

UMB News

Maryland Carey Law Launches Center for Race and the Law

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The University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law recently announced the launch of the Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law. The center, named in honor of Maryland Carey Law professors and civil rights pioneers **Larry Gibson, LLB**, and **Taunya Lovell Banks, JD**, will advance racial justice through education, advocacy, and research. The announcement was made at the school's fifth Black Law Alumni Reunion, which has taken place every five years since 2003.



(l-r) Professor Larry Gibson, Dean Renée Hutchins, Professor Taunya Lovell Banks, Professor Michael Pinard.

The overarching aim of the center will be to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities impacted by historical and modern-day racial oppression in a wide range of areas, including the criminal legal system, economic justice, employment, education, housing, health, and other emerging issues.

The center will engage in these efforts in partnership with a diverse array of stakeholders in Baltimore, the state of Maryland, and throughout the United States, including individuals and communities directly impacted by inequality, as well as organizations committed to racial and economic justice.

“The Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law is a vital addition to our law school and to the community,” said **Dean Renée M. Hutchins, JD**. “The center will provide a critical space for scholarship, engagement, and action on issues of race and the law. It

will also serve as a resource for students, lawyers, and community members who are working to advance racial justice. The beauty of this center is that it will be a convener of all the relevant voices so we can get to the best solutions.”

The Gibson-Banks Center will be led by **Michael Pinard, JD**, the Francis & Harriet Iglehart Professor of Law. Pinard is a nationally recognized expert on issues related to race and the criminal legal system and will serve as the center's inaugural faculty director.

“I am honored to direct the Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law,” said Pinard. “The center's overall focus and vision is to work with community stakeholders to improve the lives of those harmed by historical and modern-day racial and intersectional oppression. We look forward to engaging the issues thoroughly, expansively, and tenaciously.”

The Gibson-Banks Center will offer a variety of programs and initiatives, including:

Education and Engagement: The center will offer courses, workshops, and community conversations on race and the law to Maryland Carey Law students, University System of Maryland institutions, and the public.

Advocacy: The center’s advocacy work will include litigation in state and federal courts and agencies; promoting policy and legislative change at the local, state, and federal levels; and authoring amicus briefs in cases of local, state, and national importance.

Research: The center’s research arm will include legal scholarship focused on race and intersectionality as well as policy and evidence-based research that will provide insights and data related to racial and intersectional marginalization. Maryland Carey Law School faculty, affiliated faculty, and center fellows will conduct the expansive research.

Maryland Carey Law alumnus, the Hon. William H. “Billy” Murphy, JD '69, has made a \$1 million commitment to help build a solid foundation for the center.

“We are so grateful to Billy for supporting the Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law,” said Dean Hutchins. “Maryland Carey Law played an important role in preparing his family to become civil rights advocates and now, with his support, we have the opportunity to make a profound impact in advancing racial justice in Baltimore, Maryland, and beyond.”

The Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law is a critical step in Maryland Carey Law’s commitment to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. The center will build and reflect on the legacy of Maryland Carey Law, a once segregated institution that was desegregated through litigation led by Thurgood Marshall on behalf of Donald Gaines Murray, LLB '38. Today, Maryland Carey Law routinely enrolls one of the highest percentages of Black students in incoming classes of any top law school.

About Larry Gibson and Taunya Lovell Banks

Larry Gibson, the Morton & Sophia Macht Professor of Law, is a legal historian who has written one of the definitive biographies of Justice Thurgood Marshall and will soon release a second book about the justice. Gibson teaches a range of courses at the law school and has curated several exhibits on the history of Black lawyers in Maryland. On the faculty since 1974, Gibson has demonstrated strong leadership both within and outside of the law school.

Taunya Lovell Banks, the Jacob A. France Professor Emeritus of Equality Jurisprudence, taught her final class at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law in fall 2021. The legendary critical race theory scholar and first tenured Black woman on the law school faculty retired after an illustrious career in which she trained her sharp scholarship on exposing systemic sexism and racism and inspired generations of students and colleagues to dedicate their legal careers to the fight for social justice.

About University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law

The University of Maryland School of Law was authorized by the Maryland legislature in 1813 and began regular instruction in 1824. It is the third oldest law school in the nation, but its innovative programs make it one of the liveliest and most dynamic today. Maryland Carey Law stands among five other professional schools on the University of Maryland, Baltimore campus. It has taken advantage of this location to become an integral part of the Baltimore-Washington legal and business community.

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