

FRED DAVID GRAY, ESQUIRE

Fred David Gray, a native of Montgomery, Alabama, currently lives in Tuskegee and is a civil rights lawyer.

He was educated at the Nashville Christian Institute, Nashville, Tennessee; Alabama State University, Montgomery, Alabama, and Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Admitted to the Alabama and Ohio Bars, Gray is also admitted to practice in the following Courts: Supreme Court of Ohio, 1954; Supreme Court of Alabama, 1954; U. S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama, 1955; Supreme Court of the United States, 1956; U. S. Court of Appeals for Fifth Circuit, 1958; U. S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, 1963; U. S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, 1968; U. S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, 1982; Tax Court, 1968.

Gray's legal career spans a time period of over 60 years. Enthusiastic, energetic and out of law school less than a year, he began a dynamic civil rights career in 1954. His first civil rights case was representation of Claudette Colvin, a 15-year old African American high school student who refused to give up her seat on a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in March 1955. In December 1955 he represented Mrs. Rosa Parks who was arrested because she refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man, igniting the Montgomery Bus Boycott, *City of Montgomery v. Rosa Parks*. He was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s first civil rights attorney.

The list of civil rights cases that he won can be found in most constitutional law textbooks. They include, but are not limited to the following:

-*Browder v. Gayle*, which integrated the buses in the City of Montgomery in 1956.

-*Gomillion v. Lightfoot* decided in 1960, returned African-Americans to the city limits of the City of Tuskegee. A landmark case, it opened the door for redistricting and reapportioning various legislative bodies across the nation laying the foundation for the concept, "one man one vote".

-*National Association for the Advancement of Colored People v. State of Alabama, ex rel. John Patterson, Attorney General*, was brought by the State of Alabama in which it outlawed the NAACP from doing business in the State of Alabama. This case was taken to the Supreme Court, three times through the state court system, and twice through the federal court system. The ultimate result was the NAACP was able to resume its business operations in the State of Alabama.

-*Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education*, decided in 1961, reinstated students who were expelled from Alabama State College and held that the students were unconstitutionally expelled, and students attending a state supported institution are entitled to a hearing before expulsion. The legal principle announced in this case has been extended into many other areas.

-*Williams v. Wallace*, decided in 1965, was a class action suit brought by African Americans against Governor Wallace and the State of Alabama and resulted in the court ordering Governor Wallace and the State of Alabama to protect marchers as they walked from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to present grievances as a result of being unable to vote. The publicity of these actions led to the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

-*Mitchell v. Johnson*, decided in 1966, was one of the first civil actions brought to remedy systematic exclusion of blacks from jury service.

Gray filed suits that integrated all state institutions of higher learning in the State of Alabama, and 104 of the then 121 elementary and secondary schools systems in the state, *Lee v. Macon*. He was counsel in preserving and protecting the rights of persons involved in the infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study in 1972, the case of *Pollard v. United States of America*. In July of 1993, he argued on behalf of Alabama State University, the higher education case, *John F. Knight, Jr. v. State of Alabama, et. al.*, U.S. District Court for the Eleventh Circuit. The court held in that case that there are still vestiges of racial discrimination in higher education in Alabama.

One of the first African Americans to serve in the Alabama Legislature since reconstruction, he served from 1970-1974. He received the Capitol Press Corps Award for Best Orator in the House of Representatives in 1972, and was a member of the National Society of State Legislators from 1970-1974.

His love and commitment in promoting the works of the National Bar Association gave him recognition as its 43rd President, 1985-86. He initiated the NBA Hall of Fame (becoming an inductee in August of 1995), and was the recipient of the Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion of Merit from the Washington Bar Association.

Currently he is the senior managing shareholder in the law firm of Gray, Langford, Sapp, McGowan, Gray, Gray & Nathanson P.C., with offices in Montgomery and Tuskegee, Alabama. Typical representative clients the firm has represented are: City of Tuskegee, Alabama, Utilities Board of the City of Tuskegee, Alabama, The Housing Authority of the City of Tuskegee, Tuskegee University, Alabama Education Association, United States Fidelity and Guaranty Insurance Company, Macon County Greyhound Park, Jefferson County Racing Association, Equitable Life Insurance Company, State Farm Automobile Insurance Company, United Services Automobile Association, Aetna Life and Casualty Insurance Company, General Motors Corporation, Alabama Exchange Bank, Allstate Insurance Company, Resolution Trust Corporation, and Alabama Power Company. The firm has also represented Plaintiffs in wrongful death actions, personal injury, fraud, bad faith, which have resulted in jury verdicts and settlements in multi-million dollar amounts. The firm is nationally recognized and has received extensive press coverage in such publications as USA Today, Ebony Magazine, Jet Magazine, NBA Magazine, The Washington Times, Case Western Reserve University Magazine, New York Times, and ABC's Prime Time Live.

He serves or has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Case Western Reserve University, a member of the Board of Trustees of Faulkner University; a Master Benchner of the Montgomery Chapter of the Hugh Maddox Inns of Courts; a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. In October of 1999, Gray became a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Created in 1950 to recognize excellence in trial lawyers, the College includes members from every segment of the civil and criminal trial bar of the United States and Canada. In March of 2000 Mr. Gray's legal career was heightened to another level when he was elected as a Fellow of the International Society of Barristers. In 2003, he was selected for a three year term as a member of the Executive Council of the National Conference of Bar Presidents. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

The recipient of numerous awards and honors, Miller Brewing Company selected him to appear in its 1989 calendar, Gallery of Greats, Black Attorneys: Counsels For The Cause. He was further recognized by

Miller Brewing Company as the representative of all lawyers in the 1993 tenth edition, "Excellence Has Many Faces". Miller has again recognized Mr. Gray in its 2000 Gallery of Greats Calendar, Pillars of the Past: Architects of the Future, as one of the three Black Attorneys: Counsels for the Cause. He has received honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from The University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Alabama State University, Southwestern Christian College, Case Western Reserve University, Pepperdine University, Abilene Christian University, Jones School of Law of Faulkner University, Santa Clara University and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The City University of New York, Oklahoma Christian University (through Cascade College); The honorary Degree of Humane Letters from Huntingdon College, Lipscomb University and Morgan State University.

Case Western Reserve University named Gray the Fletcher Reed Andrews Graduate of the Year in 1985, elected him to the Society of Benchers in 1986, and presented him the highest honor the law school bestows on one of its graduates, the Law School Centennial Medal, in September, 1993. In February of 1996, the American Bar Association bestowed upon Mr. Gray its "Spirit of Excellence Award", which celebrates the achievements of lawyers of color and their contributions to the legal profession. It also recognizes their commitment to pave the way to success for other lawyers of color and commemorates the rich diversity that lawyers of color bring to the legal profession and to society.

Among many, in June 2003, Gray was awarded the Soaring Eagles Award from the Minority Caucus of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, which symbolizes the struggle of lawyers of color as they pursue personal and professional excellence and success. In April 2004, he was the recipient of Harvard University Law School's highest award, the Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion. In August 2004, he was the recipient of the American Bar Association's Thurgood Marshall Award, and in October the Sarah T. Hughes Civil Rights Award given by the Federal Bar Association. In 2005 he was inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor. He is the 2009 recipient of the American Association for Justice, Leonard E. Weinglass in Defense of Civil Liberties Award; and the National Bar Association, Vince Monroe Townsend, Jr. Legends Award. From the City of Montgomery in December 2013, he was awarded the "Gifts of Giants Award", in Celebration of Montgomery Bus Boycott Civil Rights Legends; Commendation by Alabama Governor Robert Bentley (2014); NBA Resolution naming the annual "Fred D. Gray Hall of Fame Award Luncheon". In 2015: historic marker noting his contributions erected in front of Supreme Court of Alabama building and in 2016 erected in Tuskegee, Alabama; Pillar of Justice Award by The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law; Lifetime Achievement Award by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.; Lifetime Achievement Award by Hyundai Motor America; NBA Board of Governors' Resolution to President Barack Obama to confer the Presidential Medal of Freedom Award; Honorabilis by Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill in recognition of lifetime achievements; Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Conference Co-Chairs' Phoenix Award; Margaret Chase Smith by National Secretaries of State (NASS); Trailblazer Award by Case Western Reserve University at its initial Unveiling Ceremony, October 2017.

Gray has lectured on local, state, national and international levels. He was Practitioner-In-Residence at Pepperdine University; lecturer at Case Western Reserve University, School of Law; Tenneco Distinguished Speaker, University of Houston; guest lecturer for the Harvard Law Forum Speaker Series, Harvard Law School, and facilitator for the Federal Executive Institute, Charlottesville, Virginia, and University of Hull, United Kingdom. In December of 2000, Gray was appointed to the Charles Hamilton Houston Chair in Law at The

North Carolina Central University School of Law. Lipscomb University honored Gray by the naming of the Fred D. Gray Institute for Law Justice & Society in recognition of his commitment to civil rights and against racism.

An author, *Bus Ride to Justice* first released in February 1995, Revised Edition released May 2013, was previewed at the Jimmy Carter Center and broadcast on C-Span Book TV. Upon receipt of a copy, President Barack Obama wrote in a letter to Gray, "Today, we stand on the shoulders of giants who helped move us toward a more perfect Union, and I appreciate your sharing your story." *The Tuskegee Syphilis Study* was released in May 1998. He also wrote *The Sullivan Case: A Direct Product of the Civil Rights Movement*, a review for Case Western Reserve Law Review.

In 1997 Gray encouraged the President of the United States to make an official apology to the participants of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. The participants also requested a memorial in their honor. The apology was made at the White House in May of that year. Gray was the moving force in the establishment of the Tuskegee Human and Civil Rights Multicultural Center, Tuskegee, Alabama. A 501(c)3 Corporation, it serves as a memorial to the Study participants, and educates the public on contributions in the field of human and civil rights by Native Americans, Americans of African s of European descent. It also strives to educate on the role Tuskegee-Macon County played in the Civil Rights Movement.

Gray is the first person of color elected as President of the Alabama State Bar Association and served as its 127th President for the year 2002-2003. As president he was instrumental in the Board of Bar Commissioners initiating the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame. Inductions are now held annually.

Case Western Reserve Law Review featured Gray in its Spring 2014 edition entitled, *Bus Ride to Justice: A Conversation with Fred Gray*. In its Summer 2017 edition, Gray is interviewed and chronicled in an article, *In Honor of Fred Gray: Making Civil Rights Law from Rosa Parks to the Twenty-First Century*". The Fred D. Gray Symposium is conducted annually at CWRU School of Law.

An Alabama State University (ASU) graduate, Class of 1951, Gray has made substantial contributions to his alma mater. He was the first President of the National Alumni Association of ASU when it was reorganized in approximately 1964, and the first person of color to serve as General Counsel for Alabama State University. He was inducted into the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame in 2003. Under the ASU Trust for Excellence he has established an endowment trust in the name of his late wife, Bernice H. Gray, a 1956 graduate of ASU. He is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity. An elder of the Tuskegee Church of Christ, Gray is married to Carol Porter of Cleveland, Ohio. He is the father of four, grandfather of six and stepfather of three.