

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**UH Law Center to co-convene second annual Black Lawyers Matter Conference in partnership with LSAC and SMU Dedman School of Law**

**HOUSTON, Sept. 30, 2021** – Law school deans, professors and other leaders from legal academia and the profession will convene for the [2021 Black Lawyers Matter Conference](#), “Building Inclusive Excellence in Legal Education and Employment” from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Central on Oct. 15. The event is being held by the University of Houston Law Center, SMU Dedman School of Law, and the Law School Admission Council.

Building on the dialogue started at the [inaugural Black Lawyers Matter Conference](#) in 2020, it will examine and expand on how law schools and legal employers can build and develop cultures, structures, and practices better geared toward inclusion and equality in lawyer formation. With the understanding that formation extends from pre-law through employment, the conference will explore best practices for both legal educators and legal employers. The conference will encourage and support law schools and legal employers in focusing on reforms that will help minoritized students thrive during law school and in their careers.

“We and the other law schools have much more work to do in diversifying our faculties, staff and student bodies,” said Dean Leonard M. Baynes. “Without a critical mass, how do we ensure that students of color are not isolated, marginalized or tokenized?”

“I am so grateful to have the opportunity to work in partnership with the University of Houston Law Center and LSAC to continue these critically important conversations,” said Dean Jennifer Collins, Judge James Noel Dean and Professor of Law at SMU Dedman School of Law. “In addition to discussing the essential work that law schools need to do, we will also be discussing the steps legal employers must take to recruit, support and retain diverse lawyers in the workplace.”

“The BLM event and related conversations and actions that happen year-round are critical to helping us truly reach equal access and opportunity for all,” added Kellye Y. Testy, president and CEO of the Law School Admission Council. “I’m grateful to Dean Baynes, Dean Collins, and the BLM 2021 planning committee, and for the leadership and innovation that our member schools demonstrate time and time again.”

Throughout a [robust agenda](#) that includes opening and closing remarks, two keynote speakers, and four sessions, participants will analyze the current hiring ecosystem and its relation to developing a diverse and culturally competent law faculty. Other topics on the agenda include the curriculum and pedagogy of legal education, re-envisioning the hiring process for new lawyers, and best practices in lawyer retention and career development.

Additional sponsors for the conference include the American Bar Association, the Association of American Law Schools, and the National Association for Law Placement.

[Click here to register for 2021 Black Lawyers Matter Conference.](#)

[Click the complete agenda for the 2021 Black Lawyers Matter Conference.](#)

[Click here to view the full 2021 Black Lawyers Matter Conference Planning Committee.](#)

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### **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 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 11 centers and institutes which 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 enrollment of more than 47,000 students.

### **About SMU Dedman School of Law**

SMU Dedman School of Law was founded in 1925. With more than 17,000 alumni from more than 80 countries, it enjoys a national and international reputation of distinction. SMU Dedman School of Law is known for its academic rigor, as well as its excellent record in preparing students to practice in prestigious law firms, major corporations, and public service organizations. The faculty excel in their public engagement efforts, groundbreaking scholarship, innovative teaching, and international impact. The Law School boasts eleven legal clinics and three academic centers with programs making an impact in the community and nationwide.

SMU Dedman School of Law ranks as a top law school by National Jurist/preLaw in Business Law, Criminal Law, Family Law, Intellectual Property Law, Tax Law, and Human Rights Law. It is ranked #28 by National Law Journal/Law.com for the having the highest percentage of 2020 graduates in associate jobs at the nation's 100 largest law firms. It also has one of the country's oldest LL.M. programs for graduates of foreign law schools, a program initially launched in 1949.

### **About Law School Admission Council**

LSAC's mission is to advance law and justice by encouraging diverse and talented individuals to study law and by supporting their enrollment and learning journeys from prelaw through practice.