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Newsroom

January 21, 2016

Judge Keynotes MLK Week

One year ago, Judge Carlton W. Reeves delivered a searing speech on the state of race relations in Mississippi and across the U.S. Today he speaks at RWU Law.

From the Providence Journal: "[Mississippi judge speaks up in face of racial hatred](#)" by Edward Fitzpatrick, Journal columnist



Jan. 21, 2016: U.S. District Judge Carlton W. Reeves didn't just consult the applicable federal guidelines when sentencing the three young white men who admitted they were hunting black people when they beat, ran over and killed a man in Jackson, Mississippi, in 2011.

Rather, Reeves delivered a searing speech, placing their deeds in historical context, pointing to how far his state and country have come on matters of race and how far they've yet to go. And he will delve into those larger themes **when he gives the keynote address Thursday for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration week at the Roger Williams University School of Law.**

"A toxic mix of alcohol, foolishness and unadulterated hatred caused these young people to resurrect the nightmarish specter of lynchings and lynch mobs from the Mississippi we long to forget," Reeves said in the February 2015 sentencing, which received national attention. [...]

Michael J. Yelnosky, the law school's dean, said Reeves has "written and spoken eloquently" about both same-sex marriage and "the issues of racial equality that were at the heart of King's message. In so many ways, we think he is following in the footsteps of King."

Reeves' speech, which is free and open to the public, begins at 3:30 p.m. Thursday in Room 262 of the law school, in Bristol.