



Just as St. Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament fought all those decades ago to ensure the historically marginalized Black population had access to higher education, Holder embodies their vision by fighting for all citizens to overcome barriers to their right to vote. Holder, who received an honorary degree from Xavier University of Louisiana in 2015, is a great example of the legacy all Xavierites honor with their actions in pursuit of a more just and humane society.

Day in person and to welcome former  
**Curtis Wright, Xavier University of**

**Louisiana's Vice President of Student Affairs.**

that our faculty and staff gift to our Xavierites to help them grow and develop to succeed in their

Katharine Drexel was born in 1858 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to an extraordinarily wealthy and devout catholic family. Ahead of her time, St. Katharine believed that all deserved an education as a means of empowerment and self-determination, especially those who were excluded from opportunities and made voiceless due to the sin of racism. Born into great privilege, she chose to lead by example and use her vast familial wealth to build schools throughout the United States for African Americans and Native Americans. To support her vision of a more just and humane society, she also founded the religious congregation that is the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

In 1915, Saint Katharine Drexel, then Mother Katharine, conducted a series of secret business negotiations to buy the former Southern University campus in New Orleans. White homeowners

before. Still, the beliefs of St. Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament that all deserved a quality education, no matter their race, persevered as they fought racist ideals to establish a new Black university on the site. By no means an easy task, in 1925, Xavier University of

s College of Arts and Sciences was established, marking it as the first and only Black and Catholic university in the United States.

Ceremony **former U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder.**

founding is at once a sobering reminder of shameful racist past, and a remarkable expression of the progress that is possible when we persevere to create a society that works for all. I am enormously inspired by the bravery of founders, the dedication of its leaders to student success, and the intellectual vibrancy of a campus community striving together to shape a better future in New Orleans and beyond

Holder, an internationally recognized leader across a broad range of regulatory enforcement, criminal justice and national security issues, was a partner at Covington & Burling LLP from 2001 to 2009 and rejoined the firm after he served as attorney general. Before his tenure as attorney general, Holder maintained a wide-ranging investigation and litigation practice at Covington. He graduated from Columbia University, earning his undergraduate and law degrees at the institution.

Livestream the event [here](#).

