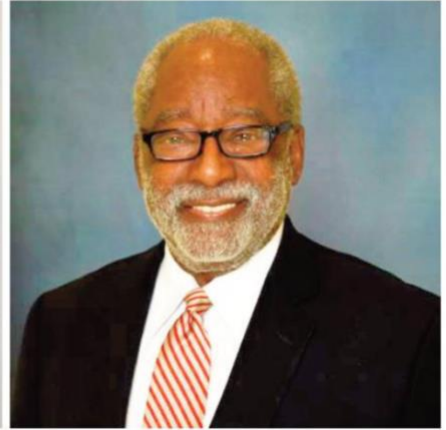


Scholarship honors H.T. Smith



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KLUGER KAPLAN AND FIU

LEGENDARY ATTORNEY HONORED: H.T. Smith, right, an extraordinary attorney, Florida International Law School professor, philanthropist, community leader, national leader, and retired golf enthusiast was selected by Miami law firm Kluger, Kaplan, Silverman, Katzen & Levine, through founding partner Alan Kluger, left, for a scholarship to bear his name, H.T. Smith Legal Studies Scholarship. FIU Law School second-year student Briana Harris, center, is the inaugural scholarship recipient.

By **DAPHNE TAYLOR**
Special for South Florida Times

MIAMI - Highly esteemed Attorney H.T. Smith is many things to many people. His was the first Black law firm to have an office atop the highest building in downtown Miami. He cost Miami over \$100 million in lost revenue in a Black economic boycott after South

African President and hero, Nelson Mandela came to Miami and was snubbed. And his leadership is responsible for Miami Beach's first Black-owned convention resort hotel. And that's not to mention the many "firsts" he's amassed as an attorney.

But now he's beaming at the thought of a scholarship being given to a deserving young law student bearing his

name. Instead of being proud the scholarship bears his name, he's even more so elated a minority law student will get an amazing opportunity and a financial boost as well. The very first, inaugural H.T. Smith Legal Studies Scholarship recipient was announced this week. The Miami law firm of Kluger, Kaplan, Silverman, Katzen & Levine created the scholarship and announced astute stu-

dent Briana Harris, a South Florida native, as its first recipient.

Alan Kluger, founding partner of Kluger Kaplan, said the annual scholarship is necessary. "Like many companies we realized that some minority students have not historically had the same opportunities as non-minorities.

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“Our goal for the scholarship is to attract qualified candidates and create more diversity in the South Florida legal community, while encouraging more law firms and businesses to create similar initiatives.”

Smith, in a telephone interview, said he is both humbled and grateful to be a part of such an undertaking. Meanwhile Kluger said it was only fitting that it bears Smith's name. “H.T. Smith is a legend in Miami's legal community and has helped pave the way for others. When we came up with the idea to create this scholarship, I called the person who I most respect when it comes to creating racial diversity and equity in our profession, H.T. Smith. I asked him to help formulate the program,” said Kluger. “When he and I discussed who to name it after, he offered excellent suggestions, but my partners at the firm said, ‘There's nobody more deserving than H.T. Smith in our community.’”

Smith, who is founding director of

the Trial Advocacy Program at FIU College of Law, said he is honored and is most happy for students like first recipient Briana Harris. “She is an exceptional student who is well deserving,” said Smith. Kluger said Harris' leadership and overall dedication to her studies and community made her a standout candidate. The scholarship awards one student annually with \$10,000 in financial assistance to attend an eligible law school in Florida. They are also considered for a clerkship at Kluger Kaplan as well as an attorney position upon graduation of Law school and completion of the Florida Bar. Harris is a second-year student at FIU College of Law and received her Bachelor of Arts from Vanderbilt University.

Smith said he applauds Kluger Kaplan for taking the lead on such a noteworthy initiative. “This scholarship is a step in the right direction to promote meaningful diversity in the legal profession, and Kluger Kaplan is providing a blueprint for other firms to create similar programs.”