



Take Time to Determine a Way to **EFFECTUATE REAL CHANGE**

FEBRUARY MARKS THE CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH. Each year, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, established in 1915, selects a theme for the month. The theme is not meant to be a limitation on the exploration of the Black experience in this country but to focus the public's attention on important developments that merit emphasis. This year, the theme is The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity.

After watching the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6 unfold, I could not help but notice the disparity in the response and manner in which these rioters were handled as opposed to the manner in which many peaceful protesters were treated last year. It shows, despite some progress, this country still has a long way to go in promoting the rule of law. A step in the right direction comes down to educating yourself.

Black Americans have helped shape and build this country and, frankly, made it possible for a person like me to become the leader of the Texas Young Lawyers Association. The month of February is devoted to learning about these extraordinary Americans. I encourage everyone to take the time this month to learn about the history of Black Americans and gain a better understanding of the struggles and frustrations that still exist. But do not stop at educating yourself. Determine a way to effectuate real change throughout your life, in your community, and in your legal practice.

Our TYLA Board of Directors strives to have diversity, equity, and inclusion in the projects and initiatives we create. In honor of Black History Month, I encourage you to view some of our projects from the past:

They Had a Dream Too: Young Leaders in the Civil Rights Movement, highlighting the achievements of several young people who made a difference during the fight for civil rights; and

I Was the First. You Can Be a Lawyer Too!, featuring compelling interviews about Thurgood Marshall, Barbara Jordan, and Morris L. Overstreet.



New Initiatives

At our TYLA January board meeting, we heard updates from our directors regarding the progress they made in finalizing our planned initiatives. Two of our largest projects, *Iconic Women in Legal History* and our *Racial Justice HUB*, are coming together and are expected to launch in March and May, respectively. Stay tuned for more information about these amazing projects. Our board also selected a new slate of officers. TYLA has so many talented leaders on the board that regardless of the outcome of elections, the TYLA leadership will remain strong. I will be honored to serve alongside these leaders on the 2021-2022 Executive Committee.

Additionally, we honored our Third-Quarter Small City and Large City Champs at our meeting. Our previous Small City Champ passed the championship belt to Courtney M. White, of Longview. White is a first-year TYLA director and took the lead on coordinating our TYLA virtual roadshows across the state. Our previous Large City Champ passed the championship belt to Cali M. Franks, of Dallas. Franks is a first-year TYLA director and has been instrumental in launching our *Practice Areas 101 Podcast*. Hats off to these amazing first-year directors!



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BRITNEY HARRISON

2020-2021 President, Texas Young Lawyers Association