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Xavier Announces New Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit

New Orleans LA – Xavier University of Louisiana has announced the formation of the Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit, an intellectual and physical convening place for research, teaching, community engagement, and debate on issues related to race-based inequities, social identity production, and power relations.

The mission of the Center, to be housed on the University campus, will be to engage in, support, and promote innovative thinking in a multiplicity of contexts and across disciplines regarding race, class, systemic inequities, and a faith that does justice toward a better understanding of issues impacting modern societies and vexing the human spirit.

“We are pleased to announce the creation of The Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit which will serve as an anchor, a magnet, and a beacon reflecting and furthering our calling, as a Historically Black and Catholic university, to help create a more just and humane society,” said Xavier University President Dr. Reynold Verret. “We envision that it will become a cornerstone for individuals and groups seeking to elaborate new theories and verify others by studying and advocating and beyond, engaging in empirically verifiable social change work.”

Verret also announced that the Dr. David W. Robinson-Morris, who holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Research from LSU, will serve as director of the Center. Robinson-Morris will concurrently continue to serve as Xavier’s Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations and as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Education and Counseling.

“The Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit at Xavier will be a vibrant and critical research, teaching, and public engagement space,” said Robinson-Morris. “Through it we will explore issues in society that are embedded in our intellectual programs and across academic disciplines such as political, social, and systemic inequities in public health, crime and social justice, bioethics, Black Catholic Studies, the arts, African and African-American Diaspora Studies, urban policies, education policy studies, socially responsible entrepreneurship, and community health.”

“At this moment in our nation's history, the Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit at Xavier is a vital catalyst and conduit of critical dialogue, research, policy advocacy, and community convening. We seek to be an agent of social change aimed at raising awareness and assisting in solving systemic injustices, inequities, and issues that vex the human spirit,” he added. “As the only historically Black and

Catholic institution of higher learning in the country, we are aptly poised to address the issues of the day through the lens of a faith tradition that seeks to do justice. Justice is how love shows itself in the public sphere."

In keeping with the mission of Xavier, the Center will organize conferences, seminars, lectures, and community assemblies that bring together area experts, faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and the community with diverse interest and backgrounds.

About Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier was recently ranked as the nation's #2 HBCU (Historically Black College and University) by [College Consensus](#), a unique college ratings website that aggregates publisher rankings and student reviews, in its newly released publication, *Best HBCUs for 2018*. Xavier was also among the four colleges selected by Beyonce and her *BeyGood Foundation* as the recipient of a Homecoming Scholars Scholarship Award announced after her much lauded performance at Coachella, while actor and comedian Kevin Hart has joined forces with UNCF and KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) to help 18 more KIPP students earn a college degree – three of whom were Xavier students.

That's just the latest in national accolades Xavier has received as one of the best universities in the country. Most notably, XULA is ranked as the best value among southern regional colleges and universities in the 2018 edition of "Best Colleges" by the *U.S. News Media Group*. Xavier also ranked No.1 in its grouping, heading the list of only 15 schools that qualified for the Southern Region category listed under "Great Schools, Great Prices."

At Xavier *eXcellence awaits yoU*. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana visit us online at www.xula.edu or follow us on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter @XULA1925. Take a moment to learn more about how Xavier is preparing students for the future at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD4mb-jYZC8>. To book interviews about our recent accomplishments 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 Diana Hernandez at (504) 520-5120 or dhernan1@xula.edu.

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Dr. David W. Robinson-Morris
Director, The Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit