

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2021

FOUNDATION CREATED TO CONTINUE LOUISIANA LEGAL LEGEND'S LEGACY

On the anniversary of what would have been his 97th birthday, the Family & Friends of the late Dr. Jesse N. Stone, Jr., proudly announce the organization of the Jesse N. Stone, Jr. Foundation. Created to continue the Legacy of "Louisiana's Bridgebuilder," The Jesse N. Stone, Jr. Foundation will concentrate on diversifying the legal profession and promoting Social Justice. The Board of Directors will work to create pipeline programs in local schools that identify and nurture the next generation of attorneys. These programs will serve to encourage and develop young people as early as elementary school, providing mentoring, job shadowing, and other leadership opportunities with local legal professionals that will extend to and through their admission to law school.

"My father believed in the law as a means to ensure justice for all. He also committed himself to opening the doors of the legal profession to as diverse a community as possible. He believed that a sound legal education and a diverse profession would hasten the day where 'Justice for All' would certainly prevail," said the Honorable Judge Shonda D. Stone, Louisiana Second Circuit Court of Appeal.

The Foundation will seek to develop resources through both human capital and fundraising efforts to support its program of work. Although headquartered in Shreveport, the Foundation plans to have a statewide focus, in testament to Dr. Stone's work throughout the state and country.

Dr. Jesse N. Stone, Jr. lived a remarkable life, having been part of the first graduating class of the Southern University Law Center in 1950 and later rising to the Presidency of the Southern University System in 1974. Prior to his service as President of the Southern University System, Dr. Stone served as Dean of the Law Center and Assistant Superintendent of Education for the State of Louisiana. During the early days in his storied legal career, Dr. Stone usually was the first and only attorney of color practicing before the bar in many of the courthouses throughout North Louisiana. Dr. Stone was also known as a brilliant trial attorney who often found himself in cases where the entire local bar association would sign on as opposing co-counsel.

Beyond his contributions as an Educator and Trial Attorney, Dr. Stone was the first African-American to serve as Justice on the Louisiana State Supreme Court. This trailblazer never forgot his humble roots and extended himself to many young lawyers and aspiring political figures. He was well known for offering sage advice and wise counsel to the women and men whom he believed would go forth and change our state, nation, and world.

For more information on the Jesse N. Stone Jr. Foundation, please email: jnstonejrfoundation@gmail.com