



# FEDERAL LAWYER

A publication of the Chicago Chapter  
of the Federal Bar Association

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## SOLICITOR GENERAL DREW S. DAYS, III TO SPEAK AT ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Drew S. Days, III, Solicitor General of the United States, will speak at the FBA's Annual Luncheon which will be held this year on July 21, 1993, at the Palmer House in Chicago. Solicitor General Days has had a long legal career with an

emphasis on civil rights. From 1969-1977, he was on the staff of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in New York City. In 1977, he was confirmed as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. In January, 1981, he joined the faculty of

Yale University Law School where, from 1988 until his appointment, he was the Director of the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights. Professor Days was nominated by President Clinton earlier this year to serve as Solicitor General.

Tickets to the luncheon are \$37.00 for members and guests and \$42.00 for non-members. For information or to make reservations, call Mary Ann at (312) 435-7610.

### IN MEMORIAM

Judge James B. Parsons, 81, the first African-American appointed as an Article III judge on the United States District Court, died June 19, 1993, in Chicago after a long illness. Judge Parsons, born August 13, 1911 in Kansas City, Missouri, was raised in Decatur, Illinois.

Judge Parsons received his law degree from the University of Chicago in 1949 and was admitted to the Illinois Bar that same year. During his legal career, Judge Parsons served as an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago (1949-1951) and as an Assistant United States Attorney in Chicago (1951-1960).

In 1960, Judge Parsons resigned from the U.S. Attorney's Office and successfully campaigned for a vacancy on the Superior Court of Cook County.

On August 31, 1961, upon the nomination of President John F. Kennedy, Judge Parsons was appointed to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, thus becoming the first African-American in history to receive a life term appointment to the district court bench.

Judge Parsons' appointment was one of a series of "firsts." On April 17, 1975, he became Chief Judge in the Northern District, the first African-American in history to hold that position. One month later, he became, by the unanimous vote of the judges of the Seventh Circuit, the first African-American elected to the Judicial Conference of the United States.

On September 30, 1981, having completed his term as Chief Judge, Judge Parsons assumed senior status. Judge Parsons ceased presiding over trials in 1992, but, until his health deteriorated, continued to perform other functions, such as swearing in new citizens.

Last November, Judge Parsons was honored at a historical gathering of the nation's Article III African-American judges held in Chicago. The event, entitled "Just The Beginning," celebrated the integration of the federal judiciary. (See related story, p. 2)

Judge Parsons is survived by a son, Hans-Dieter Parsons; a sister, Mary Parsons Waters, and a grandson.

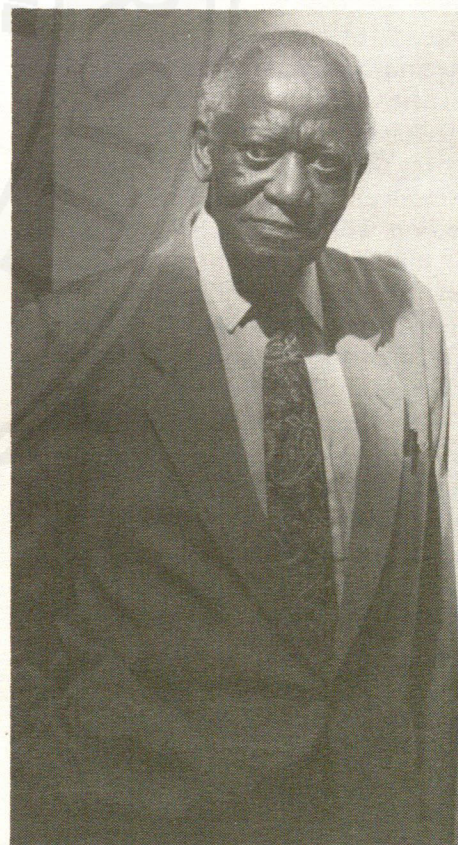


Photo by Victor Powell, Powell Photography, Chicago, IL

*The Honorable James Benton Parsons  
(1911-1993)*

# CHICAGO CHAPTER HOSTS HISTORIC GATHERING OF BLACK JUDICIARY

By Kevin Flynn

Three generations of African-American men and women shared their deeply personal recollections of lives and times worth remembering at an unprecedented gathering of fifty-two of the nation's sixty-eight living black Article III judges. The September event initially was planned to honor only Senior U.S. District Judge James B. Parsons of Chicago, the nation's first black federal district judge, who announced his retirement this fall, thirty-one years after his historic appointment by President Kennedy. But the scope expanded when U.S. District Judge Ann Claire Williams, a Chicago Chapter Director, and a committee of local judges and lawyers transformed a gala dinner into a weekend celebration of the integration of the federal judiciary entitled "Just the Beginning."

The event netted proceeds of over \$32,000 which the Chapter intends to donate to the Just the Beginning Foundation, a not-for-profit entity created to fund academic scholarships commemorating the contributions of African-American federal judges. The donation will be formally presented at the Chapter's annual luncheon on July 21, 1993. The Foundation's first scholarship will be in honor of Judge Parsons, who died in June.

The weekend's festivities kicked off with a welcoming cocktail party on Friday night. Federal Magistrate Judge Elaine Bucklo, FBA Chicago Chapter President and member of the event planning committee, welcomed the honored judges, their guests and a host of local federal judges and lawyers in attendance. Judge James B. Moran, Chief Judge of the Chicago federal district court, also addressed the party guests, acknowledging the honor of being the host district for such an auspicious gathering.

Never had so many black federal

judges been in one place. They ranged from the most veteran, Judge Parsons, to the youngest, Timothy Lewis, who, in 1991 at the age of thirty-six, became the youngest member of the federal judiciary. From the start, a sense of comradeship filled the room. Nationally-known figures such as Senior District Judge Constance Baker Motley of New York City, who helped write the winning briefs in the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, and District Judge Matthew J. Perry of Columbia, South Carolina, were seen exchanging stories and laughing with younger colleagues who first read of their civil rights battles when they were in grade school. "The reminiscences are fascinating for those of us in the second or third wave because many [of the older judges] are our mentors or heroes," said Judge Harry T. Edwards of the D.C. Circuit. "The struggles have been difficult."

Judges who had followed one another's careers, but who had never personally met, hugged and cajoled like long lost friends. "We are a part of a history, whether you realize it or not," Judge Nathaniel R. Jones of Cincinnati, Ohio, reminded his black colleagues on the federal bench.

Mindful of the history represented by this group of judges,

Judge Williams organized a Saturday morning conference at the Chicago Downtown Marriott Hotel, featuring two panel discussions. Harvard Law Professor Randall Kennedy served as moderator for the first panel discussion entitled "The First Appointments." "This meeting provides both great enlightenment and inspiration," said Kennedy, a former Rhodes scholar and outspoken critic of the Reagan and Bush administrations' failure to appoint more minority judges.

The discussions were, indeed, inspiring and enlightening. Judge Parsons recounted, with humor and fondness, the story of his being awakened by an 8:00 a.m. phone call on August 7, 1961, at a summer cottage he was renting in Lakeside, Michigan. Parsons recalled angrily picking up the phone to yell at the caller for intruding so early on a Sunday when he was interrupted. "This is John Kennedy and I'd like to announce to the world that I am nominating the first Negro to the U.S. District Court Bench." The rest, as they say, is history.

Retired Bankruptcy Judge Edward B. Toles, a close personal friend of Judge Parsons and a pioneer in the movement toward integrating the judiciary, provided the conference attendees with some perspective of the struggle

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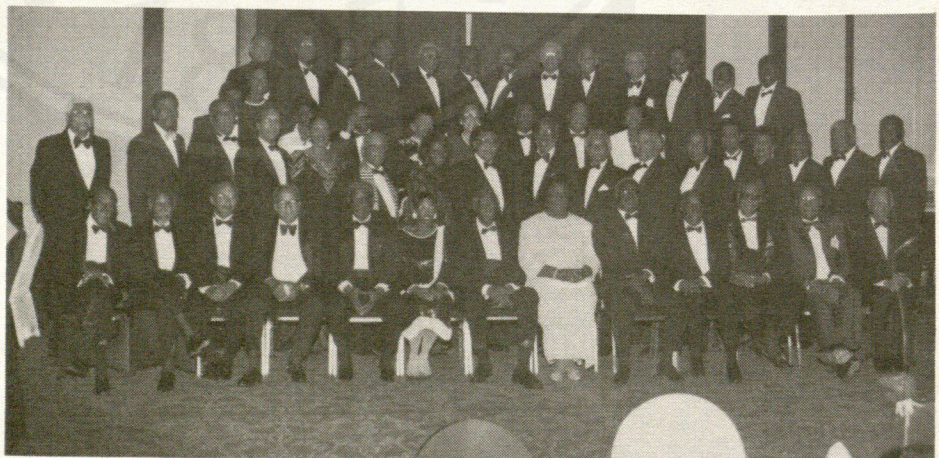


Photo by Victor Powell, Powell Photography, Chicago, IL

*Fifty-two of the nation's sixty-eight black Article III judges gathered for the "Just The Beginning" celebration in Chicago last September.*

# "Just The Beginning"

Photos by Victor Powell, Powell Photography, Chicago, IL



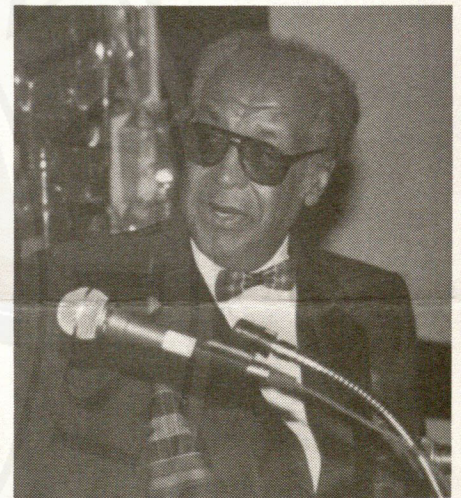
Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee emceed the Saturday evening celebration.



Judge Parsons is congratulated by Senator Simon.



Judge Williams, Chief Judge Moran and Chapter President Magistrate Judge Elaine Bucklo at Friday's reception.



Hon. A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. concluded Saturday evening's speeches.



Speakers at the dinner included (from l.) Hon. Betty B. Fletcher, Hon. William J. Bauer, Senator Paul Simon and Hon. Abraham Lincoln Marovitz.

## "JUST THE BEGINNING" SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED

As a result of the successful "Just The Beginning" celebration, a scholarship fund has been established. This year's scholarship of \$1,000 will be awarded at the FBA's October monthly luncheon. The Foundation's goal is to raise \$100,000 as permanent funding for an annual scholarship award. Contributions to the Foundation may be sent to:

Just The Beginning Foundation  
c/o Kevin M. Flynn, Treasurer  
Three First National Plaza  
Suite 3500  
Chicago, IL 60603

## HISTORIC GATHERING

*Continued from page 2*

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The second panel discussion entitled "Lives, Times and Careers," moderated by Sixth Circuit Judge Damon J. Keith, included such luminaries as Judge A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., Chief Judge Emeritus of the Third Circuit in Philadelphia, and Judge Motley, as well as retired District Judge George N. Leighton of Chicago.

Judge Higginbotham left no doubt for a younger generation that times have changed. He recounted his undergraduate years at Purdue University. "When I was 16 years old and a freshman at Purdue University, I and the other twelve black students slept in the unheated attic of a dorm." Judge Higginbotham recalled that when he finally summoned the nerve to confront the university president directly, he was told coldly that "the law doesn't require us to have coloreds. The law doesn't require us to give the coloreds heat."

Retired Judge Leighton, 79, born in poverty on the Cape Verde Islands, told the audience that being a judge "remains the highlight of my life." He spoke intimately of the blessings of old age, referring to it, tongue in cheek, as the "last blessing." He spoke freely about his difficult decision to leave his life-tenured judgeship in 1987, after eleven years of service, to resume private practice in order to better support an ailing wife.

Judges who were not scheduled to speak publicly were able to record their messages on videotape, which JTBF intends to offer



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*Judge Parsons flanked by (from l. to r.) Hon. Mary Johnson Lowe (S.D. N.Y.), Hon. Ann Claire Williams (N.D. Ill.), Hon. Constance Baker Motley (S.D. N.Y.), Hon. Consuelo B. Marshall (C.D. Cal.), Hon. Norma H. Johnson (D. D.C.), Hon. Anna Diggs Taylor (E.D. Mich.) and Hon. Anne E. Thompson (D. N.J.).*

for sale to raise funds for its scholarships. A commemorative booklet containing profiles of each judge and an historical overview of the integration of the judiciary was also created by the event organizers and distributed to all attendees. An expanded second edition is planned for publication this summer, which JTBF also plans to market as a fundraiser.

One of Judge Motley's observations during the Saturday conference was typical of those heard from many of her colleagues. "I am pleased with the progress blacks have made in the profession... The world does really change."

On Saturday evening, with the Grand Ballroom of the Chicago Downtown Marriott filled with over 750 politicians, lawyers, judges, honorees and their families, Judge Williams surprised, and impressed, everyone by leading the National Anthem and "Lift Every Voice and Sing" after the scheduled singer failed to find her way to the dais. The incident provided several of the dinner speakers with fuel for humorous preludes to their remarks. Among the dignitaries addressing the dinner guests were U.S. Senator Paul Simon, Seventh Circuit Chief Judge William J. Bauer, U.S. Attorney Fred L. Fore-

man and National Bar Association President Allen J. Webster. Actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee emceed the dinner and performed a dramatic reading, authored for the event, recounting African-American pioneers in politics, science and the arts.

The Chicago Chapter presented a silver platter to Judge Parsons in tribute to his thirty-one years of service to the federal judiciary.

Judge Higginbotham delivered the dinner's final speech in the form of a letter from heaven from his late mentor, William H. Hastie, the first black federal appellate judge whom President Truman appointed to the Third Circuit in 1949. The theme of his remarks was that "we are going backwards." "The tragedy is, because some of us have become so isolated, we have become reluctant to speak out against the decimation." Some of his colleagues, Judge Higginbotham added, have been "lulled to sleep by the empty lullaby of a kinder and gentler society."

The event was further memorialized by a group photograph of the honorees taken after the dinner. The photo is being presented to the judges as a final gift from the Chicago Chapter.

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# PANEL DISCUSSION EXPLORES GENDER BIAS

In a program entitled, "Is There a Glass Ceiling?/Does it Have a Color?" recently sponsored by the FBA's Chicago Chapter, a panel explored the issues of gender and race bias in the legal profession. The panel, consisting of Christina M. Tchen, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, Rita A. Fry, Cook County Public Defender, and Elaine C. Weiss, Director of the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession, shared their personal experiences with the luncheon audience.

Ms. Tchen began by relating statistics which demonstrate a disparity between the number of women and minorities in the legal profession and the number of women and minorities in partnership positions in firms. Ms. Tchen attributed her ability to succeed in a large firm to the mentoring of other professional women. She related an instance involving her partner, Susan Getzendanner. After a lengthy trial the judge re-

quested proposed findings and conclusions within a very short period of time. Ms. Getzendanner, knowing that Ms. Tchen's young child was ill, informed the judge of that fact and obtained a substantially greater amount of time for the post-trial submissions.

Rita Fry shared her experiences as a black professional woman. She related a common perception that black women in the legal profession have the advantage of being "two-fers," *i.e.*, hiring a black female professional gives an employer credit for assisting two minorities—women and blacks. In reality, however, Ms. Fry noted that black professional women often suffer a double disability: they must overcome two sets of prejudices, one towards women and the other towards blacks.

Elaine Weiss summarized her work as Director of the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession. According to Ms. Weiss, gender discrimination is much more widespread than published

statistics show because many women, for fear of damaging their careers, fail to come forward with their allegations. Ms. Weiss noted the recent public hearings regarding President Clinton's Attorney General nominee, Zoe Baird, and commented ironically that most of the male senators criticizing Ms. Baird's child care arrangements "couldn't pick their own children out of a line-up."

After identifying the problem of gender bias, particularly involving women with families and the attendant time restraints which often result in women leaving the practice of law, Ms. Weiss addressed potential solutions. In particular, Ms. Weiss noted that the development of a part-time track to partnership is not only advantageous to women who often find it difficult to balance career and family or to re-enter the work force after a substantial leave, but also benefits law firms by retaining valuable lawyers who might otherwise leave the profession.

## FBA MEMBERS HONORED

The Federal Bar Association and the Chicago Chapter wish to gratefully acknowledge those attorneys who have been members in good standing of the Association for 25 years or more. Those attorneys who are members of the Chicago Chapter are listed below:

Ray J. Schoonhoven	6/01/49	Yale Stein	10/01/56	Patrick W. O'Brien	9/01/60
Edward G. Krantz	9/01/49	James F. Wyatt, Jr.	10/01/56	Maureen B. Leahy	9/01/60
CAPT Etha B. Fox	9/01/50	Frederick Franklin	10/01/56	David V. Kahn	8/01/61
Ira M. Burman	9/01/50	Harold R. Winger	1/01/57	Nathan P. Owen	9/01/61
Charles M. Nisen	10/01/50	Anthony D. Petrone, Jr.	8/01/57	Robert E. Fitzgerald, Jr.	9/01/61
Hon. Olga Jurco	11/01/50	Victor G. Rosenblum	8/01/57	Maurice P. Raizes	10/01/61
Lt. William H. Barrick	5/01/51	Jerome S. Lamet	8/01/57	Dennis A. Bell	1/01/62
Francis L. Zimmermann	12/01/51	Matthew C. Kessler	9/01/57	Helen V. Porter	8/01/62
William G. Vogt	1/01/52	D.A. Connelly	11/01/57	Scott Hodes	9/01/62
Hon. Bernard B. Wolfe	8/01/52	George N. Karafotias	4/01/58	Hon. Richard A. Palewicz	10/01/62
Charles V. Kralovec	8/01/52	Lloyd B. Foster	8/01/58	Frank A. Edelman	10/01/62
Mitchell S. Rieger	8/01/53	Charles R. Purcell	9/01/58	Harold V. Harsha	8/01/63
Erwin C. Heininger	9/01/53	W. Donald McSweeney	11/01/58	Hon. James N. Gramenos	10/01/63
Charles A. Lippitz	2/01/55	Robert J. Nye	12/01/58	David Parson	11/01/63
Hon. Lucia T. Thomas	7/01/55	Nicholas G. Manos	8/01/59	Michael J. Freed	12/01/63
George H. McEwen	8/01/55	David Siegel	9/01/59	Julian R. Wilhelm	2/01/64
Hon. John D. Schwartz	9/01/55	James F. Shea	9/01/59	Prof. George T. Frampton	2/01/64
Hon. Roy A. Olson	3/01/56	R.W. Mick, Jr.	9/01/59	Gilbert H. Hennessey	5/01/64
Marshall M. Holleb	7/01/56	Harvey M. Silets	10/01/59	Martin M. Samber	9/01/64
Paul D. Newey	8/01/56	Thomas F. Crane	3/01/60	John H. Secaras	9/01/64
Francis H. Monek	9/01/56	Robert H. Michaud	7/01/60	Elmer Gertz	12/01/64
Herbert I. Rothbart	9/01/56	Elmer M. Walsh, Jr.	8/01/60		

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