

In Memoriam



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose commitment and dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was **The Honorable Judge Donald F. Castor**, one of Tampa's most beloved citizens and well respected Jurist, who passed away on Tuesday, April 9, 2013, at age 81; and

WHEREAS, born on July 15, 1931, Judge Castor grew up in the Seminole Heights neighborhood of Tampa, Florida, and attended Hillsborough High School and as a popular and active student, was involved in student government, elected President of the Student Council and served as International Vice President of the Key Club. He thereafter received his Bachelor's degree from Duke University in 1953, earned his Law Degree from Stetson University College of Law in St. Petersburg, Florida, and later attended the School for Advanced International Studies at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Judge Castor began his stellar law career in Dade County, Florida, serving as an Assistant State Attorney, and then as Assistant Director of the Legal Services Program, which led him to his passion of wanting to provide legal services for those that could not afford it. He returned to Tampa in 1967 and established Bay Area Legal Services, serving as its first Executive Director. The non-profit legal organization began modestly with a staff of four attorneys on a shoestring budget, and due to Judge Castor's vision and dedication, today it has more than 100 attorneys, paralegals, and support staff with offices throughout the Tampa Bay area. In recognition of his contributions to the organization, the Judge Don Castor Community Law Center was named in his honor and in 2009, the prestigious Judge Don Castor Award was established and is awarded annually to honor an outstanding donor who has shown access to justice, leadership, advocacy, commitment, compassion, dedication and service to the community, all attributes demonstrated by Judge Castor over his lifetime; and

WHEREAS, after practicing law with the Albritton, Sessum and Ryder firm, and a career in private practice, he was appointed to the Hillsborough County Courthouse bench by Governor Reubin Askew in 1976 and served as Judge for two decades before his retirement in 1997, and Judge Castor earned the reputation as a fair and impartial jurist who ran his courtroom with compassion and integrity. He pioneered the concept of community service in lieu of jail time for non-violent offenders, and he was proud of the difference this made in people's lives; and

WHEREAS, Judge Castor loved the Tampa community he called home and actively supported it through many avenues including the Spring of Tampa Bay, Boys and Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay, and he maintained his support of legal services for those less fortunate throughout his lifetime, and among his well-deserved recognitions, the Hillsborough County Bar Association recently honored him with its Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to the judicial system and the community; and

WHEREAS, Judge Don Castor was a man of great warmth and sincerity who cared deeply for his fellow citizens, truly interested in and about them, and he was committed to the legal profession and advocate for equality and fairness, and although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, his legacy will continue to live on through the improvements he brought to our community and in all those whose lives he has touched; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by the virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to The Honorable Judge Donald F. Castor Family, his wife Mickey, his son Frank, daughters Kathy and Karen, Grandchildren and other family members, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their cherished memories and the impact of his life on our community.

Dated this 12th day of April, 2013.

Bob Buckhorn

Mayor

