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D.C. judges, attorneys gather to celebrate ‘living legends’ in law, business



D. C. Courts Security Specialist Sgt. Hubert T. Jones, left, long-time defense attorney John McDaniel, Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric T. Washington, local hatmaker and entrepreneur Vanilla P. Beane and Tuskegee Airman Lt. Col. Robert J. Friend. (Keith L. Alexander/The Washington Post)

By [Keith L. Alexander](#) February 3 at 6:17 PM

D.C. court judges, attorneys and personnel and staff gathered Wednesday in the D.C. Court of Appeals to celebrate four “living legends” who combined have more than 300 years in law, aviation and business, as part of the court’s Black History Month celebration.

Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric T. Washington helped celebrate longtime D.C. defense attorney, 95-year-old John McDaniel. McDaniel who since becoming an attorney in 1955, still wears a suit and tie and reports to his office in D.C. Superior Court each day; original Tuskegee Airman Lt. Col. Robert J. Friend, 95; D.C. Courts Security Specialist Sgt. Hubert T. Jones, 75; and local entrepreneur and hatmaker Vanilla P. Beane, 96, owner of Bene Millinery and Bridal Supplies in Northwest Washington. Beane has been making ladies’ hats in Washington since 1956 and several of her creations will be on display at the new Smithsonian Museum when it opens in September.

During the hour-long celebration, Washington called the four “black pioneers” in their respective fields who each continues to work in those fields.