

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UH Law Center Dean Baynes Charts Course

Baynes Administration to Focus on ‘The Power of Legal Education’

Aug. 15, 2014 – Leonard M. Baynes today began his tenure as the ninth dean of the University of Houston Law Center with twin goals of enhancing the school’s global and national reputation, while training young students “to transform the world.”

“During my deanship, I plan to focus on how the Law Center embodies the ‘Power of Legal Education.’ As legal academics, we are exemplars of this power by fundamentally transforming each student and teaching them how to think like lawyers,” Baynes said. “Through this process, each student learns to write precisely, analyze rigorously, advocate persuasively and conform to the highest professional standards. Our law graduates then take these tools to transform the world by representing individual clients to secure justice, as well as provide the legal architecture of global and national social, political and economic advocacy.”

One of his first initiatives as dean was to institute a voluntary “Community Service Day” with neighboring agencies as part of orientation for incoming students. The outreach is meant to instill the value of public service in the future lawyers that comes with the power of their legal education, he said.

Baynes also plans to launch a pipeline program to create more opportunities for minorities, economically challenged and other under-served students to attend law school.

Baynes was chosen from among six finalists after a nationwide search and replaces interim dean Richard M. Alderman. He brings a national reputation to the job as a communication law scholar with specializations in business, media and diversity issues. Baynes previously served as a

professor and inaugural director of the Ronald H. Brown Center for Civil Rights and Economic Development at St. John's University School of Law in New York City. He was confirmed by the UH System Board of Regents in May.

“Dean Baynes possesses a sophisticated understanding of the changing landscape of legal education, as well as the passion, energy and vision required to take our University of Houston Law Center to even greater heights. His knowledge of law and business blends perfectly with the entrepreneurial spirit of UH and the city of Houston,” said Renu Khator, Chancellor of the University of Houston System and President of the University of Houston.

“As a proud graduate of the University of Houston Law Center, I am delighted to welcome Leonard M. Baynes as our law dean,” added Jarvis Hollingsworth, Chairman of the University of Houston System Board of Regents. “The University of Houston Law Center is the leading law school in the nation’s fourth largest city and stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the best law schools in the country for its quality of legal education and success of our alumni. Dean Baynes’ dynamic leadership will serve to enhance our relationships with alumni, members of the legal profession, the judiciary, community members, state and local government, and other external constituencies.”

Baynes is actively seeking input from alumni and school supporters on where the law school should be heading and how to get there. Alumni can offer suggestions through an interactive [link](#) on the Law Center’s website.

They also can meet the new dean at a series of [receptions](#) scheduled in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Dallas and New York.

“I am extremely excited about the future of the University of Houston Law Center,” said the new dean. “The Law Center has a first class faculty, nationally ranked academic centers and institutes, terrific LL.M. programs and clinics, an enthusiastic and talented staff, great students, and a vibrant and engaged alumni base.”

An official [bio](#) for Dean Baynes is now available on UHLC’s website. To schedule an interview with Dean Baynes, please contact the Law Center Communications Office.

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About the University of Houston

The **University of Houston** is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized by The Princeton Review as one of the nation's best colleges for 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, UH serves more than 39,500 students in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region in the country.

About the University of Houston Law Center

The **University of Houston Law Center** is the leading law school in the nation's fourth-largest city. Founded in 1947, it is a top-tier institution awarding Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees. The Law Center is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.