

JCBA
JACKSON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

5:30PM - 8:00PM

OCTOBER 8, 2026

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The 28th Annual

JUDGE KIT CARSON ROQUE, JR.

Scholarship Reception

Today we celebrate Judge Roque, a visionary leader, fierce advocate for children and justice, and a lifelong champion for his community

P.O. Box 410184
Kansas City, Missouri 64141-0184
jcba@jacksoncountybar.com
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PROGRAM

"Lift Every Voice and Sing"
April Cobbins - Darron J & Go Hard Band

Welcome/The Occasion
Shaun Stallworth, JCBA Foundation President

Invocation
The Honorable Mark Dupree
Wyandotte County District Attorney

Judge Lisa White Hardwick Academic Excellence Scholarship Recipient Recognition
Dewanna Newman, Chairwoman & Recording Secretary

Presentation of Judge Roque Scholarship Recipients
The Honorable Mark Styles
Division 19, Jackson County Circuit Court Judge

Judge Lewis W. Clymer Award
Shaun Stallworth, JCBA Foundation President

Pyramid of Diversity Award
Anika Hickman, Vice President

Closing Remarks
Crystal Ellison, President

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THE HONORABLE KIT CARSON ROQUE, JR.

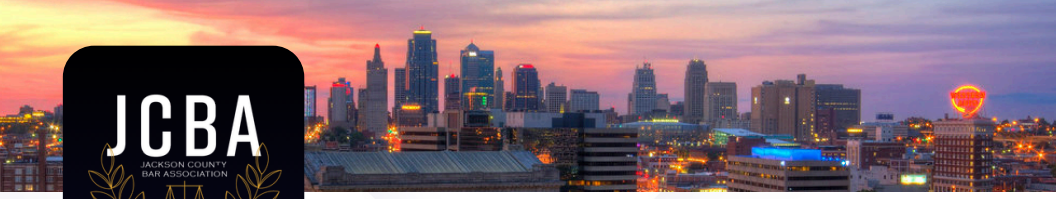


The Honorable Kit Carson Roque, Jr. was a devoted judge, civil rights advocate, and lifelong Kansas City leader. Appointed to the Jackson County Circuit Court in 1992, he brought decades of legal experience, from private practice at Gray, Payne & Roque to his work with the U.S. Department of Education reviewing federal civil rights investigations.

Judge Roque was deeply rooted in service. He was former counsel to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a leader in multiple bar associations, and an active member of organizations dedicated to uplifting minority contractors, students, and the broader community. His commitment to children and youth was unwavering, serving as President of Niles Home for Children and First Vice President of KCMC Child Development Corporation.

A Navy Vietnam veteran, fraternity brother of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Prince Hall Freemasonry, and dedicated member of St. James United Methodist Church, Judge Roque lived a life of purpose, faith, and leadership. His legacy as a civil rights warrior and community builder continues to inspire.

Each year, the JCBA proudly joins students, legal professionals, and community leaders to honor Judge Roque's enduring impact and the standard of excellence he set for us all.



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2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Cara Bruce, Washburn Law

Cara D.V. Bruce is a law student at Washburn Law, set to graduate in December 2026. Raised in Wyandotte County, Kansas, as the 7th of 9 siblings, she is the first in her family to attend college and law school. Her drive to advance the Black community through law was sparked by her brother's unjust experience with the criminal justice system. Professionally, she has worked as a paralegal in Jackson County and currently serves as a legal intern with the Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office, KS Legal Services, and the KS Appellate Defender's Office.



Russell Harrison, Washburn Law

Originally from rural Gadsden County, Florida, Russell Harrison is a Washburn Law 3L and former U.S. Army Officer. Driven by a commitment to service, he co-founded *Born2BeAMan* in 2017, a youth mentorship program that now serves over 50 young men across three chapters. Combining his military leadership and legal education, Russell remains dedicated to representation, community advocacy, and empowering the next generation.



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2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Kerete Paul, Washburn Law

Kerete Paul is a law student at Washburn University School of Law who began her studies in the fall of 2024. She is actively involved on campus as a representative in the Student Bar Association, president of the Black Law Students Association, and has gained practical legal experience practicing under a student license. Recognized as an intelligent and personable student with strong academic dedication and boundless energy, she studied abroad in Japan and is open to taking the bar and practicing locally after graduation.



A'Veyunna Ranson, Washburn Law

A'Veyunna Ranson is a law student at Washburn University School of Law, where she began her studies in the fall of 2024 and serves in an elected role within the student bar association. She has taken coursework including Civil Procedure I and Federal Courts, demonstrating strong persistence, professionalism, analytical growth, and a systematic approach to her legal education. Additionally, she excels at seeking feedback and applying a rigorous approach to overcome challenging coursework.



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1998 Melanie Sawyer McIntyre
1999 Therese Le Blanc
1999 Mary Rogan
2000 Latrice Davis
2000 William Jacob
2001 Karla Jones-Wilson
2001 D'Onica Hodgkin
2002 Dorthy Savory
2002 Daniel Dye
2003 Katherine Ray
2003 Shomari Benton
2004 Sharon Stewart Ivy
2004 Pearline Downs
2004 Corey Johnson
2005 Uzoamaka Nwonwu
2005 Latine Alston
2005 Keron Wright
2006 Ambereen Shaffie
2006 Stephanie Thorn
2006 Alfred Jordan
2007 Shaun Stallworth
2007 Jon Otto
2008 Shalanda Smith
2008 Meagan Mcginness
2008 Shayla Lewis
2009 Maryam Fakhradeen
2009 Ebonie Reed
2009 Rury Grisham
2010 Charnissa Holliday-Scott
2010 Camille Roe
2010 Sophia Washington
2011 Karma Johnson
2011 Adrienne Haynes
2011 Ebonie Davis
2012 Henry Tanner
2012 Terrell Dark
2012 Tiffany Johnson
2013 Melesa Johnson
2013 Gerald Gray, III
2013 Cecilia Brown
2014 Jayne Bart-Plange
2014 Portia Britt
2014 Alexandra Alpough
2015 Valerie Desroches
2015 Linda Adeniji
2015 Florene O'Neal
2016 Eric Hurtt
2016 Florene O' Neal
2016 Valerie Desroches
2017 Susanna Ampem
2017 Doretta Goolsby
2017 Brandi Sue Spates
2018 Irene Downs
2018 Demetris “Deme” Drummer
2018 Susanna Ampem
2018 Brandon Williams
2019 Wayne Jordan
2019 Brionna Pratt
2019 Fluffy Kilburn
2019 Kristen Stinnett
2020 Tamika Ross



PAST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS CON'T

2020 Jasmine Ward
2020 Sommer Sharpe
2020 Kristen Stinnett
2020 Niya Young
2021 Wayne Michael Jordan III
2021 Tamika Ross
2021 Brenden Buford
2021 Justin Griffin
2021 Sommer Sharpe
2022 Sommari T. Muwwakkil II
2022 Jamie Powell
2022 Brenden Buford
2022 Baron Hoy
2023 Adina Shabazz
2023 Dee Arrington
2023 Jonnette Oakes
2024 Myuah Hamilton
2024 Doug Grace
2025 Cara Bruce
2025 Doug Grace
2025 London Kelly
2025 Kerete Paul
2025 Kelcie Washington

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THE HONORABLE LEWIS CLYMER AWARD RECIPIENT: MARK BRYANT



Judge Lewis Walter Clymer (1910–2001) was a trailblazing lawyer, judge, and community leader. Overcoming early setbacks, he earned his law degree from Howard University and began a distinguished legal career in Missouri, serving as Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Assistant Attorney General, and later as a judge in the Kansas City Municipal Court and Sixteenth Judicial Circuit. Clymer also dedicated his life to community service, working with the Urban League, NAACP, Kansas City School Board, and numerous civic organizations. His legacy of justice, leadership, and opportunity continues to inspire.



Mark S. Bryant is a distinguished attorney at Rouse Frets White, P.C., where he is recognized as one of the leading land use and public law attorneys in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Mr. Bryant is a longtime Kansas City attorney, former Kansas City Councilman, and President of Freedom, Inc. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law and was admitted to practice in 1975. In 1995, he became the first Black lawyer elevated to shareholder at Polsinelli. In 2005, he joined the Kansas City office of Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP (now Dentons).



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THE HONORABLE LEWIS CLYMER AWARD: RECIPIENT: MARK BRYANT

Mr. Bryant's commitment to public service includes serving as a former trustee of Metropolitan Community College, a former member of the Tax Increment Financing Commission, and a former superdelegate to the Democratic National Committee. He also led Onyx Development Corporation as its Executive Director, working to revitalize Kansas City's urban core. His advocacy started well before he became a licensed professional. As a student at Southeast High School, he led a class boycott after his sister was not elected to the cheerleading team because of racial injustice in the election process. As a result of the boycott, the election procedure was changed, and his sister was elected cheerleader.

Mr. Bryant's determination, commitment to justice, and advocacy skills translated seamlessly into his professional career. He zealously advocated for the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway to benefit the entire metropolitan area. While President of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, he signed a million-dollar-per-year licensing agreement with Nike to sell NLB insignias. Mr. Bryant was called "the nicest bulldog in town" by Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers magazine in 2005. His distinguished career has earned him numerous honors and professional recognitions. He received the 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award from the UMKC Law Foundation and Law Alumni Association and is a recipient of the Thomas Deacy Trial Award. He has also been selected as a Missouri Super Lawyer and has received Martindale-Hubbell's highest attorney rating, AV Preeminent. Mr. Bryant is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. He is the proud father of four children and grandfather of six grandchildren. The JCBA Foundation is honored to present this year's Clymer Award to Attorney Mark S. Bryant.



THE PYRAMID OF DIVERSITY AWARD RECIPIENT: KCMBF

The JCBA Foundation's **Pyramid of Diversity Award**, established in 2004, recognizes Kansas City-area law firms and corporate legal departments that demonstrate a strong commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion for people of color.

The award recognizes efforts such as recruiting, retaining, and promoting attorneys of color; supporting minority-owned businesses and community organizations; sponsoring diversity-focused initiatives; and establishing meaningful goals for continued progress.

KCMBF

Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation

The JCBA Foundation is proud to present The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation with the Pyramid of Diversity Award! The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation is the charitable arm of the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association. KCMBF serves the Kansas City region through programs that protect survivors, support veterans and service members, and inspire the next generation of diverse legal leaders. KCMBF brings together lawyers, judges, law firms, and community partners across the Kansas City region to strengthen the justice system and serve those who need it most. Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation is a force in the community and is committed to solving problems and building an equitable future.





Creating a culture that inspires us to bring out our best.

Polsinelli is proud to support the **Jackson County Bar Association Scholarship Reception** to foster diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and communities we serve.

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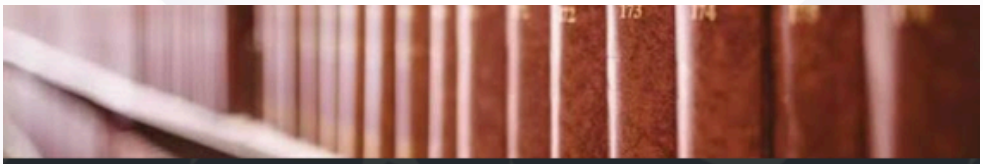

UNITED STATES COURTS

Western District of Missouri

Honorable Brian C. Wimes, Chief Judge
Paige Wymore-Wynn, Court Executive

Western District of Missouri congratulates JCBA on the 2026 Judge Kit Carson Roque, Jr. Scholarship Reception

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Energizing Impact

Husch Blackwell is proud to support the 2026 Judge Kit Carson Roque, Jr. Scholarship Reception. We celebrate the legacy of Judge Roque and the efforts of the Jackson County Bar Association to help diverse students achieve their legal aspirations.

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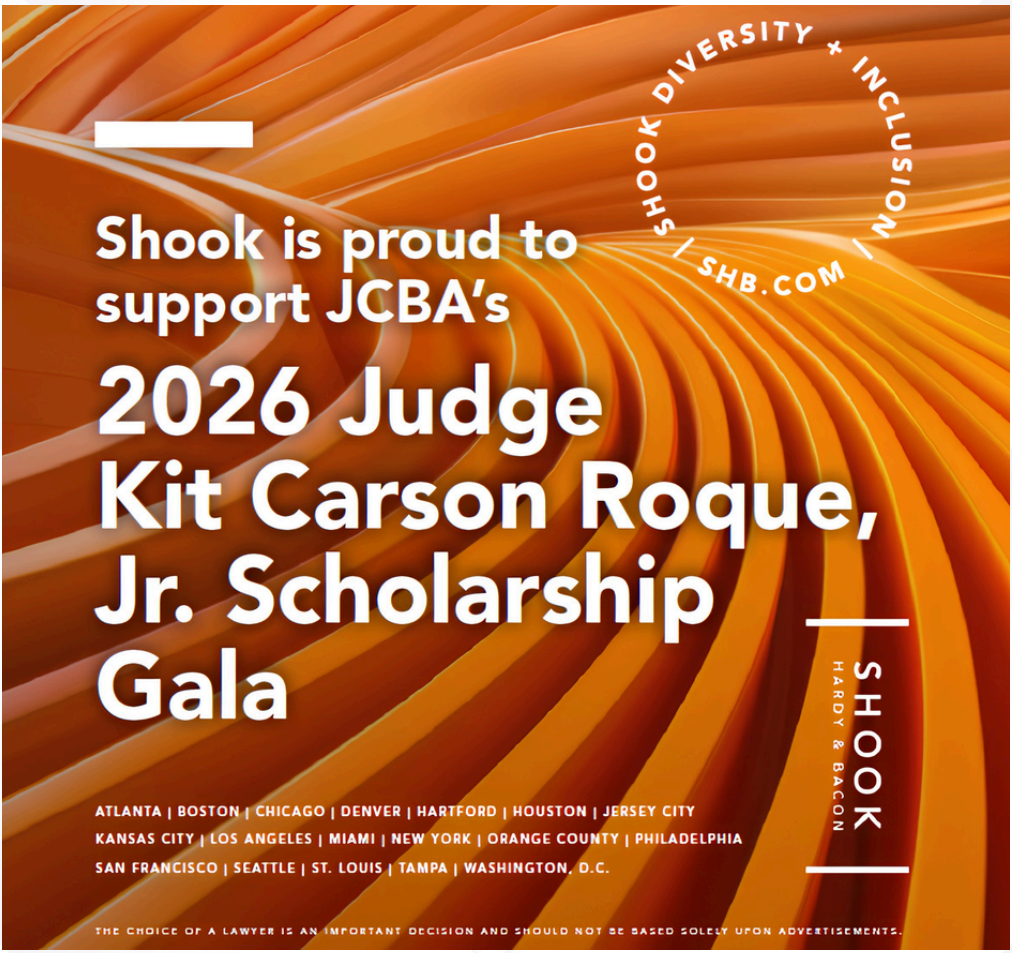
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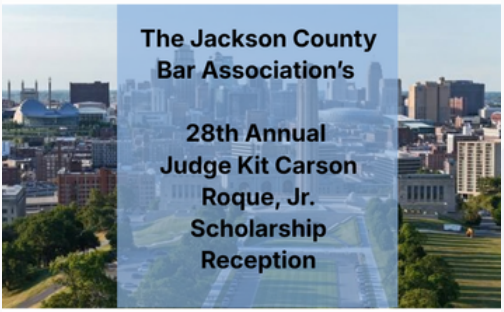

Congratulations to this year's scholarship and award recipients!

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2026 SCHOLARSHIP JUDGES, BOARDS & RECEPTION COMMITTEE

Scholarship Judges

- The Honorable Candice Alcaraz
- The Honorable Jalilah Otto
- The Honorable Martina Peterson
- The Honorable Mark Styles, Jr.

Scholarship Reception Committee

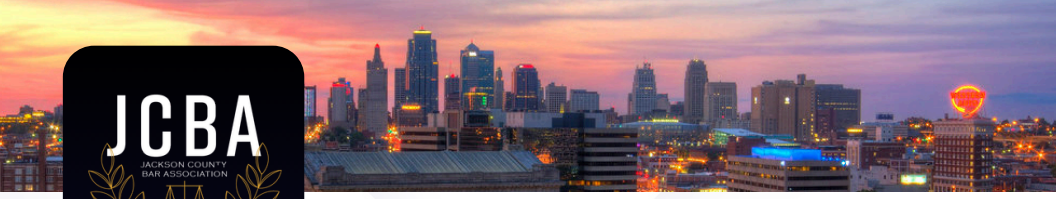
- ***Dewanna Newman, Chair***
- Sophia Bond, Co-Chair
- Crystal Ellison

JCBA Foundation Officers

- ***Shaun Stallworth, President***
- Kori Carew, Vice-President
- The Honorable Lajuana Counts, Secretary
- Kamillia Scott, Treasurer (ex officio)

JCBA Executive Board & Committee Chairs

- ***Crystal Ellison, President***
- Anika Hickman, Vice-President
- Kamillia Scott, Treasurer
- Araya Dixon, Corresponding Secretary
- Dewanna Newman, Recording Secretary
- Sophia Bond, Parliamentarian/Immediate Past President
- ***Anika Hickman, Judge Roque Reception, Chair*****
- ***Crystal Ellison, CLE, Chair, Reception, Co-Chair***
- ***Dewanna Newman, Scholarship Competition's, Chair***
- ***Araya Dixon, Social Committee, Chair***



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THANK YOU!

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT YOU!

We extend our sincere gratitude to our contractors for their exceptional work, which contributed significantly to the success of this event.

2026 Judge Kit Carson Roque, Jr. Scholarship Reception Contractors

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