

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

A son of Georgia, you grew up in segregated Atlanta during the 1950s. After graduating with honors from David T. Howard High School, you continued your education at DePauw University, and in 1960, you earned a law degree at Howard University.

You then returned to Atlanta to join the law office of Donald L. Hollowell, considered by many as Georgia's chief civil rights attorney. While you were there, the firm sued the University of Georgia for racial discrimination in its admission policies. That suit ended in 1961 with a federal court order demanding the admission of two African Americans, Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton E. Holmes. In an act of courage, you personally escorted the two past a group of angry white protesters to the registrar's office.

You have been a trusted presidential adviser, chairing the Clinton Presidential Transition Team in 1992. But that was by no means your only presidential appointment. You have also served on the President's Advisory Committee for the Points of Light Initiative Foundation, the Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on South Africa, the Advisory Council on Social Security, the Presidential Clemency Board, the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, and the Council of the White House Conference "To Fulfill These Rights."

Since 2000, you have turned your considerable talent to the financial advisory and asset management firm Lazard Frères in New York, where you are a senior managing director and work with a wide variety of industries. You also continue to serve as senior counsel with the law firm of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, where you were senior executive partner.

Other positions you have held during your career include president and chief executive officer of the National Urban League, executive director of the United Negro College Fund, director of the Voter Education Project of the Southern Regional Council, attorney-consultant for the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, and Georgia field director for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

You are a member of the bars of Arkansas, the District of Columbia, and Georgia, as well as the U.S. Supreme Court. Your professional memberships include the American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, and the Council on Foreign Relations. Businesses and organizations that have tapped your expertise for their boards include American Express, Howard University, the Institute of International Education, the Xerox Corporation, and the International Advisory Board of Barrick Gold. You also are engaged in civic and community programs, including your role as former president of The Economic Club of Washington, D.C.

In 2001, the NAACP awarded you with The Spingarn Medal, the highest honor it bestows each year, for your achievements as a lawyer, adviser to presidents, and champion of human and civil rights. You are also the author of two books: *Vernon Can Read!: A Memoir* and *Make It Plain: Standing Up and Speaking Out*.

For your lifetime of leadership, your willingness to "stand up and speak out," and your exemplary career, I have the honor of presenting you, Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., for the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

James F. Jones, Jr.
President and Trinity College
Professor in the Humanities

Paul E. Raether '68
Chairman
Trinity College Board of Trustees