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Judge Horace J. Johnson Lecture on Race, Law
and Policy

Lectures and Presentations

9-19-2023

2023 Judge Horace J. Johnson, Jr. Lecture on Race, Law and Policy with Vanita Gupta

Vanita Gupta

Peter B. Rutledge

Clare R. Norins

John B. Meixner Jr.

Matthew R. Auer



**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

**Judge Horace J. Johnson
Lecture on Race, Law and Policy**

*September 19, 2023
Athens, Georgia*

*Presented by:
The School of Law
The School of Public & International Affairs*

With support from the University of Georgia's Presidential Task Force on Race, Ethnicity and Community, the School of Law and School of Public and International Affairs have established the Judge Horace J. Johnson, Jr. Lecture on Race, Law and Policy in honor of the late jurist, who was a trailblazer for the Black community in Georgia. Johnson was a pioneer throughout his life. He was one of five students who helped desegregate Newton County, Georgia, schools in the 1960s. He graduated from the UGA School of Law in 1982. After briefly working in Atlanta, Johnson became the first Black attorney to practice in his home county. In 2002, he became the first Black Superior Court judge to serve in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit when then-Gov. Roy Barnes appointed him to the post. He remained in this role until his death in July 2020.

About the Speaker

Vanita Gupta is the 19th United States Associate Attorney General and serves as the third-ranking official at the Department of Justice. Associate Attorney General Gupta supervises multiple litigating divisions within the Department of Justice, including the Civil Division, Civil Rights Division, Antitrust Division, Tax Division, and Environmental and Natural Resources Division. She also oversees the grantmaking components of the Department, including the Office of Justice Programs, the Office on Violence Against Women, and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services; and supervises the Office for Access to Justice, Office of Information Policy, the Community Relations Service, the Executive Office for United States Trustees, the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, and the Servicemembers and Veterans Initiative.

Associate Attorney General Gupta previously served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the nation's oldest and largest coalition of non-partisan civil rights organizations in the United States.

Before serving in that capacity, from October 15, 2014, to January 20, 2017, Associate Attorney General Gupta served as Acting Assistant Attorney General and Head of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. Appointed by President Barack Obama as the chief civil rights prosecutor for the United States, Associate Attorney General Gupta advanced a wide range of civil rights enforcement matters.

Prior to her tenure leading the Civil Rights Division, Associate Attorney General Gupta served as Deputy Legal Director and the Director of the Center for Justice at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). In addition to managing litigation, Associate Attorney General Gupta created and led the ACLU's Smart Justice Campaign aimed at promoting bipartisan justice reform while keeping communities safe. She began her legal career as an attorney at the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund.

Associate Attorney General Gupta graduated *magna cum laude* from Yale University and received her law degree from New York University School of Law, where later she taught a civil rights litigation clinic for several years.

Program

Welcome

Peter B. "Bo" Rutledge
Dean and Talmadge Chair of Law
UGA School of Law

Lecture

A Conversation with

Vanita Gupta
Associate Attorney General of the United States

co-moderated by

Professor John Meixner
Assistant Professor of Law
UGA School of Law

and

Professor Clare Norins
Clinical Assistant Professor & First Amendment Clinic Director
UGA School of Law

Closing

Matthew R. Auer
Dean and Arch Professor of Public and International Affairs
UGA School of Public and International Affairs