

Board of Tulane member Kim Boyle receives honor of a lifetime

October 09, 2024 9:03 AM Alina Hernandez
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Board of Tulane member Kim M. Boyle received the Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society's Lifetime Achievement Award — the highest honor awarded by the society. (Photo by Sabree Hill)

Board of Tulane member Kim M. Boyle is a revered civic leader whose commitment and vision has changed many lives and affected countless people and organizations throughout New Orleans and beyond. Her dedication to the community, to civil rights and to the promotion of legal education and the legal profession was

recognized recently with the highest honor given by the Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society — the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Martinet Society was established by Black lawyers during the Jim Crow era, when attorneys of color were not allowed to fully participate in the legal profession. The society's highest honor is reserved for individuals who demonstrate a lifetime of service to the legal profession and to Martinet's mission of promoting legal scholarship, advancing the science of jurisprudence, promoting the administration of justice, upholding the order and ethics of the courts and the law profession and promoting the law profession in Louisiana.

Given her longtime role in supporting scholarship funding for students to attend Tulane, it was most appropriate that Boyle received the lifetime award at the Martinet Society's annual Jazz Brunch & Scholarship Gala on Sept. 28.

"Through her lifetime commitment to law, her civic leadership and contributions to the greater New Orleans community, as well as her support for students and her guidance in propelling Tulane's mission, Kim Boyle has worked tirelessly to create a more inclusive and just society. She is truly worthy of this great honor from the Martinet Legal Society," Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts said.

Boyle, who has been a member of the Board of Tulane since 2009, is vice-managing partner of Phelps Dunbar LLP's New Orleans office. She focuses her labor and employment law practice on civil rights, constitutional law, commercial, tort and general litigation issues, helping businesses promote inclusion and avoid discriminatory practices. She is also a frequent speaker on employment-related topics, litigation and procedure, as well as diversity, ethics and professionalism.

At Tulane, she is a member of the Albert and Tina Small Center Advisory Board, and previously served on the Presidential Commission on Race and Tulane Values and the Campus Recognition sub-committee. In 2019, Boyle established the Ernest and Connie Boyle Scholarship Endowed Fund to support Tulane students from the greater New Orleans area, with a particular focus on graduates of New Orleans public high schools.

Boyle's distinguished law career includes serving as the first female African American President of the Louisiana State Bar Association and receiving the organization's Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award in 2023 for her work to diversify the profession. She was also the first African American President of the New Orleans Bar Association. Boyle was named to Benchmark Litigation's Top 250 Women in U.S. Litigation and designated an American Lawyer Woman Leader in Law, a New Orleans CityBusiness ICON and a member of the Lawyers of Color 2023 Power List.

Boyle is also known for her extensive civic involvement in community organizations. She is a member of the board of directors and executive committee of Greater New Orleans, Inc., and New Orleans Business Alliance. She is on the executive committee of the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation and was President of the Louisiana Women's Forum and currently serves as Chair of the Touro Hospital Board and the Amistad Research Center.

In addition to Boyle, Tulane Law alumnus Micah Zeno and three third-year law students — Victoria Branch, Jamika Mack and Natalia Walcott were honored by the Martinet Society.

Zeno, an attorney at Gordon Arata Montgomery Barnett, received the President's Award given for service to Martinet and to its mission. Branch, Mack and Walcott all received scholarships based on their law school achievements.