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## **National Black Law Journal**

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Editor's Note

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

It is with great sadness that we present what is likely the last National Black Law Journal published exclusively by the UCLA School of Law. The passage of Proposition 209, ironically now known as the California Civil Rights Initiative, has had a devastating effect on the population of African American students at the law school. Hence, for both political and practical reasons, we decided that the National Black Law Journal, its authors and its readership are better served at a law school that has a greater acceptance and appreciation of African American law students.

The future of the Black legal community is at a critical stage, not just in California, but across the country. As the attacks on affirmative action and other institutions that support African Americans become more pervasive, the need for critical, scholarly discourse is increasingly apparent. In the previous issue of the National Black Law Journal, Professor Winkfield F. Twyman, Jr. critiqued the California Civil Rights Initiative ("CCRI"), California's anti-affirmative action proposition. Now that CCRI is law, African American students, especially those in law and medical schools, are feeling the significant impact across the state, as the rest of the nation watches carefully and other states begin to follow suit.

With African American law school populations among the hardest hit, it is even more important to provide a vehicle for legal discussions of those issues that most profoundly affect the African American community. Our lead article in this edition, by Professor Phyliss Craig-Taylor, appropriately addresses the responsibility of this nation's law schools to provide opportunity and education for a diversity of students. Ms. Craig-Taylor's article is extremely important in chronicling the experiences that many women and students of color face in law schools and how the schools can and should do a better job of making legal education more appropriate, sensitive and relevant for everyone who chooses a career in the law.

The articles in this edition of the National Black Law Journal expand beyond explicit law school and legal issues. Raquel Aldana explores an issue that continues to arise in states across the country in her analysis of the viability of school choice programs for disadvantaged students. David Cohen provides a very unique book review that considers the racial implications of the nation's growing prison industry. Finally, Omi Leissner takes a historical look at the political and social significance of names for both white and Black women from the 19th Century to the present.

On behalf of the 1997-1998 National Board of Editors, I would like to thank the authors for their important contributions and to the subscribers for their continued support. As the Editor-in-Chief, I thank the Journal's staff and editors for their work and I especially thank those Board members who took their responsibility to the Journal seriously and approach each duty with dedication and integrity. I encourage you all to continue to support the National Black Law Journal as it continues to provide a voice for African American students, professors and practitioners alike. The

need for critical dialogue in the African American community is more important now than ever.

Celsa L. Snead  
*Editor-in-Chief*