

Our Mission Statement

The continual unification of as many organizations as possible starting at the local level and branching out to both the state of North Carolina and then the entire nation.

Spotlight

Harvey Bernard Gantt

Pioneering Leadership



(born January 14, 1943)

By

DonnaMarie Woodson

The **“Paint the Town Sapphire Jazzy Gala 2019”** Benefit on Saturday, October 26th at the Harvey B. Gantt Center will mark the 10-

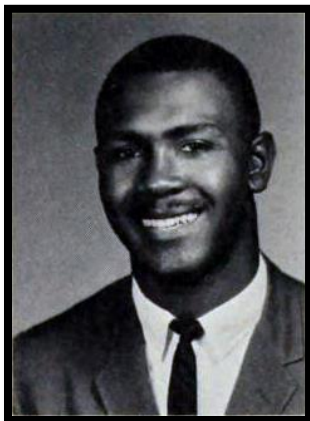


year Anniversary of the former Afro-American Cultural Center opening its doors to a new, award-winning facility that was renamed the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American

Arts + Culture in honor of this pioneer and innovator.

Cool coincidence, my maiden name is Gantt, so even though I don't know him, I claim Harvey Gantt as family. When relocating to Charlotte in 2009 and learning his legacy, I couldn't believe it. Gantt with a double T is rare and even though I haven't checked with Ancestry.com, he could be a relative? 🤔

Mr. Gantt charted his own destiny. Born in Charleston, South Carolina to Wilhelminia and Christopher C. Gantt, a shipyard worker, his civil



Harvey B. Gantt

rights activism began in high school. Growing up in the 1940s and 50s in then-segregated Charleston, South Carolina, he went on to study architecture at Iowa State University and in January 1963, after a legal battle that escalated to the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, Gantt became the first African-American student accepted at Clemson University.

Graduating with honors from Clemson in 1965, he earned a bachelor's degree in Architecture and later a Master of City Planning from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

After graduating from MIT Gantt relocated to Charlotte and in 1971, co-founded Gantt Huberman Architects. A pioneer in blending urban planning with the practice of architecture, Gantt Huberman employed a diverse group of professionals who were charged with designing buildings that encourage community.

As a result, the firm has developed some of the city's most iconic landmarks, including the Charlotte Transportation Center, TransAmerica Square, ImaginOn, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, and the Johnson C. Smith University Science Center.

Gantt's innovation and vision of community in the city extends beyond mortar and stone. He remained true to his activism joining Charlotte City Council in 1974 and again broke barriers when he was elected Charlotte's first African-American mayor in 1983. Remaining in office for two terms, Gantt stood shoulder-to-shoulder with other Charlotte leaders committed to establishing a *New South City*.

Harvey Gantt continues to advocate for equity and equal rights and serve on civic, cultural, and business boards, leading philanthropic efforts and community initiatives.

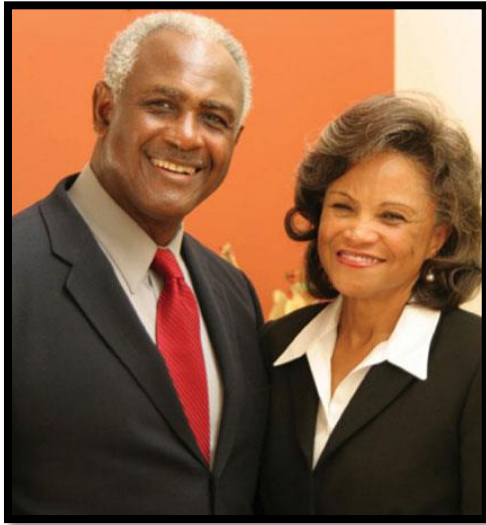


Harvey B. Gantt Center

When the idea was proposed to rename the Afro-American Cultural Center in honor of Mr. Gantt his initial response was "Being a man of tradition, I always felt it was more appropriate to name a building or street

for someone after their passing, as a way to honor their work."

But, after some persuading from Board Chair Earl Leake and others, he embraced the idea saying “After much processing and discussion with my wife, Cindy, the prevailing factor that led me to say “yes” was that it was for the sake of posterity. I envisioned walking into the building with my grandchildren and had thoughts of others doing the



Harvey and Lucinda (Cindy) Gantt

same with future generations.

I saw them talking about the sacrifices of many who made Charlotte great, and the enormous history and accomplishments of the African American community. And I remembered my parents and others who served as inspirations to me. I am forever grateful to them for being the driving force and motivation in my life.”

In 2016, PBS Charlotte and UNC-TV featured Gantt in their online series, [Biographical Conversations](#). In this series, Gantt recalls his life experiences, ranging from his attendance at Clemson University to his inauguration as Mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Gantt and his wife Lucinda (Brawley) Gantt, the second black student to attend Clemson, have four children: Sonja, Erika, Angela and Adam. Their daughter, Sonja Gantt, is a former news anchor at WCNC-TV in Charlotte.

Harvey B. Gantt reflects: *“Charlotte is a great community and the Carolinas are a great region. I call this home because the city and community represent all that is symbolic to steadfastness and a “can do” attitude.*



While our nation and world still struggle with acknowledging and appreciating our differences, the Gantt Center can serve as a vehicle for people to come celebrate African American art, history and culture. Residents and visiting friends alike will have numerous opportunities to enjoy all aspects of Levine Center for the Arts.

The Gantt Center will serve as one of the entry points to experience the arts, sporting events and many other amenities that Charlotte has to offer.”

Works Cited:

<https://ganttcenter.org/about-the-center/about-harvey-gantt/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvey_Gantt

Editorial

Charisma and the Loyalty It inspires

By

Tarik Kiley

September 25, 2019



Charisma has often played a large role in the leaders whom we follow. Often times, charisma allows one person to control a multitude of others. How is it that some people develop the ability to influence others so greatly? This is a

question which charismatic leaders may be more readily able to answer. Charismatic persons are able to manipulate others on a different level.

Adolf Hitler, a person who used charisma for evil, was actually laughed at before he was able to manifest his racist vision. In this way, Adolf Hitler was able to manipulate others perceptions of him over time. But mainly, charismatic leaders are able to inspire the people.

This inspiration can turn deadly as the multitude turns towards blind loyalty, though. In these cases, the charismatic leader can become authoritarian.

Often times, charismatic leaders can rise when there is a national



crises. Sometimes, people feel they need a “strong leader” to rescue the state from said crises. Still followers and true believers fail to

recognize it when their freedoms and liberties are being trampled on in the name of security. Consider the idea that Joseph Stalin originally had a very noble vision for the USSR.

So, charisma can be dangerous. Leaders are human beings, and as such are tempted towards corruption just as any other person. It is also hard to stop basking in the adulation which comes with being a “Supreme Leader.” When you are surrounded by persons under your influence it is also difficult for those persons to tell you the truth about yourself. Charisma can lead to authoritarianism, and authoritarianism takes hold when people are no longer able to say, “The emperor has no clothes on.”

What would you do if you were surrounded by thousands of admiring people? Would you be able to check your ego, and thereby check your political power or would you start believing in your own divinity?

Not all charismatic leaders turn to the proverbial “dark side.” Actually, FDR, for example, was able to use his charisma to win WWII and also to be able to further beneficial social programs. It seems that FDR truly cared about the American people, and didn’t seem to want everyone to worship him or express loyalty towards himself, personally. FDR seemed to have an integrity which Adolf Hitler and Stalin didn’t possess.



I think the difference here is also the results which a particular leader produces. A leader can be an inspiring dreamer but if their actions actually bring about a dystopian nightmare, then they have used their charisma for evil and not good. Adolf Hitler practiced genocide, and Stalin destroyed any dissenters. FDR gave us the forty hour work week, eliminated child labor in the USA, introduced social security and also built up the USA’s infrastructure and gave us the minimum wage.

Also, FDR seemed to have no designs on being a supreme leader. FDR was extremely popular as a president and died in office, on the beginning of his fourth term, but it seemed he had no designs to establish a dictatorship in his name. Still, his death did lead to the 22nd amendment, limiting presidents to two terms in office.



Charismatic leaders can often do great things for the public good—as in FDR’s case. But, charisma can also feed a cult of personality and bring about dystopian outcomes, as in the case of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. This is all to make note of the fact that we are at another crossroads in history. When populism rises as it has in recent years, the danger of dictatorship becomes more acute. As people, we have to be careful whom we admire. Blindly applauding a leader can lead to disastrous outcomes. Being under the sway of someone else can be quite dangerous, especially if that person has evil intents, such as genocide, xenophobia, or even rapacious designs to enrich themselves.

Works Cited:

<https://raywilliams.ca/beware-the-dark-side-of-charismatic-leadership/>

<https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=6121609>

[43](#)

Announcements



N. Meck Democrats Monthly Meeting

Thursday, October 3rd at 7:00 PM

Cornelius Town Hall

21445 Catawba Ave.

Cornelius, NC

Queen City Unity presents: The Charlotte UNITE Festival

Saturday, October 5th – 12:00 pm – 8:00 pm

NoDa Brewing Company

2921 N. Tryon St.

Charlotte, NC 28206

Meet the At-Large Candidates

Combined Community Group

Monday, October 7th – 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

2701 Freedom Dr

Charlotte, NC 28208

Announcements



N. Mecklenburg Progressives Dinner

Tuesday, October 8th at 6:30 PM

Famous Toastery

12715 Conner Dr.

Huntersville, NC

(just off Gilead, across the parking lot from Earthfare)

Speaker Cal Cunningham, candidate for U.S. Senate

Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County

October Membership Meeting

Wednesday, October 9th 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Belmont Regional Center

700 Parkwood Ave

Charlotte, NC

"Dem Friends"

Thursday, October 10th at Noon

Asian Buffet & Grill

11032 East Independence Blvd - Matthews, NC 28105

704-246-6962

(Every 2nd Thursday of the month)

Announcements



2019 Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Greater Charlotte

Saturday, October 19th from 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
AvidXchange - 1000 NC Factory Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28206

“Dem Good Time”

Wednesday, October 23rd - 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Hickory Tavern
9010 Harris Corners Pkwy
Charlotte, NC 28269

African American Caucus General Meeting

Thursday, October 24th – 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM
8300 Ikea Blvd
Charlotte, NC



Please submit your group events to donnamarie93@gmail.com by
the 15th of the month for inclusion in the Announcements.

Happenings Gallery!



Presidential Candidate Elizabeth Warren, AAC President Collette Alston



DWMC President Connie Green-Johnson, Presidential Candidate Elizabeth Warren, MCDP Chair Jane Whitley

The Executive Corner:

Executive Director - Jade X. Jackson

Rev Rodney Sadler, Joel Segal, DonnaMarie Woodson

Coalition of United Progressives-CharMeck Chronicle

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