

Benham Scholars Program

TO ENHANCE DIVERSITY IN LEGAL EDUCATION AND THE PROFESSION

The School of Law has created the Benham Scholars Program, which seeks to enhance diversity in the legal profession and to recruit students from underserved communities.

The initiative is named in honor of Georgia Supreme Court Justice Robert Benham, who was a first-year law student 50 years ago and became the law school's second African-American graduate in 1970.

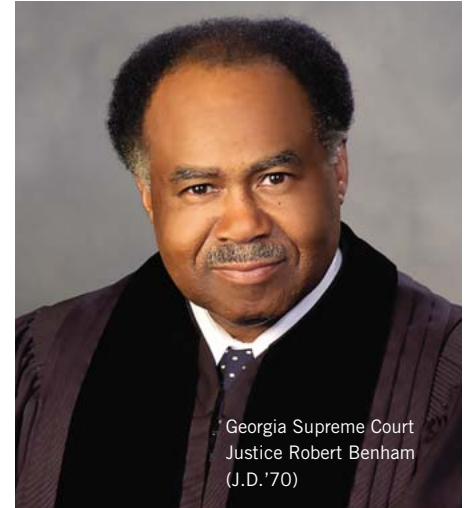
"Throughout our state and nation, there are young people who work hard and dream about success but have difficulty overcoming certain obstacles, financial or otherwise," Benham said. "If this program can help even a fraction of them attend law school and have the chance for a successful legal career, we will have made an impact. I am of course honored by this incredible recognition and look forward to watching this new program change young lives."

The Benham Scholars Program is funded as part of the New Approaches in Diversity and Inclusion initiative announced by UGA President Jere W. Morehead (J.D.'80) in the fall of 2017. Private donations received from the Office of the President were matched by

private law school funding to support the program, which will focus on four key areas: recruitment, preparation for law school, academic support and career planning.

"One of our goals as an institution of legal education is to ensure our student body, and ultimately the new lawyers who enter the profession, is reflective of today's society," Dean Peter B. "Bo" Rutledge said. "We know that for some academically qualified students, barriers still exist to entering law school. Some of these are financial and others are tied to access to information and support. Through the Benham Scholars Program, we plan to give these young men and women the opportunity to thrive both in law school and in their careers."

Pre-law advisers at colleges and universities throughout the state of Georgia say they have qualified students who would like to study the law but they find these students lack the information and resources to make law school a reality, according to School of Law Executive Director of Admissions Gregory L. "Greg" Roseboro (J.D.'87). "These students think attending law school at Georgia is beyond their reach," he said.



Georgia Supreme Court Justice Robert Benham (J.D.'70)

The Benham Scholars Program – which is open to Georgia residents and those with significant ties to the state – was designed to assist students with a range of support options including participation in the school's Early Start Program (a weeklong introduction to law school that takes place prior to the start of the fall semester), money for books and bar exam prep courses as well as invitations for special professional development opportunities and networking.

The inaugural class of Benham Scholars will start law school this fall.



Jackson named associate director of admissions and diversity programs

Jenna L. Jackson (J.D.'14) was recently named the school's associate director of admissions and diversity programs. She is responsible for recruiting prospective applicants to the law school, representing the school at various Law School Admissions Council forums as well as speaking at other college and university graduate and professional career fairs. She also supports and implements a range of diversity-related programming at the law school.

Before coming to the School of Law in 2015, Jackson worked as a recruiting and game day logistics consultant for the UGA Football Department, where she assisted with ensuring NCAA compliance and the execution of game day events. She also worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ASPIREtv and Morris Manning & Martin. Additionally, she is a member of the LEAD Athens Class of 2018.