Administrative, Legal and Diversity Officer for a more than \$4 billion dollar organization. Isaac has not only worked at TDECU as he has also demonstrated a history of banking leadership at USAA, Wells Fargo, and Trusted National Bank.

Not only is he involved with work he also proudly serves as a Brigadier General commanding the 351<sup>st</sup> Civil Affairs Command, United States Army Reserve. Isaac received his J.D. at Thurgood and holds a B.B.A. from Mississippi State University, M.B.A. from Jackson State University. Isaac has a diverse background as he has completed additional programs at Cornell University, University of Pennsylvania, and U.S. Army War College. Isaac says, "I am honored to lead TDECU as its an exceptional credit union, I have an amazing team of leaders by my side, and we will work together with confidence, clarity, and purpose." Isaac is committed to provide the best member experience to help people along their financial journey's.

Congratulations Isaac, your hard work is truly noticed!

Your Monthly Thurgood Marshall School of Law Electronic News and Information Source from The Office of External Affairs • Assistant Dean Prudence Smith



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY Thurgood Marshall School of Law



### 2021 INAUGURAL THURGOOD LAW GOLF CLASSIC: A HUGE SUCCESS!



#### Together we raised over \$47,890.00

On behalf of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Alumni Association we want to thank all the sponsors, vendors, golfers and volunteers who participated in this year's Golf Classic. We are so thankful for your amazing generosity, time and resources. Its individuals like you that support the efforts of our Thurgood Law Alumni Board and create new opportunities for our students.

We held our inaugural golf event on May 6, 2021, at the Houston National Golf Club. The event was a huge success and the event was sold out, we were able to raise over \$47,890.00! We also want to thank everyone who competed, you were all winners but the Vonda Bailey Team (Mark Metze, Rodney Griggs, Royce West Jr. and Hillary Comeaux) came in first place. We would also like to congratulate Royce West who won the big raffle item and was gracious enough to

give his raffle winnings to Ms. Jo Aldridge for appreciation of all that she did for him during his time as a student at Thurgood Law. We believe everyone enjoyed the *Cinco De Mayo* theme as the event took place during the holiday weekend. We encourage all of the sponsors, golfers, vendors, and volunteers to return next year for the 2022 Golf Classic!

We also look forward to seeing new faces at our annual golf event that will take place in the Fall of 2022!























### FACULTY NEWS

Associate Dean Stephanie Ledesma leads NITA training at Thurgood Law

The Thurgood Marshall School of Law was honored to host the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA) to members of the TMSL and greater legal community. Two excellent training courses were offered this summer; Depositions and Trial Skills. The deposition course was offered on July 22-23, and the trial skills course was offered on July 26-29. These courses were instructed by Program Director, **Associate Dean Stephanie Ledesma** as she is the Associate Dean for Experiential Education and Associate Professor of Law. This program provided attorneys with direct mentoring, constructive feedback, expert faculty, and actual courtroom experience. The courses are great for new attorneys that are beginning their careers and seeking to build trial skills and for more experienced litigators looking to refine their skills. NITA training course prepare you to perform in a real-life trial setting.

Be on the lookout for future courses hosted by Dean Ledesma through NITA.

#### Thurgood Marshall School of Law, is honored to present:



Attend One or Both of These Courses EITHER WAY RECEIVE THE SAME EXCELLENT TRAINING

DEPOSITIONS ONLY COURSE JULY 22 - 23, 2021 TRIAL SKILLS ONLY COURSE JULY 26 - 29, 2021

Two full days of demonstrations and workshops sure to increase your ability to effectively take and defend depositions. Four days of practicing and perfecting your trial advocacy skills where you will participate and observe, learning not only from your mistakes and triumphs but those of your fellow participants as well.

#### Essential Practice Skills in a Real-Life Trial Setting

Whether you are a new attorney starting your career and seeking to build your trial skills or a more experienced litigator looking to refine them, NITA's Deposition to Trial program is designed to prepare you for a real-life trial. This program provides you with years of courtroom experience. There is no better way to prepare yourself for a real-life trial setting than to practice, and perform, in a real-life trial setting.

#### REGISTER NOW

Both courses qualify for credit toward the NITA Advocate Designation.

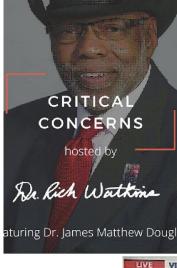
DIRECT MENTORING • CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK • EXPERT FACULTY • ACTUAL COURTROOM EXPERIENCE



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY Thurgood Marshall School of Law Thurgood Marshall Law School • 3100 Cleburne St. • Houston, TX PROGRAM DIRECTOR: STEPHANIE LEDESMA Associate Dean for Experiential Learning Programs and Associate Professor of Laws Accredited for CLE, hours TBD



### FACULTY NEWS CONT'D



#### The legacy of HBCU's by Distinguished Professor James Douglas

In a candid conversation, Dr. James Douglas discussed African American legacies with Dr. Rich Watkins. Dr. Douglas engaged with Dr. Rich Watkins on his podcast "Critical Concerns with Dr. Rich Watkins" over the summer. The episode focused on discussing the legacy of HBCU's, civil rights in Texas, and the current state of education for students of color and people in the south.

If you're interested in listening to this podcast, please tune in on Youtube.



#### Professor Craig Jackson discusses the Juneteenth Holiday

Thurgood Marshall Law Expert and **Professor Craig Jackson** discussed Juneteenth becoming a national holiday on NewsNOW on Fox over the summer break. This was a great way to wrap up the holiday weekend or to start the week fresh with insight and perspective on this pivotal moment in history. Professor Jackson provided insight on this historical moment. The last federal holiday was created in 1983 when former President Ronald Reagan established Martin Luther King Jr. Day. President Biden's legislation on Thursday 17, 2021 made Juneteenth a federal, national holiday which spurred conversation of progress by some and yet a call for action by many others. You can now rewatch this episode on <u>www.newsnowfox.com</u> to watch Professor Jackson explore this pivotal moment in American history.



### FACULTY NEWS Cont'd



#### Professor SpearIt quoted in The New York Times

Thurgood Marshall's own, **SpearIt**, was included in an article published in *The New York Time's*\_article on Muslim prisoners. SpearIt has been a professor at TMSL for nearly a decade, and has published numerous legal articles and books. Most recently, Professor SpearIt wrote <u>American Prisons: A Critical Primer on Culture and Conversation to Islam</u>, which can be purchased on Amazon. Because of his knowledge on the topic of Islamic prisoners, Professor SpearIt, was asked to contribute to a *New York Time's* article about this topic. The article is titled "'I Don't Think You're Going to Be Eating Tonight..' Muslims Describe Ramadan in U.S. Prisons," by Sanya Mansoor.

The article discusses the challenges that Muslims face when trying to practice their faith

while incarcerated, such as practicing Ramadan and not eating for several days as sacrifice. SpearIt says in the article that Muslim prisoners received a stunning victory when two federal court cases in Alaska and Michigan held that prisons denied prisoners adequate Ramadan diet that complied with federal health guidelines for caloric standards. The article referenced SpearIt as a professor at Thurgood Marshall School of Law and as an expert on litigation involving Muslim prisoners. We continue to support Professor SpearIt in his efforts to raise awareness about the brutal conditions that prisoners face, as he continues his research and expertise in this area of law.



### Professor Dannye Holley gives his take on the current landscape of policing

**Professor Dannye Holley** has published an article entitled "Leon and the State Supreme Courts, 1984-2019" that will appear in Volume 57 of <u>The Criminal Law Bulletin (a peer reviewed Journal)</u> at page 453-483.

#### ABTRACT:

The United States is in the midst of probably its most intense review of the role of policing. This conversation is overseen, in part, by the Supreme Court of the United States. Importantly, states supreme courts also play an important role. These courts' policy evaluations are the cornerstone of determining the appropriate resolution of the interest of citizens versus that of the government implicated by how we define and regulate policing. In June of 2020, the New

York Times published an article in which state supreme court justices acknowledged their role in regulating policing, particularly with regard to sensitivity to its racial injustice implications, and their somewhat problematic performance. This Article is a study that helps to inform that conversation by analyzing the responses of the states supreme courts in the last thirty-five years to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1984 decision in United States v. Leon, which recognized the Good Faith Exception to the Exclusionary Rule. Specifically, this national study of constitutional federalism analyzes the outcomes and reasoning found in scores of state supreme courts' decisions applying Leon and, in doing so, suggests ways to appropriately limit the authority of law enforcement agents in ways that might more effectively provide protection to all of the people throughout the country.



### STAFF NEWS

Farewell Message from longtime Staff Member, Derrick Wilson



Good morning Thurgood Marshall School of Law Faculty and Staff,

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your Director of Administration for the past 8 years (21-year tenure at Texas Southern University). With that being said, this will be my last email to you all as Director of Administration as I have taken another job outside of Texas Southern University. I would like to personally thank the Administrative Services team (listed below) for your hard work and dedication to Texas Southern University - Thurgood Marshall School of Law. It was your service that made the difference, it was your attention to detail that made the difference, it was your passion for TSU that made the difference, it was your not on my watch attitude that made the difference. Continue to be great in all you do and leave no doubt. "Protect It. Improve It. Pass It On." I sign off with one of my favorite verses from our Alma Mater.

#### The Texas Southern University Alma Mater :

"The air is filled as our voices ring From earth to the heav'ns above. With voices raised; we're singing praise, To the school we dearly love. Hail, Hail, Hail! to Texas South-ern Hail, to our dear Maroon and Gray Undivided we will stand By the greatest in the land, T-S-U, T-S-U, we love you. All roads lead to Texas South-ern, Paved with light for one and all. T-S-U's a shining star And we're proud of what you are, T-S-U, T-S-U, we love you. Hail, Hail, Hail! To Texas South-ern Hail to our Chiefs in reverence we sing. In our hearts you'll always stay As you lead us on our way, T-S-U, T-S-U, we love you."

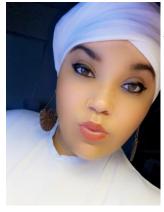
#### Administrative Services Team "The Glue":

- Jo Alridge
- Cobyon Bazley
- Mattie Chadwick
- Leslie Coleman
- Marilyn Epps
- Bria Fitch
- Rita Johnson
- Gabrielle King
- Norma Peet
- Pearly Pendenque
- Toyann Timmons
- Susan Thomas
- Wynell Wall
- Jeanette Washington
- Daniel
- Malika



### STAFF NEWS Cont'd

Thurgood Law welcomes new staff



#### Ms. Jasmin Gray El, M.Ed.

Instructional Technology Manager

**Jasmin Gray El**, Instructional Technology Manager, at Thurgood Marshall School of Law is an alumnus of the University of Toledo in Toledo, OH. It is at the University of Toledo that she completed both her Masters in Educational Technology and a Bachelor's of Science. While in school she interned with the University's Medical Center as an IT Healthcare Educator Analyst. Her fields of interest are diverse in Technology, Education & Healthcare with a passion for STEM. Jasmin was born in Germany, and prior to her relocation to Houston she stayed in Toledo, OH. She joins TSU from Houston Independent School District.

Jasmin is in the Texas Teachers of Tomorrow alternative teaching certification/ internship program. She is the owner of Hayati LLC, an educational technology consulting business. It is her goal to obtain a doctoral degree and further excel in higher education. Jasmin is a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society, Iota Sigma Tau Honor Society, a member of the Moorish Science Temple of America & Order of the Eastern Star.



#### Ms. Gabrielle King

Senior Administrative Assistant-Legal

Thurgood Marshall School of Law is excited to welcome Gabrielle King to the law school's administration team! Gabrielle is a Houston native originally from the Fort Bend community as she is a graduate from Elkins High School. She obtained a bachelor's degree in communications and public relations from Alabama State University in Montgomery, Alabama. Gabrielle has since returned to Houston to begin her career at TMSL. Prior to beginning at TMSL, Gabrielle had the honor of participating in the Might Marching Hornets Band of the SWAC and was a proud member of the Sensational Stingettes. Gabrielle now has a deep knowledge of what it means to be a part of a team, to be a disciplined worker, and to have perseverance in all that she does. Gabrielle lives by the quote "Accept what is, let go of what was, and have faith in what will be."

Gabrielle will now be assisting the Thurgood Law Academic Success and Bar Readiness Department along with Professor's Sally Green and Ana Otero.



### STUDENT NEWS - Student Spotlight

#### Andrea Villarreal



Andrea Leigh Villareal, is a rising 3L who we're shining this month's student spotlight on! Andrea has been a shining star at TMSL both academically and in her extracurricular activities. Andrea is involved in the TMSL Ambassadors' program, Hispanic Law Student Association (HLSA), serves as a Barbri Representative, and a member in Women of Law. Andrea is also the President of the TMSL Ambassadors and an ABA Representative. Andrea had multiple internships, in summer 2020 she worked for the Law in Technology Diversity Collaborative, where she gained experience as in-house counsel with HPE in San Jose, California and split her summer with Sidley Austin. She was invited back summer 2021 to work as a summer associate for Sidley Austin's Palo Alto, CA office. Andrea plans to pursue a practice in transactional law focusing on mergers & acquisitions, global finance, and ECVC.

Although it may appear as though Andrea has it all figured out, it wasn't an easy ride. Andrea balances law school course work, extra-

curricular activities, and internships with being a mother to her son. "My son is very busy with Tae Kwon Do and Tumbling, so I have to make it a priority to get to his practices and tournaments to ensure I support him, while making time to study and do my best in school," says Andrea. She shares that her best practice for balancing all of these tasks is through using calendars. "I am a big proponent of calendars and tend to schedule my events, commitments, and time for myself. It helps me to keep things in perspective and on top of my busy schedule," said Andrea. However, calendars aren't her only tip for success. Andrea mentions her son keeps her very motivated, "I know that I am capable of having an amazing career where I can provide for the needs of my son. I want to show my son that hard work always pays off and to never give up on your true dreams."

Her tips for success have worked for her this far as she prepares for her last year of law school, Andrea has set new goals. "I want to continue to build new connections and foster the connections I currently have. I plan to make the most of my last year of law school and celebrate more of the small victories that happen every day," said Andrea. We are sure that Andrea will have many more victories to share in the near future! Villareal has advice for all future law students "law school takes serious commitment, and it is not for the faint of heart or mind. Be ready to dedicate yourself to your studies and to push yourself harder than before. It will pay off tremendously when you secure your future career in the practice of law. ALWAYS do your best!"



#### **STUDENT NEWS**

#### Mostyn Law Firm TMSL Students New Internships

Two students from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law accepted invitations from Mostyn Law to join the firm's paid internship program. Kendria Holmes and Mya Ashlan Lloyd, both second-year law students, assumed their clerkship duties with the firm on July 6, 2021.



#### Mya Ashlan Lloyd

Mya Ashlan Lloyd completed her undergraduate studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where she played active roles in LSU Ambassadors, LSU NAACP and LSU Student Government. As a student at TMSL, she serves as the Secretary for the Sports & Entertainment Law Society and a member of the Dean's Leadership Council.



#### <u>Kendria Holmes</u>

Kendria Holmes developed her passion for justice and equality for underprivileged communities at an early age. Following her graduation from Texas State University in San Marcos, with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Ms. Holmes worked as a mental health associate for The San Marcos Treatment Center. In this role she mentored the facility's resident juveniles from a variety of backgrounds. She is currently ranked in the top 25% of her law school class.

Both students have bright futures ahead of them and TMSL is extremely proud of these two for beginning their legal careers at Mostyn Law. Mostyn Law's recruitment efforts on the campus of Texas Southern University are the latest in a series of successful engagements with the university and its radio properties, KTSU-FM and The Vibe. Mostyn Law is a Houston-based firm specializing in personal injury law, with a focused expertise in accidents involving trucks and other commercial vehicles. Many of the lawyers at Mostyn Law have been with the firm for over 10 years and started as law students. The firm was excited to have Kendria and Mya on the team this past summer.



### STUDENT NEWS

#### 2021-22 SBA Executive Board







#### Alumni News

#### Alumni on the Move

### **Omar Vargas' unrelenting commitment to Bar scholarship**

TMSL Alum, **Omar Vargas** has once again stepped up to support other TMSL alums by supporting them with bar prep resources. Omar annually provides TMSL students with over \$3500 in bar scholarships to assists students with funding bar prep, funding housing and necessities while studying, and any other assistance that students may need during bar prep. This year Omar provided scholarship funds to three TMSL law students.

After students took the bar, this past July Omar took them out to eat to celebrate their accomplishment of sitting for the bar exam. Omar says, "I believe in helping the bar students because I once was a bar student. I remember being broke, intimidated, exhausted, and anxious. I recently treated the bar takers to a happy hour to tell them directly I am proud of them and love them. Am I my brother's keeper?"

Omar is committed to giving back to TMSL students and shows his efforts annually with this scholarship fund. Thank you, Omar, for supporting TMSL students, your efforts do not go unnoticed!





### ALUMNI NEWS

Alumni on the Move

Karaoke is in the cards for you with TMSL Alumna Dae Fenwick's Kulture Karaoke



Thurgood Marshall alum, **Dae Fenwick** has a new product "KultureKaraoke" will be sold at all Target stores beginning this Fall. Kulture Karaoke is a fun card game for adults that helps people perform their favorite karaoke songs by simply pulling a card and picking a song. The game requires 3 groups, or if playing as individuals just 2 players and the willingness to pull a card, pick a song and perform. Dae started this after having a birthday party in 2020 where she invited friends and family to celebrate at a local Karaoke lounge in Atlanta. To make things more interesting, she decided to have everyone pull a card and select a song to sing based on the categories like "a song that remind you of middle school." Her friends and family loved it and from there she started KultureKaraoke.

More information about the game can be found on Dae's website <u>www.kulturekaraoke.com</u>.



### IN MEMORIAM

Lucinda Daniels Memorial Tribute



Daughter, Mother, Sister, Friend, Lucinda Renee Daniels gained her wings Friday, June 4, 2021, at the age of 47. It is with deep sadness to share that Lucinda was laid to rest on June 14, 2021, at 12pm at the TSU Sawyer Auditorium. Lucinda is a TMSL graduate from the class of 2000. She returned to the law school initially as the Director of Career Services but quickly transitioned careers to combining her love for academia with social justice by working at the Earl Carl Institute in 2009. Most recently, Lucinda was promoted to Deputy Director of ECI where she ran the Street Law Clinic. She also managed the Interdisciplinary Journal for Legal & Social Policy and provided oversight on student assignments and assessments. Her profound impact at ECI will not be forgotten as she served at TSU for over 16 years and in 2019 received the first ever TSU Shining Star Award for staff.

Lucinda had a phenomenal professional career but outside of work she was a mother to her son Jarvis. Lucinda was a Christian and maintained membership at The Church Without Walls. Lucinda was also an avid reader, traveler, and enjoyed journaling. Lucinda always enjoyed the company of her small family and circle of friends. Some of Lucinda's friends, family, and colleagues had only amazing things to say about her. "I am deeply saddened to hear about Lucinda's untimely passing. She brought sunshine everywhere she went - always a lovely smile on her face. My thoughts are with everyone in our TMSL community - her professors, co-workers, colleagues. She was respected and loved by all who knew her. We will miss her. May her spirit of grace continue to bless this earth," says Ana Otero.

**Larry Weeden** says "I believed that there is a time for everything under the sun, but we were simply not ready to lose our shining star Lucinda Daniels. The TSU community has lost a very good servant of the people who was especially committed to those considered the least of these in our community. Thank you for serving us well, Lucinda."

"We will remember Lucinda as a kind heart who would help anyone. She was brilliant and she will be terribly missed." **Sarah R. Guidry.** 

Lupe S. Salinas, "may our great friend and proud Tiger Law Grad rest in peace. Blessings to her family."

Our respect goes out to Lucinda's family and friends, and we ask that the TMSL community continues to pay respects to Lucinda R. Daniels and her family. "Fore we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an enteral house in heaven not built by human hands," 2 Corinthians 5:1.



#### **Upcoming EVENTS**





TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY Thurgood Marshall School of Law

### Thurgood Marshall School of Law hosts: Alumni Breakfast



Postponement of 2021 Alumni Breakfast to 2022

Due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID, the annual Judicial Education Conference committee has decided to postpone its upcoming conference to September 2022 at the Gaylord Hotel. Although we were excited to see you this year, we look forward to 2022. Take care of yourselves, your family and friends.

Stay safe,

**Prudence N. Smith** Assistant Dean of External Affair



### **Upcoming EVENTS**







### **Upcoming CLE COURSES & Student Development Courses**

### MARSHALL MONDAY

### Monday, September 13, 2021

Location - Room 212 from 12:00 noon - 12:50 pm.

Speaker - Attorney Taren Marsaw, BRAND LAW

Luncheon sponsor - THE SMITH LAW FIRM

Registration Link - https://www.eventbrite.com/e/170017951269



Attorney Taren Marsaw, Brand Law

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY Thurgood Marshall School of Law



THE EARL CARL INSTITUTE *for* Legal & Social Policy "from the capitol to the community":

What Happens Next?

The Earl Carl Institute's Symposium on the 87th Legislative Session: An Urban Perspective

A Virtual Event via ZOOM 🖵

#### September 15, 2021 from 9:30 a.m. — 1:30 p.m.

TOPICS INCLUDE: Education, Healthcare, Police Reform, Criminal Justice and Juvenile Justice

A Complimentary Event MCLE: 4.0 and Ethics 0.5

Please Register At: https://eci.pub/ECI2021LegUpdate



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY Thurgood Marshall School of Law



#### **Upcoming CLE COURSES & Student Development Courses**

