

CNN analyst, scholar headline Black Law Alumni weekend at Tulane

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Angela Rye is a political commentator on CNN and an NPR political analyst.

It's been five decades since Michael Starks became the first African American to graduate from Tulane Law School. He paved the way for more than 1,000 African Americans and more than 2,000 students of color to follow in his footsteps as Tulane Law alumni.

Tulane Law School will celebrate their achievements Feb. 7-10 with a [Black Law Alumni weekend](#) that includes lectures, continuing legal education and panel discussions on diversity in the law.

The event will open with the Dreyfous Lecture on Civil Liberties and Human Rights. University of Pennsylvania Law Professor Dorothy E. Roberts, an acclaimed scholar of race, gender and the law, will be deliver the lecture.

On Friday, a conversation with political activist and CNN and NPR legal analyst Angela Rye will take place from 3 to 4:30 pm at McAlister Auditorium on Tulane's uptown campus. The discussion is open to the public.

Other speakers during the weekend include Tulane Law alums Karen Carter Peterson, a Louisiana state senator and chair of the Louisiana Democratic Party; Brandon Harrell, a vice president of the Philadelphia 76ers; Nicholas Machen, senior vice president of Citibank; and Kimberly Ayers Shariff, chief administrative officer of the American Ballet Theatre.

Throughout the weekend, alumni will contribute to the next generation of law students through mentoring, networking and contributing funds tied to scholarships and other opportunities. On Saturday, attendees will take part in the Black Law Student Association ball and on Sunday, there will be a farewell Jazz Brunch honoring Tulane Law's pioneering alumni, including Starks.

A native New Orleanian, Starks, who died in 2011, was inducted last spring into Tulane Law School's Hall of Fame. Throughout his career, he went on to other firsts, including serving as the first African American lawyer in the City Attorney's office in New Orleans. He paved the way for others to join the ranks of the law community, often mentoring young lawyers entering the profession.