

## SCHOLARSHIP

## THE MAKING OF A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

**DOZENS** of books about Thurgood Marshall have been written, but UM Carey Law Professor Larry Gibson thought people should know more about the forces that helped create the country's first African-American Supreme Court justice.

Years of research, including poring over original documents and interviews with those who knew the Baltimore native, led to Gibson's book *Young Thurgood: The Making of a Supreme Court Justice*, released in December 2012.

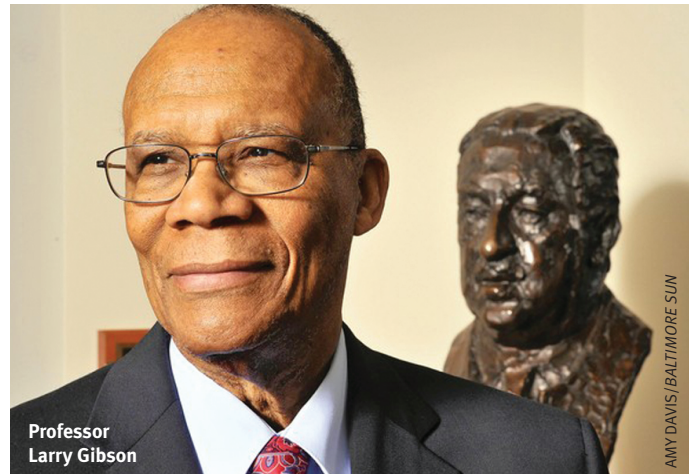
"The earlier books are principally about what Thurgood Marshall did," says Gibson. "This book is about what he was like and the forces that shaped him."

*Young Thurgood* has earned kudos from Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Taylor Branch, civil rights leader Vernon E. Jordan Jr., NAACP President Benjamin Jealous, and even Marshall's immediate family.

Harvard Law Professor Charles J. Ogletree Jr. calls the biography "a page turner" whose "compelling story is a must-read for anyone who wishes to understand a great man and the history of the civil rights movement."

As he put the manuscript together, Gibson found himself writing about a character besides Marshall. "The secondary character is the State of Maryland," Gibson says. The state's geography (between the deep South and the urban North), the economy, the politics, and sociology of the segregated Maryland that existed between the dawn of the 20th Century and through the Great Depression all influenced the young man from West Baltimore.

Gibson got a head start on his research when he put together the displays about Marshall that stand in the UM Carey Law School's Thurgood Marshall Law Library. He got to know the late Justice's widow and son, and gained access to photos, documents, and personal



Professor  
Larry Gibson

AMY DAVIS/BALTIMORE SUN

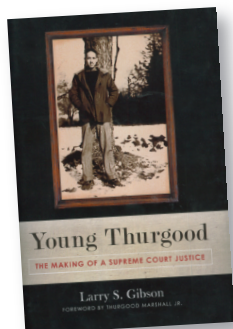
insights that allowed Gibson to cast a new light on this historical figure.

Among the popular inaccuracies about Marshall is that he was rejected from the School of Law because of his race. Gibson writes that Marshall, knowing full well



Justice Thurgood Marshall (left) and Professor  
Larry Gibson

the entrenched segregation of the law school and at many other Maryland institutions, did not submit an application. A small point perhaps, but an important part of a story that includes the work he did to integrate the School several years later in the *Murray v. Pearson* trial. ■



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