

Founding Member Arthur Pulley Honored at NYC Reception



On February 2, 2012, the Church of the Covenant in New York City was brimming with pride, history and love as Attorney Arthur Pulley and Mrs. Bernice Cosey Pulley shared reflections from their relentless commitment to justice! During the day-long program, “We The People Speak”, guests were invited to share the essence of their participation in the struggle for equality and justice. We were also shared a delicious luncheon catered by Spoonbread and Strawberries.

Attorney Pulley who looked dapper in his white tuxedo, was one of the founding members of the Westchester Black Bar Association. During his congratulatory remarks, WBBA member Larry Skyes recalled the evening when Pulley, Leroy Wilson, Gary Cooper and Hawthorn Harris “created” the Westchester Black Bar! Gail Wright Sirmans, who was instrumental in sharing the invitation to this special event, saluted the Pulley’s and delivered greetings on behalf of the Westchester Black Bar Association, as well as the New York State Bar Association. With warm enthusiasm, Gail shared her respect for Attorney Pulley, who at 90 plus is the oldest living Black graduate of Yale Law School, and for Mrs. Pulley, who is a revered member of the United Nations international community where she is noted for her outstanding historical memory.

Attorney Pulley reminisced about his years at Yale and his good fortune to meet Bernice Cosey sixty years ago - on groundhog day! Mrs. Pulley, who was attending Yale Divinity School when she met Attorney Pulley, became the second Black woman to graduate from YDS. Political activist Cora Weiss, recalled that her husband Peter and Arthur were law school classmates. In toasting the Pulleys, she gave the recipe for a successful marriage - peace and justice, along with a few other ingredients. Ms. Pulley shared her remembrances of civil right crusaders and urged all of us to continue to remain vigilant and to demand justice! She is profoundly troubled by alarming rates of incarceration of Black men, and recommended that we read Michele Alexander’s book, “The New Jim Crow” .

Actor and director Winston Jones read vibrant lines from the poetry of Langston Hughes and set the tone for the afternoon. The noted civil rights activist and Birmingham native, Reverend C. Hubert Oliver told the story of his valiant efforts during the sixties to expose the racist tactics perpetrated by the police in Birmingham to the international world. Humanist Chaplin, Beth Lamont described her battle to end police brutality in the United States and the world. Other guests included: journalist Joy Elliott, formerly with Reuters where she provided news from and about the African Diaspora, and Westchester Black Women Political Caucus leader Joann Robinson. The spirited room was filled with colleagues, friends and family members who saluted, blessed, honored, and congratulated the Pulley’s for all that they have done for all of us during their passionate and powerful crusade for justice and equality.

Submitted By ~
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WBBA Member