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Georgia Historical Society to Present an Evening With Former Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears



Leah Ward Sears

The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) is honored to present "An Evening with Former Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears" on Thursday, September 2, 2010 6 p.m. at the Lucas Theater in downtown Savannah.

The first woman and youngest person ever to serve on the Georgia Supreme Court and the first

female African American chief justice in the United States, Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears has achieved a distinguished place in Georgia and American history. She is a longtime champion of family law and civil justice matters and has twice been short-listed as a U.S. Supreme Court nominee.

Chief Justice Sears

retired from the Georgia Supreme Court in 2009 in order to practice law in Atlanta and currently serves as a visiting professor at the University of Georgia School of Law and the Institute for American Values. Engaging, informative and always captivating, Chief Justice Sears will educate and entertain her audience during what promises to be an unforgettable evening.

The Georgia Historical Society is an educational and research institution founded in 1839 to tell the story of Georgia and its role in American history.

Headquartered in Savannah with offices in Atlanta, the Georgia Historical Society has nearly 6,000 members statewide and nearly 200 affiliates in 80 counties.

It publishes the Georgia Historical Quarterly, maintains a library and archives that houses the oldest collection of Georgia history materials in the nation, manages the Historical Marker Program for the State of Georgia, and educates thousands of school children about Georgia history through the annual Georgia History Festival.

Johnson Urges Dialogue on Recognition Increase in Wealth Gap Between Black and White Americans



Robert L. Johnson

In an address to Members of Congress and participants attending a Congressional Black Caucus meeting, Robert L. Johnson, founder and chairman of The RLJ Companies, called for a national discussion about the growing wealth gap which he referred to as a "wealth gap Tsunami threatening African American families."

In response to addressing this compelling national crisis, Johnson stated that, "We must admit the harsh reality of a history of institutionalized racism and economic discrimination against African Americans is the primary cause of wealth disparity between Black and white Americans" and "we must be willing to talk about race recognition remedies at the highest levels of government as well as between Black and white Americans."

Johnson suggests that the wealth disparity between African Americans and whites compares to the "compelling national inter-

est test" cited in the Supreme Court's Adarand decision where the Court ruled 'a racial or ethnic classification must serve a compelling interest and must be narrowly tailored to serve that interest.' In his remarks to the Caucus, Johnson listed several race recognition policy initiatives that could be discussed.

For example, allow African American families earning less than \$250,000 annually to defer all federal

income taxes, without interest, provided tax savings are placed into a 401(k) type savings account which can only be drawn out at retirement or upon death at which time the government would be reimbursed for the deferred taxes. He pointed out that this would allow the gain on the 401(k) investment to be available to the families at retirement or passed on to future generations.

"I wish the answers to close the wealth gap were as politically palatable and acceptable as proposals to make our public schools better for minorities, to retrain minority workers for the new jobs market, and aggressively enforce laws against racial and economic discrimination. Over the years, this Nation has been committed to all of these objectives, but this effort will not close the Black wealth gap. I recognize that public policy based on race is extremely provocative and controversial but controversy should not prevent a reasonable dialogue about a societal dilemma that is real and economically devastating in its potential to millions of African Americans," he concluded.



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