



# THE CHRONICLE

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## Hazel Mack's passion for justice started with the Black Panther Party

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BY TEVIN STINSON  
THE CHRONICLE

The name Hazel Mack is well known throughout the city of Winston-Salem and across the state for many things: her work as an attorney with Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC), a statewide non-profit that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people; founding Carter G. Woodson School; serving as director of outreach of Wake Forest School of Law; and a host of other accomplishments. When discussing her journey through life, Mack said everything she's achieved in life was set in motion in the summer of 1969 when decided to join the Winston-Salem chapter of the Black Panther Party (BPP).

### The Summer of 1969

On April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was gunned down while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Hotel in Memphis, Tenn. Mack, who was 17 years old at time, said that day is still a vivid memory.

"These people killed Dr. King," Mack said. "These people killed Dr. King and it's just as poignant in my mind today as it was then. I was just too through at that point as a young person, I was mentally ready for something

else ... I felt like if they could kill a beautiful human being like that, then we had to do something else, that's where my head was."

The following summer, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (S.N.C.C.) held a peaceful protest and march here in Winston-Salem and Mack skipped school to be there and that's where she met a member of the Black Panther Party.

Before that day, Mack said she didn't even know what the Black Panther Party was. She said she was inspired by the Party's dedication to help those in need. "This brother had on a button with a panther on it and I didn't know what it was, so I asked him and he started telling me about the Panther Party.

"He told me about Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale, and how the party started. That's when I started to look up information on the Party. But at the same time, the party was developing here. I just didn't know it."

The Winston-Salem chapter of the Black Panther Party was officially established a few months later and Mack started attending P.E. (Political Education) classes shortly after that. To become a member of the Black Panther Party, prospects had



Submitted photo

Hazel Mack, retired attorney and former member of the Winston-Salem Chapter of the Black Panther Party.

to attend a number of P.E. classes.

### Becoming a Panther

"You couldn't just walk up and say you're going to be a member of the party, it just didn't work like that," said Mack while discussing the process of becoming a member of the BPP.

The BPP's Political Education classes were held in various locations throughout the city and were centered around assigned readings that focused on the fight against oppression in different parts of the world.

Mack said the P.E. classes really opened her eyes. She said she enjoyed reading before she decided

to join the party, but the P.E. classes introduced her to books she probably never would've read. "One of the first books I remember was Frantz Fanon's 'The Wretched of the Earth, Black Skin White Mask.' We read 'Little Red Book' by Mao Tse-tung ... we read about people all over the world, all the people who had struggles against the powers that be and oppression. Those classes really opened my mind to a whole new universe," she said.

Not everybody who made it through the P.E. classes went on to become members of the Party. Mack said being a member of the Black Panther Party

meant dedicating your life to the cause.

"There was a requirement in the Party that you had to be able to do it 24/7 and not many people could qualify to do that, like if you have a family to feed or a job to go to," Mack said. "We lived communally and we shared what we had. We were able to accomplish a lot because of the labor we put in."

The local Black Panther Party hosted several initiatives called "Survival Programs," including a free breakfast program for children, pest control, clothes and shoes giveaway, sickle cell anemia screening, and registering people to vote. The Win-

ston-Salem BPP is also the only one in the country that offered a free, around-the-clock ambulance service. The Joseph Waddell People's Free Ambulance Service provided service throughout the city for those who couldn't afford to pay the county fee to use the public ambulance.

Mack said after she became a member, most of the meetings focused on those programs. The Panthers raised money for the various initiatives by hitchhiking and selling newspapers in different cities across the state that talked about the programs offered by the Party.

See Hazel on A2

## 'Quality food for a good price'

BY TEVIN STINSON  
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It has always been Lee Price's dream to own his own restaurant. When he was in the sixth grade, he was given an assignment to write about what he wanted to be when he grew up. "I said I wanted to manage and run my own restaurant ... when I read it out loud to the class, a few people laughed. But I didn't care, that's what I wanted to do," he said.

Last week Price's dream became real-

ity when Papa Lee's Grill opened at 2600 New Walkertown Road.

Price, 52, started cooking when he was only eight years old and has more than 30 years of experience working in fast food at McDonald's and Bojangles. Although he retired in 2017, Price said when he was presented with the opportunity to open his own restaurant, he couldn't pass it up. He said although he had his doubts in the beginning, after receiving encouraging words from several close friends, including his pastor, Bishop Willie David Sr., he decided to follow his dream.

He reached out to Goler Community Development Corporation about the property on New Walkertown Road and things just started to fall in place.

"My pastor really encouraged me. He said, 'You can do this, you know the business and you can handle it.'" Price continued, "So me and my wife sat down, counted up the cost and it was really



more than we had, but we still decided to do it. We worked by faith ... faith is the substance of things hoped for - Hebrews 11:1. And I live by that and that's how we got to where we are today."

Papa Lee's Grill officially opened on Monday, March 15, and has seen a steady flow of customers since the grand opening. The first customer

Price and his team served was Winston-Salem City Councilwoman Annette Scipio, who represents the East Ward where the restaurant is located.

"Councilwoman Scipio was the first person to walk through my door and she doesn't know how good that made me feel. Just knowing that I have her support means a lot," Price said.

Price said he wants Papa Lee's to be the go-to restaurant in the East Ward and for families across the city. "I want this to be a restaurant in the East Winston community that people are proud to come to," he said.

Some of the favorites on the menu so far are the chicken wings and Papa Lee's Big Bubba Cheeseburger, a half-pound double cheeseburger with the works.

The menu also includes a host of other burgers, turkey burgers, a barbecue sandwich, hot dogs, chicken tenders, salads, tacos, ice cream cones, sundaes, a kid's menu, and more, all for a reasonable price. Price also mentioned plans to add a breakfast menu in the near future.

"We're trying to give people good quality food for a good price. I think our prices are a good value for what you're getting," Price continued. "I've had some people tell me my prices were too low, but I told them they aren't too

low because I want to support the community and I want the community to support me."

When asked what sets Papa Lee's apart from other restaurants in the area, Price said, "Our customer service is above and beyond any customer service you will find anywhere in this city or outside this city."

"I've worked in Tennessee, South Carolina, and in Virginia, and given talks on customer service when I was with Bojangles and it's something that has to be in you. So when I interview my employees, I look for those skills in people. When a customer walks into Papa Lee's, the community can expect to receive quality food and excellent customer service."

Papa Lee's Grill is open for dine-in and take-out Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information or to see a full menu, visit "Papa Lee's Grill" on Facebook.

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