

**THE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY PROJECT &
THE JUDGE FRANK M. JOHNSON, JR.
INSTITUTE PROUDLY PRESENT:**

FREE SPEECH FORUM

6:00 PM

October 3, 2023

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**THE JUDGE FRANK M.
JOHNSON, JR. INSTITUTE**

ORDER OF PROGRAM

Welcome

Dr. Don C. Killingsworth, Jr. President, Jacksonville State University

***Presentation of the National Colors**

Jacksonville State University ROTC

***The National Anthem**

Mr. Brady Drake

Mission of the American Democracy Project and the Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Institute

Dr. Christie Shelton, Provost and Senior Vice President for
Academic Affairs

Introduction of Panelists

Dr. Don C. Killingsworth Jr., President

Panelists

The Honorable Luther Strange

Bryan K. Fair, J.D.

The Honorable W. Keith Watkins

Allen Linken, J.D., Ph.D.

Moderators

Mr. Thomas Rains

Lori J. Owens, Ph.D.

Closing Remarks and Presentation

Dr. Don C. Killingsworth Jr., President

Dr. Christie Shelton, Provost and Senior Vice President for
Academic Affairs

*Audience stands

Free Speech Forum Panelists



Professor Bryan Fair

After earning his undergraduate degree from Duke and law degree from UCLA, Professor Fair worked as an associate with Bryan, Cave, McPheeters & McRoberts in Los Angeles. In 1987, he joined the UCLA law faculty as a Lecturer and co-directed its Academic Support Program. He served as a commissioner of the California State Bar Commission on Minority Access to the Legal Profession and as a Public Counsel legal services volunteer.

Professor Fair joined the Alabama law faculty in 1991. He was named the Thomas E. Skinner Professor of Law in 2000. He is an eleven-time member of the law school commencement hooding team (selected by students), and has twice been named the law schools outstanding faculty member (selected by students). He has also received the University's Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award given each year by the National Alumni Association. Professor Fair has served as the faculty advisor to the Jessup International Moot Court Team, Black Law Students Association, Outlaw, Law Democrats, American Constitution Society, and other student groups. Professor Fair has also taught law courses at Seattle University, the University of Tennessee, the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and The Australian National University.

Professor Fair has held several administrative posts at the Law School and the University. At the Law School, from 1997 to 2010, he directed the University of Fribourg/UA Law cooperative exchange (the Swiss Program). He served as the Director of Diversity and International Programs in 2007, 2011, and 2012, and Associate Dean for Special Programs from 2008-2010, supervising international, diversity, and public interest programs. He also served as an assistant vice president for Academic Affairs at the University from 1994 to 1997.

Professor Fair is the author of *Notes of a Racial Caste Baby: Colorblindness and the End of Affirmative Action* (NYU Press 1997). Professor Fair's research agenda remains focused on equality theory under the Fourteenth Amendment, with the central theme that equal protection jurisprudence has lost its anticaste moorings, rendering it largely obsolete to address significant forms of American caste. He is a member of the American Law Institute and has served on ABA, AALS, and LSAC committees. He has served on numerous boards and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Southern Poverty Law Center.



Professor Allen Linken

Dr. Allen E. Linken graduated from the University at Albany – State University of New York (SUNY) in 2002. In 2005, Dr. Linken completed a dual degree program from Albany Law School and the University at Albany, earning his Juris Doctorate and Masters in Public Policy, and was commissioned through the United States Navy JAG Corps student program. In 2016, Dr. Linken received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts – Amherst, writing his dissertation on the civil-military gap, specifically examining the military through the Supreme Court, and has published articles and book chapters on the subject. Dr. Linken is admitted to practice law in the State of New York.

Dr. Linken's research interest in the United States military first began as a result of his service as a judge advocate in the United States Navy where he held various leadership positions including the Administrative Law Department Head and Liaison to the International Committee of the Red Cross at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Legal Assistance Department Head for Region Legal Service Office Southeast, and Assistant Officer in Charge for Naval Legal Service Office Detachment New London. He also served at United States Naval Forces Central Command/United States FIFTH Fleet as an Administrative Law and Operational Law, Naval Justice School, where he trained military officers and judge advocates in training, and as a government prosecutor and a criminal defense counsel, and as a Detention Operations attorney for Joint Task Force 134, in Iraq.

Dr. Linken is a commander in the United States Naval Reserve and he has earned multiple personal and campaign medals, in addition to the RADM Hugh Howell Jr. Award for Excellence (Junior Officer) for outstanding support of the Naval Reserve at a significant level of responsibility.

Dr. Linken is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Political Science at The University of Alabama. He teaches courses in Constitutional Law, Law and Society, and Trial Advocacy. His research interest focuses on the Supreme Court, Civil-Military Relations, and Public Law.

Dr. Linken's recent publications include, "The Constitution and Non-Citizens," in *The U.S. Constitution in 5 Minutes*, 2023, and "The Language of Law and Rights: an examination of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*," which is under review at *Law & Society Review*. Dr. Linken is also focusing on a linguistic examination of rights, examining the language of *Roe v. Wade* and *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. His current book project is a modern examination of civil-military relations, tentatively titled "The Modern Major General," examining the relationship of the military to society, as seen through decisions of the Supreme Court, since the inception of the all-volunteer force.

Dr. Linken enjoys running and is wonderfully blessed to enjoy life with his wife, Lauren, and their four-year-old daughter, Abigail.

Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange

Luther Strange has served as United States Senator (2017-2018) and Alabama Attorney General (2011-2017). As Alabama Attorney General, Strange earned national recognition for his work, having led a number of successful lawsuits defending the rule of law against federal government overreach and serving as the chairman of the Republican Attorneys General Association. During his tenure, he successfully argued an important First Amendment case before the United States Supreme Court.

Attorney General Strange served as coordinating counsel for the five Gulf Coast states in the historic Deepwater Horizon oil spill litigation, winning a landmark settlement and saving Alabama's citizens millions in outside legal fees by trying the case himself. His office was also responsible for successfully fighting public corruption in the state, including in his own party, having secured the conviction and removal from office of the Speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives.



In the U.S. Senate, Senator Strange voted to confirm Justice Gorsuch and dozens of conservative judges, supported the biggest tax reform in recent history, and worked to remove burdensome regulations. He served on the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; Armed Services; Budget; and Energy and Natural Resources committees.

Prior to entering public service, Strange was a successful attorney and businessman in Birmingham, Alabama. Active in civic and cultural affairs, Strange served on the Advisory Board of the United States Merchant Marine Academy and as a Trustee of Talladega College, Alabama's oldest historically black college. An Eagle Scout at age 13, Strange is a recipient of the prestigious Distinguished Eagle Scout Award by the Boy Scouts of America. He received both his BA and JD from Tulane University and is a member of the Tulane Law School Hall of Fame. He is an Adjunct Professor at Vanderbilt Law School and the University of Alabama School of Law. He now leads his own law practice, advising clients on matters of law and public policy.

US District Judge W. Keith Watkins



District Judge W. Keith Watkins was appointed by President George W. Bush to a vacancy in the Middle District of Alabama on December 27, 2005. Judge Watkins was elevated to Chief District Judge on May 18, 2011, and he served as Chief Judge until January 31, 2019. He assumed senior status in 2019. A native of Troy, Alabama, Judge Watkins practiced law in Tuscaloosa for two years and in Troy for 28 years, with a broad general practice. He is a graduate of Auburn University and The University of Alabama School of Law. Among other positions in the bar, Judge Watkins is a Fellow in the Alabama Law Foundation and served as the Bar Commissioner for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit and as a member of the Alabama State Bar Task Force for Alternative Dispute Resolution. He served as the mediator in over 200 civil cases in state and federal courts in Alabama and Georgia prior to taking the bench. Judge Watkins serves on the boards for The Frank M. Johnson Jr Institute, the Rosa Parks Museum, the Federal Judges Association, and The American Village. Judge Watkins and his wife have two grown children and five grandchildren.

Free Speech Forum Moderators

Dr. Lori Owens - Chair, Jacksonville State University American Democracy Project Committee

Dr. Lori Owens, Dean of Honors and Special Programs, is also a Professor of Political Science at Jacksonville State University. She earned her BA in political science from Jacksonville State, and her MA and PhD in political science from The University of Alabama. Dr. Owens chairs the Jacksonville State American Democracy Project Committee, the Study Abroad Subcommittee, and serves as the campus advisor for the Pre-Law Program and faculty advisor for the Model UN and Model Arab League Debate Teams.

Dr. Owens served as chair of the Alabama Higher Education Partnership from 2007-2012 and continues to serve as a board member. She is also an emeriti member and past chair of the Alabama Women's Commission and was a founding member of the Cherokee County Family Resource Center.

Dr. Owens' dissertation profiled the nomination and confirmation process of federal judges and included a detailed analysis of how the Robert Bork hearings impacted the judicial nomination and confirmation process. Dr. Owens' teaching interests include American Government, Southern Politics, the Middle East, and Foreign Policy. Her current research focus is the life and career of US Senator James Allen of Gadsden, Alabama.



Mr. Thomas Rains, Executive Director, The Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Institute



Mr. Thomas Rains is Executive Director of the Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Institute, founded in 2019. The Institute has become an award-winning, non-partisan voice sharing stories of our Constitution and Judiciary through programs that illuminate issues and perspectives, foster thoughtful and civil discourse, and inspire our national community in our nation's never-ending pursuit of a more perfect union.

Previously, Mr. Rains advocated for education policies to increase college and career readiness across Alabama. He has worked as a middle school teacher in the Mississippi Delta, a journalist covering finance in New York, and as a researcher of politics and policy in Washington, DC. He is a member of the advisory board for Teach For America-Alabama (previously as Vice Chair) and is a member of the Family Guidance Center of Montgomery's Success by Six advisory board.

Mr. Rains is a graduate of Leadership Montgomery Legacy Class XXXV and the Alabama Leadership Initiative. He holds a Master of Public Administration from Columbia University and dual bachelor's degrees in history and journalism from Boston University. An Atlanta native, Thomas was raised in Birmingham and Lanett, Alabama. He and his family have called Montgomery home since 2011.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

American Democracy Project Committee

Mr. Brady Drake ~ Ms. Albertha Grant

Mr. Andy Green ~ Dr. Ben Gross

Mr. Dakota Heathcock ~ Dr. Lori Owens

Dr. Teresa Reed ~ Ms. Macie Spears

Ms. Kim Westbrook

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The pocket Constitutions are courtesy of Congressman Mike Rogers, Third District, Alabama, and the Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Institute.



Established in 2003 as a nonpartisan initiative of AASCU in partnership with The New York Times, the American Democracy Project (ADP) is a network of nearly 300 state colleges and universities collaborating to deepen the impact public higher education institutions have on preparing students.



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The American Democracy Project at Jacksonville State University is a nonpolitical, cooperative effort by students, faculty, staff, and administrators to promote civic engagement. Our goal is to provide opportunities for students to engage in constructive debate, discussion, and service opportunities for our campus and community.



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