



UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
300 Fannin Street, Suite 5226
Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3074
February 25, 2019

CARL E. STEWART
CHIEF JUDGE

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Dear Members of the AASLH Awards Review Committee:

I write to recommend the Summer 2018 “African-American Judges” issue of the *Journal of the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society* for the AASLH “Excellence in History” Award.

During the summer of 2018, I was invited by retired Texas Supreme Court Justice Dale Wainwright to give the keynote address for the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society’s annual John Hemphill Dinner, held September 7, 2018, in Austin, Texas. Justice Wainwright was the current president of the Historical Society and he graciously shared helpful background information with me about the Society’s origin and projects that it had engaged in over the years. Among many materials that I reviewed in order to prepare myself for the keynote address was a special issue of the *Journal of the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society* that was dedicated to African-American judges who had served in Texas.

When I gave the keynote address at the Dinner, I commented on the importance of this special issue and its presentation of powerful narratives about African-American jurists in Texas. I stated that these jurists’ narratives “not only will inspire lawyers and judges throughout the Texas bar, but will also serve as a catalyst for broader, deeper research and preservation of valued artifacts and records of heroes known and unknown.” I can personally attest to the value of this issue. As the Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit—which includes Texas—I have served and interacted with many Texas judges, some who are profiled. However, there were many more that I never had the opportunity with which to interact, and the Journal’s presentation of their stories inspired me. I was able to gain an understanding of the path these judges took to the bench and an appreciation for who these judges were beyond the bench. As an African-American judge, I could personally identify with the historical context presented within this special issue as well as the “first and only” anecdotes that were poignantly chronicled by several of the judges. My historical perspective about the Texas judiciary was broadened by each profile presented in this special issue.

The Texas Supreme Court Historical Society Journal’s thoughtful, detailed work shed light on the narratives of those African-American stalwarts in the Texas judiciary whose lives may have not been widely chronicled in other historical writings. I applaud the Journal’s approach to telling these judges’ stories, choosing to not merely recite their biographies, but instead choosing to solicit stories from people who were impacted by these jurists. I gained great wisdom from the special

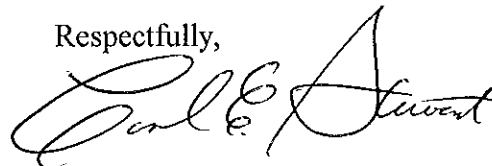
issue, and by sharing this issue with a national audience, I am sure that others will be able to receive the same. These judges were proverbial giants in their communities, paving the way for a brighter tomorrow. The Summer 2018 issue will have a generational impact because the profiles of African-American judges from different levels of the judiciary are now a part of the historical record.

The vast majority of judges in America are located on state and municipal benches and their impact is usually localized to the communities in which they serve. Given the localized impact of these judges, they are less likely to be the subject of national publicity. These judges' legacies sometimes languish in obscurity, not because their legacies are not monumental, but for the simple fact that their stories have not been told. Historical contributions such as the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society's Summer 2018 Journal issue are important avenues for telling these previously untold or rarely told stories. States across this nation should endeavor to research the "hidden figures" in their own communities, using the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society Journal's Summer 2018 issue as an exemplary model of how to accomplish this task. It is important to bring awareness to the stories of those hidden figures in communities around this nation. Their stories are a part of the fabric of our society.

There is an old church hymn that states that "we will tell the story of how we have overcome; for we will understand it better by and by." I believe that by telling stories about the various African-American judges in Texas and how they overcame extraordinary hardship to become judges, the Texas legal community has gained a better understanding of the contributions of these great jurists. Additionally, it gives hope to young African-American lawyers who do not see themselves proportionally represented in the legal community or on the bench. It provides them with a glimpse of what they could achieve one day, it gives them something to aspire to, and it offers them the opportunity to carry forward the baton for justice.

As a society, we must be careful not to relegate history to only specific moments, and we must be conscientious in our efforts to give fuller context to the struggles that people faced and how they overcame them to add value to society. I am grateful for the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society's efforts in telling the stories of African-American judges in Texas. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts and for considering the *Journal of the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society's* Summer 2018 "African-American Judges" issue for the AASLH "Excellence in History" Award.

Respectfully,



Carl E. Stewart
Chief Judge

Honorable Carl E. Stewart. Chief Judge Stewart received his B.A. degree (Magna Cum Laude) from Dillard University in 1971 and his J.D. from Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans in 1974. Immediately following admission to the Louisiana Bar Association in October 1974, he entered the United States Army and served as a Captain in the Judge Advocate General Corps until October 1977. Following his service as a military lawyer, he has served as a Staff Attorney with the Louisiana Attorney General's Office, Assistant United States Attorney, Special Assistant City and District Attorney, and private practitioner. In 1985, he was elected as a District Judge for the First Judicial District Court of Caddo Parish, Louisiana and was reelected without opposition six years later. In 1991, again without opposition, he was elected to the Louisiana Second Circuit Court of Appeal. On May 9, 1994, he was appointed by President William J. Clinton to the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals which encompasses Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana and is located in New Orleans. On October 1, 2012, Chief Judge Stewart became the first African-American Chief Judge on the Fifth Circuit. His resident chambers is located in Shreveport.

He is a charter member of the Harry V. Booth and Judge Henry A. Politz Chapter of American Inns of Court in Shreveport. He is immediate past President of the American Inns of Court Foundation Board of Trustees. He is a member of the American, National, Federal, Louisiana and Shreveport bar associations, and the Federal Judges Association. Chief Judge Stewart is a member of the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation, the Louisiana Bar Foundation, the National Bar Association Judicial Council and the Just the Beginning Foundation of African-American Federal Judges. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States. He is a past chairman of the Advisory Committee on the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure of the Judicial Conference of the United States.

Chief Judge Stewart serves on the Dillard University New Orleans, Louisiana Board of Trustees. He is a past President of the Community Foundation of Shreveport-Bossier, and past board of trustee member of Centenary College of Louisiana, Shreveport. He holds honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from Centenary College of Louisiana, Mississippi College School of Law, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, and Suffolk University Law School. He is an Honorary Master of the Bench, Middle Temple Inn of Court, London, England.

He has served in several capacities with the Boy Scouts of America Norwela Council, the Southern Region, as well as the National Boy Scouts of America. He is the recipient of the Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope, and Silver Buffalo Awards for volunteer services to scouting at the local, regional and national levels.

Publications authored by Chief Judge Stewart include: "Diversity Jurisdiction: A Storied Past, A Flexible Future," 2017 Ainsworth Memorial Lecture, LOYOLA LAW REVIEW, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, 63 Loy. L. Rev. 207 (2017); "Abuse of Power & Judicial Misconduct: A Reflection on Contemporary Ethical Issues Facing Judges," THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS LAW JOURNAL, The University of St. Thomas School of Law, 2003; "Balancing Professionalism, Ethics, Quality of Life and the Successful Practice of Law," THE SOUTHWESTERN LEGAL FOUNDATION, PROCEEDINGS OF THE FORTY-FIFTH ANNUAL INSTITUTE ON LABOR LAW DEVELOPMENTS, 1999; and "Contemporary Challenges to Judicial Independence," LOYOLA LAW REVIEW, Loyola University School of Law, 1997.

(7/9/2018)