An honored tradition of discussing issues of justice and integrity takes place at Dillard University, with the annual lecture series in honor of distiguished alumni and former university trustee, Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr. A pioneering civil rights activist for more than 60 years, Revius O. Ortique, Jr. was the first African American elected to the Louisiana Supreme Court. The annual lecture on Law and Society is held in the Georges Auditorium in the Professional Schools and Sciences Building. The lecture is free and open to the public and provides presentations on the broad field of law and society. Each year, a distinguished leader from across the country is invited to discuss a subject related to law and society, and to honor the legacy of Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr.

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General of the United States, was the inaugural lecturer for the Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr. Lecture on Law and Society in November 2010. Born in New York City, Mr. Holder attended public schools there, graduating from Stuyvesant High School, before earning a B.A. in American History from Columbia College in 1973 and a J.D. from Columbia Law School in 1976.

In 2011, Judge Carl Stewart, Chief Judge with the 5th Court of Appeals in New Orleans and a Dillard alumnus, was the keynote speaker. His role as the first African American to serve as head of a court of appeals in New Orleans is a great honor for the Dillard community. President Bill Clinton appointed Stewart to the court in 1994.

This year, Dillard University and the Ortique Lecture Series welcome acclaimed author and activist Michelle Alexander. Discussing mass incarceration and the African American community, Alexander will share notes from her latest book "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness (2010). Book signing to follow.

The Mock Trial Center

The Justice Revius O Ortique, Jr. Mock Trial Center grew out of Dillard University's commitment to undergraduate students who seek careers in law, government service, criminal justice, social

work, public policy, and environmental justice. The Center's activities are uniquely focused on Justice Ortique's archival papers, endowed chair in public policy, and pre-law scholarships, and the Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr. Law and Society Annual Lecture.

The Mock Trial Center is also a specialized classroom. In order to maintain the standards of educational excellence and professional knowledge required by the legal community, today's practitioners need specialized communication skills, particularly in making oral arguments before a judge and jury. The Mock Trial Classroom enables Dillard students to hone practical presentation skills and serve the needs of the broader community.

For more information about the Ortique Lecture Series and the Mock Trial Center, please contact the Office of University Communications at (504) 816-4024.

Justice Revius O. Ortique, Jr.

A pioneering civil rights activist for more than 60 years, Revius O. Ortique, Jr. was the first African American elected to the Louisiana Supreme Court (1992). He was also the first African American to serve as a Civil District Court Judge and the first to serve as Chief Judge of that Court.

As an attorney and judge, he engaged many landmark decisions, including the "equal pay for equal work" decision and had a national reputation for fairness and integrity. Listed in Who's Who in America (for over 20 years); Who's Who in American Law (2nd edition); Who's Who in the Southwest; Who's Who in Black America; and Who's Who in the World (2004 edition). Justice Ortique was a respected diplomat and proven negotiator. He served as the U.S. Representative to the 54th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and was honored by the government of Japan as a "World Opinion Maker". He served on five national boards under five different presidents. After his retirement from the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1994 he continued his passion for improving society by leading a trade delegation to Haiti to assist in writing a new constitution, and also led a judicial summit with the Supreme Court of Costa Rica.

Another mission he took on after his retirement, at the age of 70, was Chair of the New Orleans Aviation Board. While under his watch, the New Orleans International Airport underwent an $850 million renovation and expansion program and was renamed the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport in honor of the legendary jazz trumpeter.

Over the course of his life Justice Ortique held numerous leadership positions, nationally and locally, including President of the National Bar Association; President of two prominent African American professional associations, the Southwest Bar Association and the Louis A. Martinet Society; and a member of the Louisiana Ethics Board, to name a few.

Justice Ortique earned his Juris Doctorate from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and a Masters of Arts from Indiana University and is a 1947 graduate of Dillard University. He continued his allegiance and commitment to his alma mater, Dillard University, by serving on the Board of Trustees for more than 40 years. In addition, the Justice Revius O. Ortique Jr. Chair in Political Science and Social Justice, valued at $1 million was named in his honor. An endowed professorship has also been established in his honor at the Southern University Law Center. Hew as the recipient of numerous distinguished awards, citations, and six honorary doctorate degrees, including an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Dillard University in 2006.