



News

Introducing Irwin Fritchie's Legends of Legal Series

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Recognizing the Lives and Influences of Louisiana's African American Legal Legends

In honor of Black History Month this year, the Irwin Fritchie team wanted to create and share content celebrating the longstanding legacy of significant and percussive influence African Americans have had on society throughout the history of these United States.

During the initial stages of planning this project, one overarching factor drove our decision-making process: the final product must be genuine, interesting, and hold up to the high standards set by the subject matter at hand. Inevitably, a variety of ideas were voiced, reviewed, discussed, and, ultimately, left on the cutting room floor. We considered showcasing the lives and achievements of historical figures whose accomplishments still resonate through our schools and halls of justice today. And while this was a fine idea, we felt it did not quite go far enough into who we are as a society in the 21st century.

With an eye then turned toward modernity, we considered spotlighting the deeds and efforts of contemporary African American leaders within the legal profession, including their struggles and successes in a world not too long removed from the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-20th century.

How, though, could we focus on the present without also considering the historical giants upon whose shoulders we all stand? Maybe the solution was to alternate between articles on contemporary and historical figures throughout the month? Even discuss potential influences of historical figures on their modern-day counterparts? But those ideas just didn't seem to fit. One would be disjointed while the other, presumptuous.

Then the answer – as simple and straightforward as $1+1=2$ – dawned on us: why not just *ask them*? After all, how could anything we attempted to put on paper possibly be more genuine, interesting, and high-level than directly asking the people who lived these lives and felt these influences, themselves?

And that is exactly what we set out to do. The Louisiana legal community has many wonderful history makers, so we reached out to a few prominent and trailblazing African American legal minds asking if they would share *their* personal and professional journeys, *their* battles and triumphs, *their* influences as they rose through the profession, and *their* efforts to give back and pay it forward.

To our great joy, each person we asked (and more!) happily volunteered to participate. What has since emerged is a series of inspirational and thought-provoking discussions that we would like to share with you.

The stories and thoughts of each of these Legends will be posted here and on our social media accounts throughout the remainder of February (and maybe even a little bit longer), so check back early and often to learn more about the Legends in Legal who participated in this series.