

National Bar Association Hosts 45th Annual Mid-Year Conference and Gertrude E. Rush Awards Gala in Des Moines, Iowa

Commemorating 100 Years of Legal Excellence and Civil Rights Advocacy in the City Where It All Began

DES MOINES, IA, UNITED STATES, March 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [National Bar Association \(NBA\)](#), the nation's premier network of African American legal professionals, gathered in Des Moines, IA to celebrate its 45th Annual Mid-Year Conference and [Gertrude E. Rush Awards Gala](#). This year's event holds special significance as the NBA returns to the city where it was founded 100 years ago, commemorating its centennial year of advancing justice, equality, and legal excellence.

The conference pays tribute to two of the NBA's most influential civil rights leaders, Gertrude E. Rush and [Heman Sweatt](#). Gertrude E. Rush, the first African American female attorney in Iowa, was a trailblazer whose commitment to justice led to the founding of the NBA in 1925. Heman Sweatt, a pivotal figure in the fight for racial equality in education, left a legacy that continues to inspire future generations of legal advocates.

Attendees participated in an enriching lineup of continuing legal education (CLE) sessions, dynamic panel discussions, and networking opportunities with some of the nation's most distinguished legal minds. The Gertrude E. Rush Awards Gala recognizes individuals whose careers have exemplified leadership, service, and a steadfast dedication to civil rights and the legal profession. All events at this year's conference will lay the foundation for the Annual Convention, which will further celebrate the NBA's 100-year anniversary.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION TO BE HELD IN CHICAGO, IL.



NBA Awards Luncheon; L to R: Henry Hamilton, III, NBA Past-President Juan R. Thomas, NBA President Wiley S. Adams, Chief U.S. Magistrate (W.D. MO) Judge Wille J. Epps, Jr., and Hon. Anne-Marie Clarke (ret.)

As part of the NBA's centennial year, the organization is preparing for its highly anticipated 100th Annual Convention & Centennial Celebration in Chicago, Illinois, scheduled for July 26 - August 1, 2025. This landmark event will bring together legal professionals, scholars, and civil rights advocates from across the country to reflect on the NBA's enduring impact and chart the path forward for the next century.

"The National Bar Association's centennial is not just a milestone, but a testament to the resilience and excellence of Black legal professionals over the last 100 years," said Wiley S. Adams. "Returning to Des Moines honors our foundation, and gathering in Chicago for our Centennial Convention signifies our commitment to shaping the future of justice and advocacy." NBA President Wiley S. Adams added, "As we reflect on our history and celebrate our achievements, we must also look ahead to the next century of progress. Our commitment to justice remains unwavering, and we will continue to fight for equity and representation in the legal field."



Iowa Supreme Court Justice David N. May welcomes the National Bar Association to Des Moines

The NBA invites members of the legal community, civil rights leaders, and supporters to join in these momentous celebrations as the organization continues to uphold its mission of promoting justice, equality, and professional advancement within the legal profession.

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Wiley S. Adams, NBA President

For more information and registration details, please visit www.nationalbar.org or contact LaTaivia Calhoun at (202) 842-3900.

About the National Bar Association:

Founded in 1925, the National Bar Association is the nation's oldest and largest network of predominantly African American attorneys, judges, law professors, and law students. With a commitment to civil rights, social justice, and legal excellence, the NBA continues to serve as a voice for the underserved and a champion for legal

advocacy nationwide.

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