

# Re-enacting the desegregation of Tulane University

November 19, 2013 11:00 AM Alicia Duplessis Jasmin  
aduples@tulane.edu

Tulane University Law School students will resurrect the university's desegregation lawsuit Wednesday (Nov. 20) during a 45-minute re-enactment based on the two 1962 cases that led to the school's decision to integrate in 1963.



Pearlie Hardin Elloie and Barbara Guillory Thompson visit the uptown campus this past summer. Elloie and Guillory were the two plaintiffs listed on the original lawsuit to desegregate the university. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The event begins at 6 p.m. in room 110 of the [Law School](#) and is free and open to the public. Questions will be taken at the end of the program.

The re-enactment will be moderated by Tulane law professor [Robert Westley](#), and is part of a yearlong schedule of activities commemorating the university's 50th year as an integrated institution.

Carolyn Barber-Pierre, assistant vice president of student affairs and leader of the committee organizing the commemorative events, says that facing the ills of the past can be instrumental to the production of a society that is knowledgeable about what has worked ? and what hasn't ? for older generations of Americans.

“We have so much to learn from our history about race relations, justice, equality and the vestiges of desegregation we are still dealing with today,” says Barber-Pierre. “This re-enactment is designed to get our students thinking about the great injustices of the past and to help them navigate similar situations that are unfortunately still a part of our society in many ways.”

Students will perform court-transcript excerpts from Judge J. Skelley Wright, whose history of rulings included the order to admit black students to Louisiana State University. Wright, who ruled on behalf of the plaintiffs, was the first to hear the case. Excerpts from Judge Frank Ellis, who overturned Wright's initial order to desegregate Tulane University and granted a new trial, also will be performed.

For more details on the case, read [“The Desegregation of a University”](#) in the September 2013 issue of *Tulane* magazine.