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Roger Williams University School of Law

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August 31, 2017

Newsroom

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg to Visit RWU Law

Her Jan. 30 “fireside chat” with Judge Selya will mark the eighth time a high court justice has addressed RWU School of Law students



BRISTOL, R.I., August 31, 2017 – U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg will visit the Roger Williams University School of Law on Jan. 30.

Justice Ginsburg will take part in a “fireside chat” with 1stU.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Senior Judge Bruce M. Selya at 10:30 a.m. in Room 283 – the appellate courtroom that will be named for Selya in October.

“What Rhode Island can look forward to is a visit from a woman who is both a thought leader in this country – a historic figure in her own right – and someone who every person in this state would be pleased and proud to have for a neighbor,” said Judge Selya, vice chairman of the RWU School of Law board of directors. “The objective will be to give her an opportunity to expound on matters that will be of interest to law students and law faculty, to talk about how she goes about her job, and to offer reflections on her life experience.”

Justice Ginsburg’s visit will mark the eighth time that a sitting or retired U.S. Supreme Court justice has addressed RWU School of Law students. Justice Anthony M. Kennedy gave the law school’s first

commencement address in 1996, and law students have since heard from Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. (2008), Justice Antonin Scalia (2008), Justice Stephen G. Breyer (2011), Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. (2012), Justice Elena Kagan (2013) and retired Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (2013).

"Roger Williams University is devoted to strengthening society through engaged teaching and learning," RWU President Donald J. Farish said. "So it is a true honor to host a jurist who has strengthened society throughout her career as a lawyer, as a law professor and now as a Supreme Court justice, weighing in on some of the most important matters of our time."

"It is hard to overstate the impact Justice Ginsburg has had on American law and specifically on gender equality," said Michael J. Yelnosky, dean of the RWU School of Law. "Before she became a judge, she brought cases before the Supreme Court that first established the principle that government discrimination against women violated the Constitution's equal protection clause. As a Supreme Court justice, she and her colleagues have built on that foundation a jurisprudence ensuring women 'equal opportunity to aspire, achieve, participate in and contribute to society based on their individual talents and capacities.' "

Judge Selya said Justice Ginsburg "is perfectly capable of taking firm stands and holding them," but she expresses those views in a reasonable way that does not antagonize those on the other side of an issue. "In terms of her style and her approach to the job, she is in many ways the model of what an appellate judge should be," he said. "She does her homework. She is thoughtful. She is civil to the lawyers and litigants who appear before her. She expresses her opinion very clearly. And when she dissents, she does so forcefully but respectfully."

The Jan. 30 "fireside chat" will be open to RWU students and faculty only because of space limitations, but the media are invited to cover the event. More information regarding media access will be available closer to the date of the event.

About RWU: With campuses on the coast of Bristol and in the heart of Providence, R.I., Roger Williams University is a forward-thinking private university committed to strengthening society through engaged teaching and learning. At RWU, small classes, direct access to faculty and guaranteed opportunity for real-world projects ensure that its nearly 4,000 undergraduates – along with hundreds of law students, graduate students and adult learners – graduate with the ability to think critically along with the practical skills that today's employers demand. Roger Williams is leading the way in American higher education, confronting the most pressing issues facing students and families – increasing costs, rising debt and job readiness.

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