



Stephan P. Mickle, Sr

June 18, 1944 - January 26, 2021

When Stephan P. Mickle was born in New York City on June 18, 1944, it would have been hard to accurately foretell the course of his life's journey. After his formative years in Daytona Beach, Florida and Camden, South Carolina, Stephan moved with his parents to Gainesville, Florida, a city that he would call home for the rest of his life. After graduating from Lincoln High School in 1961, he attended Bethune Cookman College for one year, and subsequently transferred to the University of Florida (UF). In 1962, he, along with six other African American students, integrated UF. Stephan became the first African American to obtain an undergraduate degree at UF in 1965 and continued his studies to earn a master's degree at UF. Following his graduate school studies, Stephan taught high school for a year, then entered the UF College of Law. While in law school he met and married his wife, Evelyn Moore, and became the second African American to earn a law degree in 1970, making him a triple Gator.

Upon earning the Juris Doctor degree, Stephan worked in the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C., and later joined the Law Offices of W. George Allen in Fort Lauderdale, FL. He returned to Gainesville in 1972. He served as a professor of law at the University of Florida, a position that he held for several decades until he became Professor Emeritus. In 1973, he also established a successful law practice, becoming the first African American to practice law in the history of Alachua County, Florida since Reconstruction.

In 1979, Stephan Mickle became Alachua County's First African American County Court Judge. He served in this position until he was appointed in 1984 as the first African American Circuit Court Judge in the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Florida. In 1993, he was appointed as the first African American and only lawyer from the Eighth Judicial Circuit to serve on the First District Court of Appeal in Tallahassee, Florida. While serving on the First District Court of Appeal, he also was an adjunct professor at the Florida State University College of Law from 1994 through 1997. In 1998, he was nominated by President Bill Clinton and confirmed by the United States Senate as the first African American United States District Court Judge in the history of the United States Northern District of Florida. In 2009, he became the Chief Judge of the United States Northern District of Florida.

Dedicated to the University of Florida and his community, Judge Mickle gave back in many ways. He was a founding member of the Association of Black Alumni and served as the ABA's first president. He served on the University of Florida National Alumni Association Board of Directors, and on the University of Florida College of Law Board of Trustees, Law Center Association. He was a dedicated lifetime member of Mount Carmel Baptist Church where he chaired the Board of Trustees, taught Sunday School, and served with the Men's and Marriage Ministries. He was a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and the NAACP.

Judge Mickle was an active member of the bar and judiciary and held many leadership roles. He served as Chairman of the Eighth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee, and he was a board member for the Conference of County Court Judges of Florida and The Florida Bar Association Young Lawyers Section, Board of Governors. He was the former president of the U.S. District Judges Association of the Eleventh Circuit.

He was a member of numerous organizations including the American Judicature Society, James C. Adkins American Inns of Court, the American Law Institute, the Federal Bar Association, the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association, the Florida Bar Association, National Bar Association, the

American Bar Association, Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association, and Florida Association of Women Lawyers.

Many of the accomplishments of Judge Mickle are further exhibited by the numerous awards, recognitions, and commendations he received, to include: the Conference of County Court Judges' Distinguished Leadership Award; the National Bar Association's Heman Sweatt Award to recognize legal pioneers and their commitment to civil rights; the University of Florida Black Alumni Association's "Man of the Year Award"; National Bar Association, Virgil Hawkins Chapter, Outstanding and Exemplary Commitment Award; a Proclamation of "S.P. Mickle Day," from the City of Gainesville; Lincoln High School Alumni Association's Hall of Fame Award; and he was the first African American to receive the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Florida. In addition, Judge Mickle was a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, an honorary member of Florida Blue Key, and a 1974 graduate of Leadership Gainesville.

Beyond his many academic and professional accomplishments, Judge Mickle was proudest to be the husband to his beloved wife of fifty-two years, Evelyn Moore Mickle; father to their three children, Stephanie, Amy Grace and Stephan, II, and a nephew/son, Cotie W. Jones; and grandfather to five grandchildren, Gabrielle, Stephan III, Jaelin, Courtney and CJ. He also leaves to cherish his memory, his mother; Catherine B. Mickle; brothers, Darryl Mickle and Jeffery Mickle (Rhonda); sister-in-laws, Ethel Brown, Veronica Campbell and Yolanda Mickle, brother-in-laws, Calvin Moore, Earnest Moore and James Moore and a host of extended family, friends, community, judicial and legal colleagues. He was preceded in death by his father, Andrew R. Mickle; mother; Grace Ellis Mickle; brother, Andrew L. Mickle, and grandparents, Willis and Grace Belton Mickle.

Tribute Wall

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“ Judge Stephan Mickle and his wife , Evelyn, and their children became our instant family when Anthony and I moved to Gainesville in 1987. Anthony was taking his first teaching position as a Professor of Law at the University of Florida Law School and I was about to deliver Brian, the first of our four sons. We asked Stephan and Evelyn to be Brian's Godparents and they poured their love on Brian and our entire family. We are forever grateful to Stephan for his wise counsel. He led with such a calm demeanor and honesty. He adored and cherished his devoted wife, Evelyn. He appreciated her and knew that she was an anointed woman of God. Stephan touched our lives in profound ways that will continue to sustain us. We will miss seeing your face and hearing your opinions and sharing a good meal with you, Stephan. You have run the race and fought the good fight. Take your rest and keep watch over us, until we meet again. Traci, Anthony and Brian Cook

Traci Patterson Cook - February 13, 2021 at 12:00 AM

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“ I met him because his daughter is my good friend and he was always poised calm and articulate. I went to a judges convention with the family and it was amazing to see how respectable and how well put together he was at all times and was a kind and fun person full of smiles. It was an honor and a pleasure to meet Judge Mickle and his lovely family. I salute you sir and may you rest in heaven and sleep in peace. Blessings to your family and may God protect them through this tremendous loss of such an amazing soul. Thank you so much for showing the world that color should never be a barrier for success and despite obstacles we as a people can succeed if we if we persevere. I was inspired and honored to be in your presence and I appreciate the kindness of you and your loving family. We honor you and all that you have done to make a difference.

Rest peacefully,

Carrie Yates

carrie y - February 10, 2021 at 12:00 AM