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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Xavier University of Louisiana to host Founders' Day Convocation Ceremony

New Orleans, La. -- When Saint Katharine Drexel founded [Xavier University of Louisiana](https://www.xula.edu/) in 1925, she envisioned a sacred place of learning rooted in faith and scholarship. Xavier University's annual Founders' Day Convocation Ceremony is set to take place Tuesday, October 19, in Xavier's Convocation Center at 12:15 pm. In addition to celebrating Xavier's founding and the class of 2022, the ceremony will also recognize the accomplishments and milestones of Xavier's faculty and staff.

"Founders' Day is important to our community because it's a time when we can come together as a collective to recognize the sacrifices made by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and Saint Katharine Drexel to educate us and others who historically were not allowed access to quality education," **said Xavier University of Louisiana Vice President of Student Affairs, Curtis Wright.** "It's also a time to recognize the faculty and staff who work to educate our students. Each day we walk this campus and with each student who graduates, we are holding true to Saint Katharine Drexel's vision for us."


In 1858, Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to an extremely wealthy and devout catholic family. She believed in education as a means of empowerment and self-determination for those who were excluded from opportunities and made voiceless due to the sin of racism. As a result, Saint Katharine used her wealth to build schools throughout the United States for African-Americans and Native Americans. She also began a religious congregation of women—the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to support her vision for a more just and humane society.

Xavier University began as a high school in 1915 and was approved to give college degrees in 1925 with the establishment of the College of Arts and Sciences. In 1932, the campus consisted of the administration building and a ballfield. Today, the original administration building still stands as a sign of strength and beauty at the center of Xavier's campus.

Founders' Day Convocation will be in-person this year and all Xavierites are expected to attend the annual celebration.

"We are excited to be back in-person this year to celebrate Founders' Day," said Wright. "Without our foundress, we would not be able to execute the vision for a more just and humane society, and without the faculty and staff who nurture and grow our Xavieites, they could not be as excellent and successful as they are in their roles. It's important for our community to come together as a collective to celebrate those who are pertinent to our overall mission. It's also very important that our Xavierites experience other thriving and successful Xavierites. We are lucky to have Tiffany West speak with us during our ceremony."

Xavier alum Tiffany West, director of advancing Black equity and community engagement at Gilead Sciences is the keynote speaker for this year's ceremony. West graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Xavier University and a Master of Public Health from Tulane University. Her background in advancing Black leadership and regulating inclusivity and diversity in the workplace is a direct reflection of her values and ideals. West is also responsible for working with several divisions at Gilead to ensure alignment of Gilead's efforts related to Black employees and communities.



SAVE *the* DATE

OCTOBER 19, 2021

XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LA
Founders' Day
CONVOCATION
(IN PERSON)

12:15PM
CONVOCATION CENTER

Strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines will be enforced.

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About Xavier University of Louisiana

Being America's only historically Black and Catholic University is only the first among many distinctions that have set Xavier University of Louisiana apart for more than nine decades. Despite its relatively small size, Xavier is a nationally recognized leader in STEM and the health sciences, producing more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Its College of Pharmacy is among the top producers of African American pharmacists.

Its liberal arts-based programs in such areas as art, business, education, psychology, and political science – as well as recent additions in bioinformatics, data science, neuroscience, crime and social justice, and jazz studies – offer students an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities, and life experiences. The winning Xavier formula to provide students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls.

For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit us online at www.xula.edu or follow us on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter @XULA1925. To book interviews and/or to speak with our experts in the field of pharmacy,

education, premed, public health, science, technology, math, business, English, communications, and the arts, contact Chelsea Cunningham at (504) 520-5425 or ccunnin5@xula.edu.