

**HAMPTON UNIVERSITY
PRE-LAW INSTITUTE
SENIOR RECOGNITION CEREMONY**



**HONORING
THE
CLASS OF 2025 PRE-LAW GRADUATES**

**SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2025 11:00AM
OGDEN HALL**

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

(Assistant Professor & Director of the Hampton University Pre-Law Institute, Damien L. Bevelle, Esq., Hampton U. c/o 1996)

To the Hampton University Pre-Law Institute Class of 2025:

Under the leadership of our 13th President LTG. (Ret.) Darrell K. Williams and First Lady Myra Williams, Hampton University is well into its next era of elevating our Standard of Excellence, producing the next generation of transformational servant-leaders, and above all—delivering the No. 1 student experience in America!

In my third year as its steward, the 2024–'25 academic year saw HUPLI achieve a number of historic “firsts”: In August, during the first week of classes, HUPLI hosted the Court of Appeals of Virginia—for two days, our historic Ogden Hall was a state appellate courts house where our pre-law students witnessed the first ever (in the state of Virginia) panel of all black women judges preside over a full docket of appellate cases, hearing oral arguments from the opposing parties. By bringing court to our Home by the Sea, our pre-law students were the first at an HBCU (or any university without a law school) to have appellate proceedings occur on their campus. In October, HUPLI had the distinct pleasure of hosting the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. On this auspicious occasion, our pre-law students were privileged to witness our own distinguished alumna, the Hon. M. Tia Johnson, sit on the five-judge panel that heard oral arguments on an appeal from a military tribunal, as Ogden Hall was transformed into a United States Federal Appellate Court. These were just two of the events to which our pre-law students were privy this year. This year also saw a record number of law schools (22) visited campus to engage our pre-law students. Additionally, three national law firms—ProskauerRose, OgletreeDeakins, and BallardSpahr—visited campus to connect with our pre-law students and affirm their support of HUPLI. Most importantly, this past year saw our pre-law students, including a number of our graduates, experience tremendous success academically and via their co-curricular endeavors. Our pre-law students competed successfully in the Virginia Foundation of Independent Colleges' Applied Ethic Bowl, the HBCU National Speech & Debate Competition, and the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge. Finally, for the first time in recorded history, multiple senior pre-law students scored above the 98th percentile on the LSAT exam.

I will be forever grateful to the class of 2025 (and last year's class) for welcoming one of Hampton's sons back to this beloved institution. You embraced the programmatic changes and met the new challenges in the way we as Hamptonians do—you rose to the occasion! Again, I thank you for trusting me to help guide you on your academic and professional journey. I have every confidence that each of you are prepared and poised to realize your full potential whether in the noble profession of law or whatever field you decide to make your mark. Finally, know that your departure from your Home by the Sea is not “goodbye,” as HUPLI is here to assist and support you as you take the next steps toward fulfilling your divine purpose. It is my sincere hope that you know that I love, respect and cherish you as young scholars and as future service-leaders.

It is my sincere hope that each and every member of HUPLI's Class of 2025 chases your wildest dreams while affirming and representing in all you do HUPLI's ethos:

Justitia et Aequitas per Veritas et Rationem

(Justice and Equity through Truth and Reason)

Lastly, as your time at Hampton has likely revealed, life will present many, often unexpected, challenges. Thus, I leave with you these words from the great Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as words to guide you through the personal and professional challenges that you will surely encounter:

“Cowardice asks the question, 'is it safe?' Expediency asks the question, 'is it politic?' Vanity asks the question, 'is it popular?' But, Conscience asks the question, 'is it right?' There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience says that it is right.”

Kenneth J. Montgomery, Esq.

Hampton University, Class of 1994



After graduating Fordham Law School in 1997 Kenneth honed his skills as a litigator at the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office. As a prosecutor he worked in the red zone which covered high crime areas in the northern section of Brooklyn including East New York and Flatbush. He also worked in the sex crimes unit, the juvenile designated felony unit, grand jury and investigations, the complaint room, and the Violent Gang Bureau.

Upon leaving the Prosecutor's office in 2001, Kenneth formed his own law firm specializing in Criminal and Civil Rights litigation and some general litigation. Kenneth is also a founding member of both The Brooklyn Combine and Pixod. The Brooklyn Combine is a non-for-profit community organization that partners with schools, educators, other community organizations and dedicated city officials to help provide

critical education, mentoring, leadership, and social programs to youth and young adults in low-income and under-served communities. The Brooklyn Combine run academic and mentoring programs in the Brownsville and Red Hook sections of Brooklyn.

As a talented and well-respected criminal defense attorney in both Capital, Federal, and State court, in the past 21 years as a private attorney Kenneth has defended clients charged with everything including but not limited to federal capital murder, terrorism, murder, wire fraud, rape, RICO, drug conspiracy, etc. As a criminal defense attorney he has litigated over 100 criminal trials as both a prosecutor and defense attorney, securing over 50 not guilty verdicts as a defense attorney. Kenneth serves on both the EDNY and SDNY criminal panels and is also a federal capital murder attorney in both districts. Kenneth has also represented clients across the country who have been charged with the federal death penalty statute.

For the last 15 years Kenneth has been a professor at Fordham law in the trial advocacy department and most recently he has served as a professor in the Black Studies department at Brooklyn College. Kenneth also currently serves as a member of the federal death penalty working group in Washington D.C.

Having grown up in the Brownsville and Crown heights section of Brooklyn at a time where many of his peers were incarcerated or killed, the work that Kenneth is most proud of is not his impressive legal career, he is most proud of his work as a member of the Brooklyn Combine.

The Combine has provided him and his partners a number of paradigm shifting opportunities within the community. Some of those opportunities include working with students in the DOE as well as young people in the community. The programs are focused on changing the narrative and self-determination.

Kenneth's life work and journey is being a part of the work that facilitates necessary change in communities of color and the American legal system

PROGRAM

May 10, 2025

11:00 am

“Justitia et Aequitas per Veritas et Rationem”

Damien L. Bevelle, Esq., Director

OPENING REMARKS Damien L. Bevelle, Esq.

INVOCATION Dr. Melody Williams PhD, DMin, CPE,
Assistant Professor of English

MUSICAL SELECTION Led by Pre-Law Choir Members
Lift Every Voice

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKER Christopher Holloway
Class of 2023

INSPIRATIONAL REMARKS Kenneth J. Montgomery, Esq.
Class of 1994

PRESENTATIONS

Gavels, Certificates & Cords Damien L. Bevelle, Esq.

Director's Award Sissy Adams-Jones, Esq.
Jason Vives, Esq.

CLOSING REMARKS Damien L. Bevelle, Esq.

2025 PRE-LAW GRADUATES

**Pre-Law Scholar*

+Pre-Law Fellow

Saniya Acree*

*Sociology
Columbus, GA*

Yahmise Bordies*

*English
Hampton, VA*

Cyanna Cabell+

*History
Madison Heights, VA*

MacKenzie Carron*

*Criminal Justice
Katy, TX*

Hailee Clack*

*Political Science
Swartz Creek, MI*

Donovin Cooper+

*Finance
Gainesville, FL*

Kalailah Coleman*

*Sociology
Nashville, TN*

Jada Cooper+

*Sociology
Chicago, IL*

Kalise Dyton*

*Criminal Justice
New Castle, DE*

Promise Fagbuyi*

*Accounting
Upper Marlborough, MD*

Philip Haynie*

*Political Science, Economics
Burgees, VA*

Bryan Henry*

*Political Science
Chicago, Illinois*

Makayla Herman*

*Political Science
Newport News, VA*

Symphony Hicks+

*Political Science
Hollis, NY*

Shavonne Hines-Foster+

*Political Science
San Francisco, CA*

Sylonna Johnson

*Political Science
Los Angeles, CA*

Henry Johnson+

*Criminal Justice
Downers Grove, IL*

Janai' Marshall*

*Political Science
Parkville, MD*

Wali McJunkins Jr+

*Finance, English
Washington, DC*

Karin Owens+

*Political Science
El Paso, TX*

* Pre Law Scholars: Students who completed the full 18 credit hour Pre-Law curriculum

+ Pre-Law Fellows: Students who completed at least 6 credit hours of the Pre-Law Curriculum

A'Shantia Parker*

*Political Science
Eules, TX*

Stephen Shields*

*Economics
Hackensack, NJ*

Chasity St. John+

*English
Brooklyn, NY*

Micah Stevens+

*Political Science
Annapolis, MD*

Alexandra Umelo*

*Political Science
Middletown, CT*

Elisa Walker+

*International Studies
Evanston, IL*

Jaelyn Williams*

*Political Science
Munster, IA*

Morgan Williams+

*Strategic Communications
Roseland, NJ*

Aleana Woods*

*Political Science
Eastvale, CA*

Kendall Yancey+

*International Studies
Detroit, MI*

Arsema Yohannes*

*International Studies
Dallas, TX*

* Pre Law Scholars: Students who completed the full 18 credit hour Pre-Law curriculum

+ Pre-Law Fellows: Students who completed at least 6 credit hours of the Pre-Law Curriculum

DIRECTOR'S AWARD RECIPIENTS



Philip Haynie IV is a Political Science major with a minor in Economics on the Pre-law track from Reedville, VA. At Hampton, he has served as a Senator in the Student Government Association; Vice President and Treasurer of the Upsilon Theta Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society; Mister Political Science for the Political Science Club; and as the Captain of Forensics for the Debate and Forensics Team. He is also a member of Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society and MOSAIC. Philip was raised on his family's row-crop farm and is pursuing a career in regulatory food, agricultural, and environmental law. He will attend the University of Michigan Law School in the fall.



Makayla Herman is a graduating senior at Hampton University, majoring in Political Science on the Pre-Law track. A Newport News native, she has excelled academically and served as Vice President of Pi Sigma Alpha, the Political Science Honor Society. Makayla has participated in various volunteer and internship programs, all rooted in her passion for advocacy and service. This fall, she will begin her legal studies at William & Mary Law School, where she plans to continue pursuing her commitment to helping others through the study and practice of law.



Janai' T. Marshall is a graduating senior at Hampton University, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a concentration in Pre-Law. A native of Rochester, New York, she has distinguished herself as a Dean's List student and a Freddie T. Davy Honors College Scholar. Throughout her time at Hampton, Janai' has taken on meaningful leadership roles, including serving as a Student Leader in the Greer Dawson Wilson Student Leadership Training Program and representing the Political Science Club as Ms. Political Science, where she helped strengthen campus and community engagement. Passionate about Contract and Sports Entertainment Law, Janai' plans to attend law school to further her education and pursue a career centered on advocacy, leadership, and legal excellence.



A'Shantia L. Parker is receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a Pre-Law Concentration and a minor in Leadership Studies from Hampton University. She is currently applying to law schools to matriculate into her 1L year with a passion for trial advocacy and litigation. In addition, A'Shantia serves as President of the Southwest Pre-Alumni Council, Senior Class Vice-President, the Fundraising Chair of Black Women in Law, a Pre-Law Ambassador of the Hampton University Pre-Law Institute, and a Student Leader of the Greer Dawson Wilson Student Leadership Training Program. She is honored by the University as a Merit Scholar, a William R. Harvey Leadership Institute Fellow, and by the Political Science Department as a Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society inductee.

HUPLI ALUMNI ADVISORY COUNCIL

HUPLI has grown by leaps and bounds during the last three years. The progress we have achieved would not have been possible without the passion, commitment and love of the HUPLI Alumni Advisory Council.

On behalf of Director Bevelle, and HUPLI's students,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!



Sissy Adams-Jones

*Hampton University, Class of 1995
Florida Coastal School of Law*



Tasha "Coach TC" Cooper

*Hampton University, Class of 1996
Columbia Law School*



Peyton Farley

*Hampton University, Class of 2017
Regent University School of Law*



Rex Flynn

*Hampton University, Class of 1997
George Mason University
Antonin Scalia Law School*



Nicole Hagan

*Hampton University, Class of 1995
Howard University School of Law*



Karlyn Hunter

*Hampton University, Class of 1996
Columbia Law School*



Lavonne Idlette

*Hampton University, Class of 2007
Florida A&M University College of
Law*



Mechelle Johnson Webb

*Hampton University, Class of 1989
University of Baltimore School of
Law*



Angela D. Minor

*Hampton University, Class of 1993
UDC David A. Clarke School of Law*



Daria Neal

*Hampton University, Class of 1996
University of California Los Angeles
School of Law*



Spencer Overton

*Hampton University, Class of 1990
Harvard University School of Law*



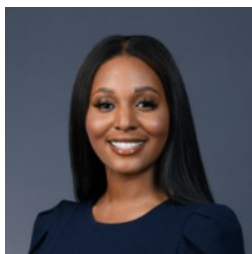
Jaaye Person-Lynn

*Hampton University, Class of 2004
Howard University School of Law*



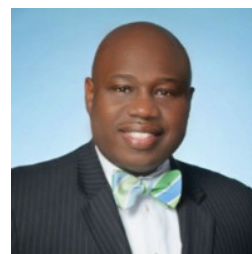
Aaliyah Pichon

*Hampton University, Class of 2023
George Washington Law School, 2L*



Keatrice Robertson

*Hampton University, Class of 2012
Northwestern Law School,
JD/MBA'25*



Jimmy F. Robinson, Jr.

*Hampton University, Class of 1995
William & Mary Law School*



John T. Rose

*Hampton University, Class of 2014
Emory University School of Law
School*



Rashida I. Sims

*Hampton University, Class of 2000
University of Arkansas William H.
Bowen School of Law*



Ambur C. Smith

*Hampton University, Class of 2015
Georgetown Law School*



Nicole Stallworth

*Hampton University, Class of 1996
Fordham University School of Law*



Jason Vives

*Hampton University, Class of 1996
Cardozo Law School*



David Whitted

*Hampton University, Class of 1990
University of Baltimore School of
Law*



Cherina Wright

*Hampton University, Class of 2011
Suffolk University Law School*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Office of the President	(Ret.) LTG. Darrell K. Williams Mrs. Myra Williams Joy Jefferson Apyrl Roberts
Office of the Executive Vice President & Provost	Dr. Betty Stewart Dr. Leroy Hamilton Jr.
Office of the General Counsel	Faye Lucas, Esq. Rashida Stevens, Esq.
Office of Strategic Communication & Marketing	Richelle Payne James Parker
School of Liberal Arts & Education (SLAE)	Dr. Linda Malone-Colon Assistant Dean, Novelle Dickenson Assistant Dean, Dr. Sherree Davis Dr. Celeste Green Assistant Professor, Dr. Janneice Haughton (Ret.) Professor & Adjunct, Ava Marrow, JD

SPECIAL THANKS

Virginia Court of Appeals	Hon. Doris Henderson Causey Hon. Verinda R. Chaney; Hon. Domonique A. Callins
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces	Hon. Kevin Ohlson, Chief Judge Hon. M. Tia Johnson; Hon. John Sparks; Hon. Gregory Maggs; Hon. Liam Hardy
Law Firm of Proskauer Rose, LLP	Ailani Acey, Esq. Brandon McCoy, Esq.
Law Firm of Ogletree Deakins	Jimmy Robinson, Esq.
Law Firm of Ballard Spahr	Virginia G. Essandoh
Commonwealth's Attorney Office	Anton Bell, Hampton, VA Ramin Fatehi, Norfolk, VA
LDF- Marshall Motley Scholars Program	Adria Kimbrough, JD
George Mason Antonin Scalia Law School	Dean Ken Randall Associate Dean Sabrina Huffman
William & Marry Law School	Dean Benjamin Spencer Dean Isabella DiScullo
Yale University	Assistant Provost, Lakia Scott

Your support of the Hampton University Pre-Law Institute is greatly appreciated!

ALMA MATER

Words by Sarah Collins Fernandis, 1882

Music by Chauncey Northern, 1924

O Hampton, a thought sent from Heaven above,
To be a great soul's inspiration;
We sing thee the earnest of broad human love,
The shrine of our heart's adoration.

Thy foundation firm and thy roof tree outspread,
And thy sacred altar-fires burning;

The sea circling 'round thee, soft skies overhead,
Dear Hampton, the goal of our yearning!

Refrain

O Hampton, we never can make thee a song,
Except as our lives do the singing;

In service that will thy great spirit prolong,
And send it through centuries ringing!

Kind mother, we'll treasure the dear happy days,
We've spent here in life's preparation;

Yet go with brave hearts upon our chosen ways,
Of service to God and our nation;

Still wearing our colors, the blue and the white,
As pledge that our fond hearts will cherish;
A love which for thee ever shines true and bright,
A loyalty that ne'er can perish!