

ID

from page A1

young voters. This year, Schroeder heard arguments on the voter ID requirement that went into effect during the March primary.

N.C. NAACP President William Barber said the ruling has been appealed to the Fourth Circuit.

"We know that people - African-Americans, Latinos, women and students - have been disenfranchised by this voter suppression law and we are appealing immediately," he said.

Schroeder's 485-page ruling, released Monday evening, agreed that the state has a history of "significant, shameful past discrimination" against minority voters but there "is little official discrimination to consider" in the last 25 years. He wrote the plaintiffs "failed to show that such disparities will have materially adverse effects on the ability of minority voters to cast a ballot."

While he acknowledged "educational and socioeconomic disparities suffered by African-Americans," he didn't think that they prevented African-Americans from voting under the new provisions.

"The evidence shows that, like all voters, African-Americans are not only capable of adjusting,

but have adjusted," wrote Schroeder.

Democracy N.C. Executive Director Bob Hall condemned the ruling.

"Schroeder's decision ignores the reality that over 1,000 voters who lacked an acceptable ID took the trouble to fill out forms at polling sites in the March primary but were silenced; their ballots were rejected, often for trivial and inconsistent reasons, depending on where they voted and the wording they used to explain their lack of ID," said Hall.

Lawyers in the case like Allison Riggs of the Southern Coalition for Social Justice are looking to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn the ruling. The Fourth Circuit previously ruled against Schroeder on the case in 2014 granting an injunction he had denied against the law that was later overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court, which kept an injunction restoring same-day registration and out-of-precinct voting.

"Today's ruling is inconsistent with the Fourth Circuit's decision in 2014, and we're confident that the voters in this state will eventually be vindicated," said Riggs.

Schroeder's ruling maintains the injunction until the June 7 primary and then same-day registration and out-of-precinct voting will end.

Democracy North Carolina estimates that 29,000 votes were saved in the March primary by those two measures.

Gov. Pat McCrory, who signed HB 589 into law and is named in the lawsuit, praised the ruling, saying photo IDs are also required for things like boarding an airplane and purchasing Sudafed.

"This ruling further affirms that requiring a photo ID in order to vote is not only common-sense, it's constitutional," said McCrory.

HB 589 started as a voter ID law and then had many provisions added to it after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the pre-clearance requirement of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, which forced certain states and counties with a history of voter discrimination to get Justice Department approval when changing election laws. The Supreme Court ruled that the list of states requiring pre-clearance was dated and ordered Congress to come up with a new formula, which it hasn't done. Barber said during a conference call on Tuesday that HB 589 wouldn't have gone into effect if pre-clearance still existed and that Congress should pass the Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore it.



S.G. Atkins CDC Executive Director Carol Davis addresses the crowd after receiving the Breaking Barriers Fair Housing Award during the 11th Annual Fair and Affordable Housing Summit on Thursday, April 21.



More than 100 people gathered at the Benton Convention Center last Thursday for the 11th Annual Fair and Affordable Housing Summit. S.G. Atkins CDC was awarded the Breaking Barriers Fair Housing Award.

Hopkins

from page A1

"The women had afros and miniskirts, we were strong and proud and fearless," said Hopkins.

She said the men were equally resilient. Among them was Lawrence Hopkins, who she married her senior year. The very small minority of black students stuck together as a unit.

"We depended on the upperclassmen to help us navigate the turbulent waters and so they told us which professors we should absolutely not enroll in," she said. "We ate together at breakfast, lunch and dinner, so we presented a very bold image."

She said they were all good students who earned their place at WFU, despite some white students who questioned their academic credentials for being there because of Affirmative Action. After being turned down by Wake Forest University law school, Hopkins attended the Marshall Wythe School of Law at the College of William and Mary in Virginia while maintaining a long distance relationship with her husband, who attended Bowman Gray School of Medicine locally. After she graduated in 1977, she took a job at Hill, Tucker and Marsh, the law firm of one of her heroes, Civil Rights Attorney Oliver Hill.

"It was one of the most incredible employment experiences I have ever had, to be working on cases where you're going to change the traditional way in which the Commonwealth of Virginia treated its citizens," she said.

The firm worked on a variety of cases in the two years she was there, including employment issues and

police brutality. When the black bar association honored the partners at the firm, she got to meet another of her heroes, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who was Hill's college classmate.

"It was an exhilarating experience, he had this big warmth and his spirit just filled up the whole room," she said about Marshall.

Hopkins would become a United States state's attorney in both Richmond, Va. and in Shreveport, La. where her husband served in the Air Force. By 1984, they had moved back to Winston-Salem so they could be close to their parents in neighboring states. She helped Lawrence start his OB/GYN practice while working at the local Chamber of Commerce. She said she was no longer bitter about being denied entry to WFU School of Law.

"That was in the past, that was gone, I'd moved on," she said.

So in 1985, she began working for WFU's newly created legal council office. She would go on to become a lecturer and professor teaching courses in history, American ethnic studies and law. In 2010, she became the director of the Smith Anderson Center for Community Outreach, which includes the law school's Pro Bono and Public Interest programs. Public Interest Law Organization encourages students to pursue careers in places like public defender or district attorney offices. The Pro Bono Project lets students volunteer in the community. During Hopkins' tenure, participation in the Pro Bono Project went from 10 percent of law students to more than 60 percent, giving 6,000 hours of service. Volunteering is not

required and students receive no credit for it.

"It worked because we had a team here," said Hopkins. "We had administrative support, faculty resources and dedicated students. And I was like a facilitator putting all the pieces of the puzzle together."

She also said supervising attorneys from the community who've mentored the students have also been vital to the project's success.

During a recent retirement celebration, Law School Dean Suzanne Reynolds said students helped with advanced directives, expungement clinics and helping local youth know their legal rights as part of the project. She said she expects that to continue after Hopkins retires.

"Professor Hopkins, you have made this law school a better law school and it will remain that way," said Reynolds.

Hopkins and her husband have two children, Michelle, who is a mental rehab counselor, and David, who is a professional tennis player, and two grandchildren. After she retires June 29, she plans to enjoy retirement by spending time with family, reading a book a week and taking classes in pottery and Spanish.

She's also passionate about tennis, which she was introduced to as a student at WFU and still plays. She's chair of constitution and rules for the United States Tennis Association and helped start the tennis programs at two local high schools.

The university has renamed the Public Interest Initiative scholarship grant to the Hopkins Pro Humanitate grant in her honor.

Atkins

from page A1

accessible to all.

"S.G. Atkins CDC has made a major impact on a number of lives in this community. We just want to thank them for all that they do," Allen-Abraham said.

Named after the founder of Winston-Salem State University Simon Green Atkins, the development corporation was formed in 2008 with a mission to revitalize the southeast ward of the city which has a large number of rental homes. Executive director Carol Davis said highway construction in the late 1940s caused the housing stock to be destroyed. Davis mentioned S.G. Atkins mission is to bring the neighborhood back to life.

"We want to revitalize that housing and attract good products and services for the neighborhood," Davis said.

S.G. Atkins is responsible for the Ridge Wood Place neighborhood located off Woughtown Street. Davis said once the all 130 lots are complete, the neighborhood will contribute \$15 million to the tax value. Davis claims that will generate a yearly property tax of \$500,000.

"That's significant because that money will go into our public budget," she continued. "It can be used to re-invest in the neighborhood."

In 2005, S.G. Atkins built homes on 10th Street near New Walkertown Rd. The development company which is housed inside the Enterprise Center located on Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. also helps

potential buyers find financial assistance with buying homes as well.

Those in need of financial assistance have the opportunity to complete classes at the Center for Home Ownership (CHO).

Participants in the course will learn about the home buying process, make contact with community professionals who will assist them, and learn to resolve problems that prevent home ownership. After completion of the course, S.G. Atkins will also help potential buyers find lenders to work with.

"We want to make sure that our buyers are financially ready," said Davis. "That's very important to us."

After accepting the Breaking Barriers Fair Housing Award during the annual summit held at the Benton Convention Center last Thursday, Davis thanked the New Horizons planning committee for recognizing S.G. Atkins for the work they do in the community.

Keynote speaker for the summit college advisory board chairperson and city native Richard Caban-Cubero said more development corporations should follow in the footsteps of Atkins CDC and invest in the inner city.

Caban-Cubero noted that in recent years Winston-Salem has seen an increase in poverty and homelessness.

"We have to start investing in communities that are often overlooked," he said. "Until development corporations decide to invest in the communities that need it most, nothing will change here in Winston-Salem."

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