

*Presentation of Distinguished Service Award to*

# Professor James E. Jones, Jr. ('56)

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BY HAROLD JORDAN  
(77)

The purpose of the University of Wisconsin according to the faculty mission statement "is to provide an environment in which faculty and students can discover, examine critically, preserve, and transmit knowledge, wisdom, and values that will help ensure the survival of the present and future generations with improvement in the quality of life.

I have the distinct privilege tonight to present the *Distinguished Service Award* to Professor James E. Jones, Jr., the embodiment of its mission, and a true son of this institution.

Professor Jones was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1924. After serving in the Navy during World War II, he matriculated at Lincoln University and in 1950 graduated *Magna Cum Laude*. He then attended the University of Illinois, where in 1951, he was awarded a Masters Degree from the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Upon leaving the University of Illinois, Professor Jones began a career in labor relations that has spanned five decades. He took a job as an Industrial Relations Analyst at the U.S. Wage Stabilization Board for Region Seven, where he worked between 1951 and 1953.

Leaving the Stabilization Board in 1953, Jim continued his slow academic trek northward which finally brought him to



*Harold Jordan (l) with Professor Jones (r).*

Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin Law School. During his years as a law student, Jim distinguished himself and was the first black student selected to serve on the *Law Review*.

After graduating from the law school, Jim, impelled by his personal love and interest, continued to pursue the practice of labor law. That interest led him to the *puzzle palace* on the Potomac that I call my home, Washington D.C.. He took a job as Legislative Attorney for the U.S. Department of Labor in 1956 and served in that position until 1963, interrupted briefly in 1958 to serve on the Research staff of the Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers of the AFL-CIO.

During his service as Legislative Attor-

ney, Jim had the good fortune, or the misfortune, to have been given the task of drafting the regulations concerning affirmative action goals and timetables. He has been dealing with that issue in one way or another ever since.

In 1963, Jim was tapped to serve as Counsel for Labor Relations for the Department of Labor. He continued his rise in status at the Labor Department, and in 1966, was named the Director of the Office of Labor Management Policy Development. In 1967, Lyndon Johnson named him Associate Solicitor of Labor in the Division of Labor Relations and Civil Rights.

In 1969, Washington got Richard Milhouse Nixon, and the University of Wisconsin Law School got James Earl Jones, Jr. In my totally unbiased opinion, Wisconsin got the far better deal.

Jim has served this institution in a great number of ways since joining the faculties of the Law School and the Industrial Relations Research Institute. Although the list of all of his contributions are too numerous to mention tonight, a few are particularly notable.

In the area of University governance, Jim served on the Presidential Search and Screening Committee in 1979 and the Search Committee for the Vice Chancellor for Executive and Legal Counsel. He served eleven years in the University Sen-

ate, and over twenty years on the Athletic Board. He was the Ombudsman for the UW Police and Security Department and on the Board of Regents Ad Hoc Committee on Minority and Disadvantaged Students. This service was in addition to the yeoman's work that he performed on law school and institute committees.

Inside the law school, Jim served as the Faculty Supervisor of Clinical Legal Education for Labor Law clinicals and Faculty Supervisor for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund Jackson Fellows.

During his tenure, he found time to educate a generation of labor lawyers. Jim, along with Nate Feinsinger, Abner Brody and others, established the University of Wisconsin Law School as an intellectual center for the study of labor law.

Jim has been a much sought-after lecturer around the country and has made significant contributions to literally dozens of conferences and workshops.

In addition, Professor Jones was instrumental in establishing two programs at the Law School which have had a significant effect upon this institution.

First, Professor Jones was the fine hand behind the creation of the Legal Education Opportunities (LEO) program, through which literally hundreds of minority students have become attorneys, myself included.

Second, and not unrelated to the needs created by the first, he conceived the *Hastie Fellowship*, a program which has brought outstanding minority law graduates to the UW Law School to pursue advanced degrees, providing a strong basis from which to pursue careers in teaching. The success of this program is in no small way evidenced by the fact that the first *Hastie Fellow* currently serves as the Dean of this law school. Many others have also gone on to successful academic careers.

Jim is one of the nation's foremost authorities on Affirmative Action. He has a body of work that I would strongly recommend to anyone who has an interest in the subject beyond the sound bites and political posturing. He goes about proving something that we all know but sometimes do not want to acknowledge, and that is that for every complex problem, there is a simple solution that is usually wrong. Jim, through his scholarly work,

has been able to make the intellectual case for affirmative action. His work should be instructive to those out there who do not yet realize that the plural of anecdote is not data.

Jim has served the public beyond the confines of the academy. In Madison, he has served on the School District Affirmative Action Advisory Committee and the Police and Fire Commission, two years as President.

At the state level, he has served on the Manpower Planning Council, the Governor's Task Force on Comparable Worth and the Wisconsin Federal Nominating Commission.

Nationally, Jim has served as a member of the Public Review Board International Union, of the United Auto Workers, the National Advisory Board of the IR Law Journal, and as a member of the Advisory Committee of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Science. He has served as a member of the Fact Finding Panel, National Mailhandlers and U.S. Postal Service Dispute in 1984. And, Jim has been a member of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Arbitration Panel since 1973. Under the Carter administration, he was a consultant to the President's Reorganization Task Force on Civil Rights. The list of his service activities goes on, but from this short list, you can get a taste for the breadth of Jim's contributions to society.

He has received numerous awards for his teaching, including the UW-LEO Students Professor of the Year Award in 1986. The Hilldale Award for 199-91, as the outstanding professor in the Social Science Division of the University and the C. Clyde Ferguson Award, of the AALS Minority Section as the teacher of the year for 1993, were also granted to him.

I never took a course from Professor Jones because I never had an interest in labor law. And now that I own businesses with several hundred employees, I have even less interest in labor law. No, his impact on me was similar to that which he had on many students, both black and white, but especially black. He served as a role model, a cheerleader and a hard taskmaster.

The word among the black law students of my day was that Professor Jones

was extremely demanding of black students, and some suggested that perhaps he was unnecessarily harsh. But Jim's form of tough love conveyed to us, regardless of whether we acknowledged it or not, that he expected a lot of us and from us. He conveyed to us his belief that we were capable of fulfilling his expectations.

I always thought that I was something of a disappointment to Jim because I never really showed the intellectual interest in the law that he thought I was capable of. I insisted on treating law school like a trade school. He would always talk to me about putting on the hair shirt, and I would talk to him about almost anything else. Yet his persistence was not totally lost on me, and although I never pursued an academic life, I still measure many of my successes in light of the high standards that he always urged.

When I measure my accomplishments by his standards, I usually come up wanting. However, on the rare occasion when I think I have fulfilled some of the promise he saw in me, I, like so many of my contemporaries, give Jim a call and without saying so directly, say thank you for believing in us. And, thanks for being the role model that you have been.

Moreover, Jim, you have always fought the good fight, whether it be against racism, sexism, homophobia or any other manifestation of ignorance. You have been a tireless worker for labor justice, civil rights and human rights.

If someone were to ask me how I, and many others, are able to stand chest deep in the metaphorical troubled waters caused by the current rising tide of small minded, and mean-spirited policies and actions. I would have to answer that the waters are not too deep because I am standing on the shoulders of Jim Jones.

So, as a representative of the Alumni of the University of Wisconsin Law School, I present to you, Professor James E. Jones, Jr., the 1995 *Distinguished Service Award* as a partial recognition of a life of service to this institution, which I know you love, and in anticipation of many more years of service.