

Law ‘encompassed all of my passions, all of my interests,’ says student Commencement speaker

May 17, 2021 9:45 PM Faith Dawson
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A passion for advocacy prompted Andrea Ewalefo, JD/MBA candidate at Tulane Law School and A.B. Freeman School of Business, to return to school after other careers. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Andrea Ewalefo is one of the student Commencement speakers for 2021. Her speech will be part of the Unified Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 22.

A passion for advocacy prompted Andrea Ewalefo, JD/MBA candidate at Tulane Law School and A.B. Freeman School of Business, to return to school after other careers.

A mom, a one-time high school math teacher, a small business owner, and a self-described lifelong student, Ewalefo began to consider going back to school in 2016 because she was eager to help other small business owners around New Orleans. Initially, she only wanted to go to business school, but decided to also go to law school after some encouragement from her brother, Sam. For years, he had insisted that she would make an excellent attorney. Even after she arrived at Tulane, however, she was convinced that she would become a consultant.

“I got into my first year of law school, and I realized just how vast the legal profession is,” she said. “When I realized that it really encompassed all of my passions, and all of my interests, while also catering to the ‘lifelong student’ aspect of how I operate, I was like, wow, this is the profession that I want to seek.”

As a non-traditional graduate student, Ewalefo participated fully in campus life, serving in leadership positions in the Black Business Student Association, the Student Bar Association, and other organizations.

But the journey was not without challenges.

“I’ve lived a lot of different types of lives in my years, and anytime I’ve stumbled or fallen or had a challenge, I felt like I’ve learned something from it. I always try to share those lessons with others in hopes of preventing them from having to experience those challenges too,” she said. Her Commencement speech draws on those experiences.

After Commencement, Ewalefo will study for the bar and has accepted a position with the New Orleans office of Proskauer Rose law firm, where she will start in November.