



TSU E-News

YOUR WEEKLY TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC NEWS & INFORMATION SOURCE
FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS – (713) 313-4205
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Texas Southern celebrates Spring Commencement *Blind student earns degree from TSU's law school*



TSU's graduation candidates line up for a pre-commencement photo. [©TSU/Earlie Hudnall]



TMSL graduate Daniel Vaughn

Texas Southern University saluted 1,139 candidates for graduation during Spring Commencement exercises on May 13 in H&PE Arena. Texas Southern conferred 21 doctorate, 201 master's, 230 professional and 686 bachelor's degrees. **Joanna Ramos**, valedictorian, graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor's degree in respiratory therapy. **Ashley Semier**, salutatorian, graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor's degree in psychology. **Daniel Vaughn**, who survived six brain surgeries and is blind, graduated summa cum laude from TSU's Thurgood Marshall School of Law in a hooding ceremony on May 12.

TSU President Dr. **Austin A. Lane** said, "Our students made it to the finish line! Graduation day is always a day of rejoicing for it marks the conclusion of an educational journey. It is a milestone in the lives of these graduates and those gathered here today to celebrate with them."

Graduates were greeted by **Wesley G. Terrell**, Esq., chairman of Texas Southern's Board of Regents and the invocation was delivered by Bishop James Dixon II of the Community of Faith Church.

U.S. Representatives **Al Green** (D-Texas, 9th District) and **Sheila Jackson Lee** (D-Texas, 18th District) delivered rousing tributes to the University's history, which will celebrate its 90th anniversary later this year.

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Salutatorian Ashley Semier, Valedictorian Joanna Ramos

University receives NSF grant to fund mentor project



(l-r) Dr. Azime Saydam, Dr. John Sapp, Dr. Alamelu Sundareshan, Dr. Mark Harvey and Dr. Bernnell Peltier-Glaze

Texas Southern University was awarded a Targeted Infusion Grant from the National Science Foundation totaling \$393,985 to increase STEM retention of underrepresented students.

The project will offer dedicated peer mentoring and supervised faculty research opportunities. The curricula and summer research will involve the following COSET courses: MATH 136, CHEM 131, PHYS 237 and BIOL 131.

Dr. **Alamelu Sundareshan** serves as the principal investigator and Dr. **Mark Harvey** is the co-principal investigator. Drs. **John Sapp**, **Azime Saydam** and **Bernnell Peltier-Glaze** are co-investigators.

"We are excited about this full-fledged project that will consist of an active learning concept and associated peer-mentoring," Dr. Sundareshan said.

Peer mentors will be selected from upperclassmen in each of the departments and will be directly supervised by the faculty involved in the grant.

TMSL professor receives mentorship honor



Lydia D. Johnson, an associate professor in the Thurgood Marshall School of Law and director of Criminal Law Clinic, was named Mentor of the Year by the Harris County Criminal Lawyers Association (HCCLA), the largest criminal defense lawyers' association in Texas.

Johnson was recognized for her outstanding mentorship in training 3L law students to represent indigent citizens charged with misdemeanor offenses. She supervised 3L students **Tim Adams** and **Maegen Bradley** –

who represented a citizen falsely accused of prostitution and secured a mid-trial dismissal as a result of their superior representation.

The Thurgood Marshall School of Law is the only law school in Harris County with a criminal law clinic.



Business professor in WalletHub online feature



Dr. **Rochelle Yancy**, a Business Management professor, was featured as an expert in WalletHub's recent article about the best and worst places to start a career – <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-cities-to-start-a-career/3626/#rochelle-parks-yancy>

TSU alumnus plays major role in SH 288 construction



TSU alumnus **Quinton Salsberry**, who is a field engineer with Almeda-Genoa Constructors, has a leadership role in the Drive 288 highway expansion project. Salsberry played football at TSU and earned two bachelor's degrees – one in civil engineering technology and the other in civil engineering. His education opened doors and allowed him to move directly into his current position on the Drive 288 project.

"I really enjoyed a smooth transition from college into my career," Salsberry said. "Texas Southern does a great job preparing its students for what is expected after graduation."

This is his first job on a major highway construction project and says that he enjoys the work.

"Construction has always been something I took interest in," Salsberry said. "The opportunity to get to see something built from the ground up is amazing and takes a lot of patience. I particularly like that Drive 288 is a design-build project, which makes it more challenging and interesting from an engineer's point of view."

Drive 288, when completed, will improve 10.3 miles on SH 288 by introducing new toll lanes, allowing traffic to flow more smoothly on the highway.

Lady Tigers win SWAC softball championship



Texas Southern claimed its third SWAC championship in four seasons with a 6-4 victory over defending champion Alabama State in the finals of the 2017 SWAC Softball Tournament.

Texas Southern took control in the second inning as the Lady Tigers loaded the bases. **Kelsey Riley** laid down a bunt to drive in **Dominique Tello**, who led off the inning with a single. **Heaven Benavidez** drew a bases-loaded walk and squeezed in a run to create a 3-1 lead for the team.

Marissa Padron posted a RBI double to bring home Tello and **Jocilynn Ellis** singled to bring **Terren Vinson** across home plate in the fifth to help the Lady Tigers regain the lead. The team left two on base to end the inning, but **Lauren Rodriguez** and TSU defense did the rest, retiring the Lady Hornets 1-2-3 in the final inning.

Rodriguez, who was named most valuable player, earned her second victory in the tournament, allowing eight hits and two earned runs. Tello was 2-for-3 with two runs scored and Ellis was 2-for-2 with two RBIs.

Jasmin Fulmore, Rodriguez, Ellis, and **Sierra Valdez** were named to the All-Tournament team. The Lady Tigers will face Texas A&M's Lady Aggies on May 19 in the NCAA Division I Softball Tournament.