

that had been abandoned by its original investors. Ms. Brock never let age get in the way of 16 hour days or numerous hours of volunteer service. Ms. Brock was a survivor and a shining example of what each of us should strive to become. She was loved by all in the community, whether they knew her personally or not. She was everything that was good in being human, not perfect but as close as I imagine most will come to while here on earth. My staff who knew her loved her as well. She was always offering her home as a place to stay and she never passed up an opportunity to make us all feel at home. I know we are all a little bit better off for knowing Ms. Brock, whether it was only for a few days or decades. May she take the heavens by storm as she did Calhoun and Liberty Counties, for I know she is smiling on us all.

CELEBRATING SAINT PAUL
BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call to the attention of the Congress the historic 90 year old Saint Paul Baptist Church of Los Angeles, California, whose great congregation will come together on Friday, February 13 to commemorate the one year anniversary of their esteemed Pastor, Dr. Joel Anthony Ward.

An array of distinguished religious and civic leaders from around our city will join the congregation to honor Dr. Ward and his wife, MaLinda at this special service. The keynote address will be delivered by Reverend Joe B. Hardwick, Pastor of Praises of Zion Baptist Church, whose outstanding choir will sing at the service.

This special weekend will culminate on Sunday, February 15, 1998, with a special worship service. Among the participants will be Dr. William Epps, Pastor of Second Baptist Church; Rev. Alvin Tunstill, Jr., Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church; Rev. Perry J. Jones, Pastor of Messiah Baptist Church; and Rev. G.D. McClain, Pastor of First Bethany Missionary Baptist Church. These distinguished clergymen recognize the challenges that religious leaders face today, and appreciate the remarkable record Dr. Ward has established in the short time he has been Pastor of Saint Paul Baptist Church.

Dr. Ward was the Pastor and Organizer of Rehoboth Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan when he accepted the call to become Pastor of Saint Paul. His inaugural year has been a great success. His exceptional stewardship has touched many lives, and has made an important difference in the life of his church.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues in this chamber join me in extending our best wishes to Dr. Ward on this joyous occasion. May God continue to bless his work as he ministers to the spiritual needs of his congregation.

TRIBUTE TO COLEMAN
ALEXANDER YOUNG

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of a man who was a civil rights legend, a political genius and an extraordinary human being. Coleman Alexander Young, Detroit's first African American mayor, died November 29, 1997, in the city he loved. He was 79 years old.

Mr. Young, who served a record five consecutive terms before leaving office in 1994, blazed a trail of social and political equality by acting on his conviction that all people are entitled to a decent life. Born in the segregated South when white-robed Klansmen inflicted a reign of terror on African Americans, Young had an uncompromising commitment to justice, equality of opportunity, economic empowerment and dignity for all people.

That commitment formed the foundation of his activism in the labor movement, the U.S. Army, the national political scene and the mayor's office. Mr. Young was, as former Michigan Governor William Milliken said at his funeral service, "a man of glorious gifts."

He was dazzlingly brilliant, disarmingly witty and outrageously outspoken. He was quick to anger and even quicker to forgive. He was not afraid to speak the truth, no matter whom it upset, and he was utterly fearless in his defense of basic human rights for all people—urban dwellers, common laborers, political activists, the disenfranchised and those ignored or scorned by society.

Coleman Young was born May 24, 1918, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the oldest of William and Ida Young's five children. In 1923, the Young family moved to Detroit where they settled in Black Bottom, a racially and ethnically diverse eastside Detroit neighborhood just two miles from the office he would later occupy as mayor.

The pernicious effects of systemic racism would follow him through his life. But instead of weakening his resolve, these challenges strengthened his spirit. As a student, Young excelled in his classes and earned all A's, but was denied a scholarship to three parochial high schools when school officials learned he was black. After graduating second in his high school class, he was denied scholarships to the University of Michigan and what is now known as Wayne State University because of his race.

Years later he said those early brushes with racial discrimination were catalysts that fueled his desire to make fundamental social changes. The following excerpts from the memorial booklet prepared for Mr. Young's funeral sum up the early years when he paid a heavy price for being a labor activist in Detroit and a civil rights activist in the segregated Army Air Corps.

"His activism was evident in 1937 when he joined the ranks of automotive workers. Young worked as an electrician's apprentice and soon became a labor organizer of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). He was fired because of his union activities. Taking a job at the U.S. Post Office, Young again angered supervisors by recruiting employees to band together in a labor union. Postal man-

agers used Young's involvement in a protest against racial segregation at Sojourner Truth, as eastside public housing project, as a reason to fire him.

During World War II, Young joined the U.S. Army at the age of 24. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry and later transferred to the Air Corps. There he became the nation's first black bombardier. He and other blacks in the Army Air Corps became known as the Tuskegee Airmen. However, racial discrimination prevented them from fighting in the War. They fought the Army instead.

Young organized a group of 100 other black officers and staged a sit-in at the "whites only" officers Club at Freeman Field, Indiana. They were jailed after they refused to sign documents agreeing to stay out of the club. Ironically the black officers were kept under guard while German POWs moved freely on the base. At least one high-ranking army officer wanted to court-martial and shoot the black officers. The protest did end segregation at the club.

Mayor Young continued his work as a union organizer after the war. Elected director of organization of the Wayne County AFL-CIO in 1948, he was the organization's first black paid staff member. In response to the blatant racism in the labor union hierarchy, he and other activists founded the National Negro Labor Council, whose goal was to win decent wages for blacks and whites. Entrenched union leaders were stunned and upset by the rapid growth of this group that dared to challenge the union establishment. NNLC membership included everyone from black factory workers in Detroit to white textile workers in the South to actors and activists on the east coast. Young and the NNLC also drew the wrath of the House Un-American Activities Committee which was investigating communism. He was summoned before the committee in 1952. Young's defiant testimony and his fearless challenge of the committee's role in spying on and terrorizing ordinary citizens made him a hero to thousands of Americans.

When asked if any of his associates were Communists, Young told the committee that they had him confused with a stool pigeon. When the committee lawyer said "Niggra" instead of Negro, Young corrected his speech and accused him of deliberately slurring the word to insult blacks. Young did not mince words about his view of the committee. He told them, "I consider it an un-American activity to pry into a person's private thoughts, to pry into a person's associates. I consider that an un-American activity."

Dave Moore, a longtime associate, recalled the euphoria the testimony sparked. "Coleman Young could have been elected king of Detroit. Blacks and whites responded to what he said."

But that victory was short-lived. The auto plants still blacklisted him. The UAW and other unions slammed the door in his face and the FBI put him on its list of dangerous individuals. For years he survived on jobs, but never lost his thirst for equality.

In the 1960's, Young focused on politics as the way to bring about necessary change. In 1964, he was elected to the State Senate. He quickly rose to leadership and became the first black member of the Democratic Natural Committee. In 1973, just six years after a searing urban rebellion that charred the heart and the landscape of Detroit, Young decided to run for Mayor.