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## The New Social Engineers: The Making of the Black Corporate Bar and the Dual Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education

Roger Williams University School of Law

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**Walter R. Stone** is a partner in the Litigation Group of the law firm of Adler, Pollock & Sheehan. He is a graduate of Fisk University and the Case Western Reserve University School of Law. He spent 17 years in private practice with the law firm of Stone & Clifton, has served as an Assistant Attorney General for Rhode Island, and in the Office of the Rhode Island Public Defender. He is on the boards of the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, Caritas House (a shelter for troubled teenage girls), and Rhode Island Legal Services.



**Honorable O. Rogeriee Thompson** is an Associate Justice of the Rhode Island Superior Court, a post she has held since 1997. She served from 1988 to 1997 as an Associate Judge on the Rhode Island District Court. Before beginning her judicial career she worked in private practice, as an assistant solicitor for the City of Providence, and for Rhode Island Legal Services. She is a graduate of Brown University and Boston University School of Law.

Judge Thompson serves on the Board of Trustees of Brown University, on the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Women and Minorities, and on the Board of Trustees of Save the Bay, to name just a few of her community activities. She has received honorary degrees from the University of Rhode Island and Bryant College.

*The 2004 Thurgood Marshall Memorial Lecture  
is part of the Roger Williams University School of Law  
Founding Moments Lecture Series*

2004

## *Thurgood Marshall Memorial Lecture*

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*

SPONSORED BY HINCKLEY, ALLEN & SNYDER LLP

David B. Wilkins

“The New Social Engineers: The Making of the Black  
Corporate Bar and the Dual Legacy of  
*Brown v. Board of Education*”

Wednesday, April 14, 2004

With the help of the Marshall Family, the School of Law presents its second lecture in this series, which is intended to honor the memory of Thurgood Marshall. Thurgood Marshall was a key architect of the legal strategy that convinced the Supreme Court to declare unconstitutional the doctrine of “separate but equal,” which had allowed racial segregation in public education and many other aspects of American life. It is that watershed moment in America’s history that we celebrate today. Thurgood Marshall later served with distinction and as a protector of civil rights as Solicitor General of the United States and later as the first African-American Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

April 14, 2004  
2:00 p.m.

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Welcome ..... Dean David A. Logan  
Remarks ..... Mrs. Thurgood Marshall  
Introductions ..... Associate Dean Michael J. Yelnosky  
Lecture ..... Professor David B. Wilkins  
**The New Social Engineers: The Making of the Black  
Corporate Bar and the Dual Legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education***

Panelist Responses:

Michael Evora  
Beverly E. Ledbetter  
Walter R. Stone  
Honorable O. Rogeriee Thompson

Questions and Remarks ..... Professor Wilkins and Panelists  
Concluding Remarks ..... Dean David A. Logan



**David B. Wilkins** is the Kirkland and Ellis Professor of Law at Harvard Law School and the Director of Harvard Law School's Program on the Legal Profession. After graduating from Harvard Law School, Professor Wilkins clerked for the Honorable Wilfred Feinberg, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and then for Justice Thurgood Marshall of the United States Supreme Court.

Professor Wilkins is the author of dozens of articles on the legal profession and race, and he has spoken widely on those subjects. His latest project is a book about the development of the black bar in the United States, which is based, in part, on his interviews with more than 200 lawyers about their careers. **The Black Bar: The Legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Future of Race and the American Legal Profession** (forthcoming Oxford University Press).

## Panelists



**Michael D. Evora** is the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights, a post he has held since November 2002. He was previously Legal Counsel to the Commission and began his legal career as an Assistant in the Rhode Island Public Defender's Juvenile Division. He has an A.B. from Dartmouth College, and an M.P.A. from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. He received his J.D. from Yale Law School. After graduation from Yale he was a law clerk to Victoria Lederberg of the Rhode Island Supreme Court.



**Beverly E. Ledbetter** is Vice President and General Counsel, Brown University. She earned her B.S. from Howard University and her J.D. from the University of Colorado School of Law. She is President of the Urban League of Rhode Island, a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of College and University Business Officers, and a former member of the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association.