

TRIBUTE TO CHANCELLOR JULIUS CHAMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last month a gathering of distinguished North Carolinians assembled in Durham to pay tribute to Julius Chambers upon his retirement from the chancellorship of North Carolina Central University. Speaker after speaker praised Chancellor Chambers for his many contributions to the university and to the community.

Today, along with the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), I want to pay tribute in this House to Julius Chambers, to his distinguished and path-breaking career, to his bold vision, perseverance, and ability to inspire that have meant so much to the university, to North Carolina and to the Nation.

Julius Chambers served as chancellor of his alma mater for 8 years, and his vision for NCCU reminds me of another leader of a great Durham university, Terry Sanford, who led Duke University with what he called "outrageous ambitions." Julius Chambers brought that tradition of "outrageous ambitions" to Central, and he left the university far stronger than he found it.

Julius Chambers accepted the call to return to Central after a distinguished history of leadership in the civil rights movement, the legal profession, and higher education. He came back to Durham with a reputation as a premier civil rights lawyer, having argued landmark desegregation cases in the 1960s and 1970s. His most famous case was *Swann vs. Board of Education*, in which he persuaded the U.S. Supreme Court in 1971 to approve Charlotte's comprehensive plan for school integration.

At Central, he moved quickly and effectively to increase public and private funding, to raise admissions standards and strengthen curricula, to recruit talented faculty and add major facilities in biotechnology and education, and to involve Central students in community service as an integral part of their curriculum.

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He had an active agenda at the Federal level as well. I enjoyed working with him on matters ranging from the impact of the Higher Education Act on Historically Black Colleges and Universities to the Eagle Village project, which is developing the community around NCCU; the highly promising NCCU-EPA partnership at the Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute, which bears Mr. Chambers' name; and the restoration of Shepard House, the home of NCCU's founder.

Julius Chambers graduated *summa cum laude* from NCCU in 1958, earned a master's degree in history from the University of Michigan in 1959, and he completed his law degree at the Uni-

versity of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1962 and earned a master's degree in law from Columbia University School of Law in 1964. He was the first African American to edit the UNC Law Review. He was selected by Thurgood Marshall to be the first intern for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. He founded North Carolina's first interracial law firm, which continues a distinguished and wide-ranging practice today.

As he presided over his last commencement this year, Chancellor Chambers told students how he felt when he graduated from Central 43 years ago. Despite being black and poor, he believed he could accomplish anything: "You are expected to succeed. You are expected to dream," he told the graduates of NCCU. As Julius Chambers returns to Charlotte and his law practice, we are grateful for the foundation he laid at Central; and we pledge to continue to build on his dream for the benefit of all.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), a close friend and associate of Mr. Chambers.

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), my friend and colleague, for yielding to me and for joining in this tribute to Julius Chambers. I am proud to join with the gentleman in paying tribute to Julius Chambers who, while we were out during our most recent break from Congress, retired from the chancellorship at North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina, on June 1.

North Carolina Central, of course, was in my congressional district for the first 6 years of my service in the Congress; and then, because my district lines were redrawn, North Carolina Central went out of my congressional district and into the district of the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE). At that time, Julius Chambers was the chancellor of North Carolina Central.

My relationships with Julius Chambers go back to well before he became chancellor of North Carolina Central University in Durham. More than 35 years ago, when I was about to enter undergraduate school in 1963, I had the pleasure of meeting Julius Chambers when he was about to open his law firm in Charlotte, North Carolina. Nobody knew at that time, of course, what impact Julius Chambers would have on North Carolina. Nobody knew that he would become a renowned civil rights lawyer and be involved in so many landmark civil rights cases, such as school desegregation, employment discrimination, and criminal cases with substantial civil rights implications.

But Julius Chambers was there about to start a law firm, and I was about to start undergraduate school; and he was already encouraging me, even before I started undergraduate school, to consider going to law school and returning to my native city, Charlotte, to prac-

tice law. This was 7 years before I even got a law degree, and 4 years before I got an undergraduate degree, and even then, Julius Chambers was having an impact on my life.

I stayed in contact with him for the next 4 years, for the next 3 years after that 4 years while I was in law school, and got an offer to return to the law firm that he had started in 1970, and did, in fact, go back to Charlotte to practice with Julius Chambers in that law firm, the first integrated law firm in North Carolina, one of the first integrated law firms in the South at that time. He was solely responsible for talking me into returning to North Carolina. He was solely responsible for talking other professionals, young black professionals in particular, into setting up medical practices, accounting practices, law practices of various kinds in Charlotte, North Carolina, and coming and having an amazing impact on our area of North Carolina.

I happened to be with him when he had a conversation with Harvey Gant in which he talked him into coming to Charlotte, North Carolina. He was from South Carolina and was not really thinking about coming to North Carolina, but came at Julius' insistence and with his persuasion to North Carolina, and, of course, has had substantial impact on the politics of North Carolina from being the first African American mayor of the city of Charlotte to running in 1990 against JESSE HELMS for the United States Senate, a substantial impact on the politics of North Carolina.

So I want to pay special tribute to Julius Chambers today for all of the impact he has had on North Carolina Central University, but more importantly to me, for the impact that he has had on my life, because I know I would not be standing here as a Member of the Congress of the United States, but for the influence that he had on my life. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to join in this tribute.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Julius Chambers, who retired on June 1st as Chancellor of North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina, which was in my congressional district from 1993 until 1998 and is now represented by DAVID PRICE.

Thirty years ago, I was privileged to get to know Julius Chambers as a friend and learn from him as a lawyer when he hired me to join his law practice, which was the first integrated law firm in North Carolina. In its first decade, his law firm did more to influence evolving civil rights law than any other private practice in the United States.

After serving as Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, he became Chancellor of North Carolina Central University in 1993. His vision has helped transform the school into a major research institution.

Julius Chambers has one of the most brilliant legal minds and is one of the most effective civil rights leaders of our time. I am personally and professionally indebted to Julius Chambers in so many ways and wish him my very best in all future endeavors.