

UC San Diego's Thurgood Marshall College Celebrates 40 Years of Enhancing Social Responsibility and Academic Excellence

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Thurgood Marshall College at the University of California, San Diego will celebrate its philosophy of social justice and diversity for the college's 40th Anniversary with several events including a one-man show on the life of Thurgood Marshall performed by celebrated television, stage and screen actor James Avery.

"As Thurgood Marshall College celebrates its 40th Anniversary and the university celebrates its 50th year, it's an ideal time to reflect and celebrate our diverse culture, growth and accomplishments and look ahead to our many successes still to come," said Thurgood Marshall College Provost Allan Havis.

Thurgood Marshall College is a part of UC San Diego's six-college system that provides students with many of the advantages of a small liberal arts college plus the opportunities and resources of a large research university. The key celebrations marking Thurgood Marshall College's 40th Anniversary include:

Henry Louis Gates Jr., Harvard professor and PBS documentary writer/producer, will give a talk on "Genealogy, Genetics and African-American History" at 7 p.m., Oct. 28 in the Price Center Ballroom.

Actor and UC San Diego alumnus James Avery will portray the spirit of Thurgood Marshall, legendary American legal scholar and Supreme Court Justice at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 3 at the La Jolla Playhouse. Avery is perhaps best known for his portrayal of Uncle Phil Banks of Will Smith's TV hit show "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air." Uncle Phil was ranked 34th in TV Guide's "50th Greatest TV Dads of All Time." Avery, a champion of UC San Diego, returns often to his alma matter as a featured guest speaker and has also shown his generosity to the campus through the James Avery Scholarship, which awards underrepresented students pursuing studies in the performing or visual arts, with a preference for students enrolled in Marshall College. Coincidentally, Avery portrayed law school dean Charles Hamilton Houston, the mentor of Thurgood Marshall, in "Simple Justice," a PBS television movie about Marshall.

The college is sponsoring public outdoor works of art for the Marshall campus and vicinity including a 22-foot high "Giant Chair" by MFA theatre design graduate Caleb Levensgood. Hugh Davies, director of the San Diego Contemporary Arts Museum, Mary Beebe, director of UC San Diego's Stuart Collection, UC San Diego's visual arts professors Anya Gallacicio and Ernest Silva have assembled artists and their public outdoor works. Upcoming pieces include a commissioned work by UC San Diego visual arts professor Rubén Ortiz-Torres.

Third College opened in 1970; in 1993 it was renamed in honor of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, widely recognized for his dedication to civil rights and breaking down barriers to education. The legacy of Marshall College's namesake lives on through its energetic involvement with the creation of The Preuss School - a charter public school on the UC San Diego campus - and UC San Diego's partnership with Gompers Charter Middle School in Southeast San Diego. The college is committed to revitalizing a humanitarian idea of higher education, and educating citizens for public involvement and community responsibility.

Over four decades, Thurgood Marshall College launched a range of academic programs that embraced diversity and social justice including the communications department, urban studies and planning, educational studies, third world studies and the ethnic studies department.

Moreover, the college established a writing program known as Dimensions of Culture (DOC), which is designed to inspire students to be philosophically committed to the development of both the scholar and citizen under the lens of American diversity.

In addition, the Partner-At-Learning Program, (PAL) was launched at Thurgood Marshall College. PAL offers academic credit to students for training and placement in local schools as tutors and mentors. The beginning of PAL coincided with the push, led by Thurgood Marshall College faculty, students and staff, to open a charter school on campus, The Preuss School UCSD, to serve secondary school students from low-income backgrounds. The Preuss School UCSD opened its doors to residents of San Diego County in fall 1999 and has been ranked as one of the best high schools in America many times over.

"Thurgood Marshall College believes each student has outstanding abilities in many realms," Havis said. "The college expects each student to excel in scholarly tasks and also societal roles."

For more information on Thurgood Marshall College's dynamic history go to: <http://marshall.ucsd.edu/40th/>

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