

# CLOSING FROM THE WOODS CONFERENCE

Along with all who were privileged to attend, I remember meeting Judge Woods at the very first conference back in 1997. He had not been back to the law school since his graduation in 1960, which was regrettable for all concerned. However, he graciously shared details of his journey through very challenging times from humble origins and ultimately to a seat on the bench in Prince Georges County, Maryland. He also expressed his great pride in having graduated from the Washington College of Law. When we heard later that year that Judge Woods had passed away, we were saddened that we would not be able to spend more time with him, but also gratified to have had that all-too-brief opportunity to learn something of life from a wise man.

As we celebrate the tenth conference, now so appropriately named in his honor, we reflect on the objective of the gathering: to examine the impact of law and its profound effects on African American life, work, and learning. We hold in highest regard the many honorable men and women award winners and other participants alike who have deliberated with us each year. We offer sincere thanks to the steadfast men and women of the Woods Conference Planning Committee for their great effort

and care in implementing each of these gatherings. We appreciate anew the Woods family for their yearly presence, their warmth, and their generosity. We contemplate the futures of the young lawyers whom this conference has touched as they step into their places in the profession, and we thank all those alumni who return to take part in the conference every spring.

Thus, as we look back upon the last ten years and all that has made this conference an unqualified success, we hope—we believe—that we continue to honor the pride of place and accomplishment that its namesake—the Honorable Sylvania Webb Woods—conveyed to us in our brief and remarkable meeting of ten years ago. We were, and are, no less proud to claim him as one of our own.



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