

JoAnne A. Epps '73

You, JoAnne Epps, are a trailblazer, an advocate for social justice, a gifted teacher, and a role model to many. As dean of Temple University's Beasley School of Law, you have distinguished yourself as an advocate for legal education that emphasizes institutional responsiveness. Your commitment to curricular innovation has garnered significant praise, and in both 2013 and 2014, *National Jurist* magazine named you one of the 25 most influential people in legal education.

As a child growing up in the 1960s in suburban Philadelphia, you did not envision such a future. At the time, there were few women lawyers and even fewer black women in legal professions. Fortunately, a former high-school classmate who was studying at Trinity invited you to tour the campus. In the fall of 1969, you joined the College's first coeducational class. You count your time as a psychology major at Trinity among your fondest memories and say it is where you learned the importance of institutions in shaping people.

At Yale Law School, you were one of just 10 black students in your class of 160 and have described that time as "very, very lonely." But you persevered and went on to serve for four years as deputy city attorney for the City of Los Angeles and five more as assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

In 1985, you began your academic career at Temple Law School as a visiting assistant professor. In 1989, you were appointed associate dean for academic affairs, and, in 2008, you were named dean of the law school. Recognized as a gifted teacher, you continue to inspire first-year law students each fall in Temple's "Litigation Basics" course.

Under your leadership, Temple Law School has received significant praise, particularly for its first-year experiential courses and nationally recognized clinical opportunities. It also has launched the Stephen and Sandra Sheller Center for Social Justice, which will introduce students to the roles lawyers can play in establishing access to civil justice.

Your involvement in social justice issues goes back to your days at Yale, when you were a national officer in the Black Law Students' Association. In recent years, you have counseled lawyers from some of the world's most war-torn areas, teaching advocacy skills to prosecutors at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and training Sudanese lawyers representing victims of the Darfur crisis.

A champion for women and minorities in the legal profession, you received the 2014 Justice Sonia Sotomayor Diversity Award from the Philadelphia Bar Association. This February, U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. honored you during Black History Month at the U.S. Senate, citing your passion for advancing opportunities for women through education and law.

A member of Trinity's Board of Trustees from 1988 to 1994, you chaired the Committee on Student Life and the Committee on the Board. In 1988, the College honored you with the Alumni Medal for Excellence. In 1999, you received Trinity's 175th Anniversary Award. Your many contributions to your alma mater include co-chairing the College's first all-black alumni gathering and mentoring future law students.

For your significant contributions to the legal profession, to legal education, and to your alma mater, I have the honor of presenting you, JoAnne A. Epps, for the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Joanne Berger-Sweeney
President and Trinity College
Professor of Neuroscience

Philip S. Khoury '71
Vice Chair, Trinity College Board
of Trustees

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