

## **Academics and artists to explore the intersection of art, law and social justice at University of Houston Law Center conference on Sept. 22**

**Sept. 19, 2023** — Government officials, lawyers, academics and art experts will gather at the University of Houston Law Center to discuss the importance of championing social justice in the areas of creative expression, law and community. Attendees will also honor the achievements of the late UHLC Professor Emeritus Michael A. Olivas during the Law, Community, and Social Justice Conference on Friday, Sept. 22.

“I am delighted that UH Law Center is holding this conference that commemorates the one-year anniversary of moving into the John M. O’Quinn Law Building. At this conference, we will be able to celebrate the new Law Building and its diversity of spaces, diversity of art, diversity of donors and diversity of perspective. The John M. O’Quinn Law Building is a testament to each component of the Houston community that makes Houston such a dynamic and vibrant city,” said Leonard M. Baynes, Dean of the University of Houston Law Center.

The conference's three panels will focus on community and social justice, art and social justice, and the scholarship and career of Olivas.

A reception and tour of the artwork and named spaces housed within the ultramodern, state-of-the-art John M. O'Quinn Law Building will follow the panel presentations. The Law Center will also unveil the portrait for the Michael A. Olivas and Augustina H. Reyes in the Olivas/Reyes Reading Room, the Royce and Carol West African American Law Heritage Wall of Honor and the Ezequiel Reyna Jr. and Livia Reyna Hispanic Law Heritage Wall of Honor.

Speakers and panelists scheduled to present at the conference are:

- Leonard Baynes, Dean and Professor of Law, University of Houston Law Center
- Jeronimo Cortina, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and Director of Faculty Research Initiatives at Population Health, University of Houston
- State Sen. Royce West, Texas Senate District 23
- State Rep. Armando Walle, Texas House District 140
- State Rep. Jolanda Jones, Texas State House District 147
- Ryan Dennis, Senior Curator and Director of Public Initiatives, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
- Rick Lowe, Professor of Interdisciplinary Practice, Katherine G. McGovern College of the Arts, University of Houston
- Kaneem Smith, Artist, “Laborscape”
- Adriana Corral, Artist, “Latitudes”
- Luis Alvarez Roue, Artist, “Olivas/Reyes Portrait”
- Vincent Valdez, Artist, “One in a Million”
- Carlotta Ramirez, Museum Counsel, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

- Sandra Guerra Thompson, Newell H. Blakely Professor of Law
- Norma Cantu, Professor of Law and Education, University of Texas
- Rachel Moran, Professor of Law, Texas A&M University
- Thomas A. Saenz, President and General Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
- Cheryl Wade, Dean Harold McNeice Professor of Law, St. John's University School of Law

The conference will be in-person on Friday, Sept. 22 from 9:45 a.m. – 4 p.m. Central at The University of Houston Law Center, 4170 Martin Luther King Blvd. Attendees may also join virtually. Participating attorneys will earn 5.5 hours of Texas continuing legal education credit.

[Register for the 2023 Law, Community, and Social Justice Conference.](#)

[View the schedule for the 2023 Law, Community, and Social Justice Conference.](#)

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**University of Houston Law Center media contacts:** Carrie Anna Criado, UH Law Center Assistant Dean of Communications and Marketing, 713-743-2184, [cacriado@central.uh.edu](mailto:cacriado@central.uh.edu); Bonnie Buffaloe, Communications Manager, 713-743-9137, [blbuffaloe@uh.edu](mailto:blbuffaloe@uh.edu).

### **About the University of Houston Law Center**

The [University of Houston Law Center \(UHLC\)](#) is a dynamic, top-tier law school located in the nation's 4th largest city. UHLC's Health Law, Intellectual Property Law, and Part-time programs rank in the U.S. News Top 10. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 15 centers and institutes that fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.

### **About the University of Houston**

The [University of Houston](#) is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter for excellence in undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city and one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse regions in the country, UH is a federally designated Hispanic- and Asian-American-Serving institution with an enrollment of more than 47,000 students.