



Julius Chambers
.....Kept his promise

Julius Chambers Devotes Career To Civil Rights

Special To The Post
If Julius LeVonne Chambers had wanted to, he could have hedged on the promise he made in 1961. As the newly-chosen Editor-in-Chief of the North Carolina Law Review, he pledged "After graduation (from the University of North Carolina School of Law), I will work for civil rights for colored persons. I think it is an obligation that I have to do so."

Chambers, the principal speaker Friday, November 2, for the Diamond Anniversary Founder's Day at his undergraduate alma mater, North Carolina Central University, has kept that promise for more than two decades.

But if the beginning of the two decades saw Chambers' options limited - and his status in 1961 as UNC's top law student was evidence he refused to accept limitations - his graduation came at the beginning of an era which would see Chambers' scholarly credentials and his race combine to make him highly desirable to law firms and government.

He has achieved honors since his graduation from the UNC School of Law. He added one more academic degree to his UNC Juris Doctor, receiving the LL.M. from Columbia University in 1963. He already held the B.A. from the University of North Carolina College (now NCCU) and the M.A. from the University of Michigan.

While he was working toward the Columbia degree, Chambers held his first teaching appointment as a teaching associate in the Columbia Law School. He currently holds adjunct status at Columbia and at the University of Pennsylvania, and also serves as a member of the Board of Visitors at Columbia University School of Law and at Harvard Law School (where he has also held a teaching appointment) and of the Board of Overseers of the University of Pennsylvania School of Law.

His honorary degrees include the LL.D. from North Carolina Central University and from two other colleges and universities.

Chambers holds the record for brevity of term on the Board of Trustees of NCCU. He appeared in

1971 for his first meeting of that board, as an appointee of Governor Robert Scott, to find that the first order of business after the oath of office was the election of two members of the newly-created; the other was a veteran member of the NCCU board.

Their election to the Board which would from then on govern all 16 senior state-supported colleges and universities in North Carolina made the two ineligible for service as Trustees of individual institutions. Chambers' tenure as a Trustee of NCCU was in effect a matter of minutes.

By 1972, many celebrated law firms would almost certainly have delighted to list the credentials of Julius LeVonne Chambers on their letterhead, (B.A., M.A., J.D., LL.M., LL.D.). There were predictions of political and judicial appointments.

But for ten years, Chambers had kept his pledge of commitment to civil rights. As a private practitioner in Charlotte he had led the plaintiffs' case in the landmark school desegregation case, Swann V. Board of Education. He was senior partner in his own law firm, a firm which was celebrated for its commitment for civil rights.

Chambers was elected in 1975 to the Presidency of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., and soon afterward resigned from the UNC Board of Governors, declaring his dissatisfaction with the system's commitment to desegregation. (Nevertheless, he was honored in 1983 with the Distinguished Alumni Award of the system's "flagship" institution, UNC at Chapel Hill.)

This year he left his law partnership to assume the role of chief executive of the Legal Defense Fund, Director-Counsel.

Chambers will speak at NCCU's Diamond Anniversary Founder's Day at 11 a.m., Friday, November 2, in B.N. Duke Auditorium. The celebration commemorates Dr. James E. Shepard, who founded NCCU in July, 1910. The 1984-85 academic year, the university's 75th year of service, is being celebrated as the Diamond Anniversary Year.



Benjamin L. Hooks (l) congratulates Kelly Alexander Jr. on succeeding his father, Kelly Sr., as N.C. State Chapter President of the NAACP. (Photo By Divine Reflections)

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Judge T. Michael Todd

District Court

VOTE Nov. 6

Experience Counts

The undersigned Citizens and Lawyers of Mecklenburg endorse and support for re-election District Court Judge T. Michael Todd.

We believe that his experience and competence make his continued service on the bench in the Public Interest.

We consent to this endorsement being made public through paid political advertising.

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