



People

# Giving Sarah Mingo Stevenson her flowers: County commissioners present the trailblazer with a proclamation

Mecklenburg County officials honor the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum co-founder and civil rights activist with "Ms. Sarah Mingo Stevenson Day."



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A day before Congresswoman Alma Adams honored Sarah Mingo Stevenson with a **speech from the House floor**, Mecklenburg County leaders officially recognized the pioneer and civil rights activist for her community impact.

During the Sept. 15 Board of County Commissioners meeting, Chairman George Dunlap presented a proclamation declaring the day as “Ms. Sarah Mingo Stevenson Day” for her 50-plus years of service to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. The group unanimously approved the resolution, with many recalling their connections with Stevenson.

She holds the title of several firsts in Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s history. In 1970, Stevenson became the first Black president of the district’s integrated PTA and was a leader in the push to desegregate Charlotte schools. A decade later, she was elected to the local school board, the first Black woman to serve in the role. She also co-founded the **Tuesday Morning Breakfast forum** in 1980 as a place for Black residents to voice concerns and learn about political and social matters. It became an important stop for anyone wanting to connect with Charlotte’s growing Black community.

“This is a Black woman who struggled years ago during the civil rights

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Sarah Mingo Stevenson. Photo: John D. Simmons | The Charlotte Observer

In addition to the praise, Leake said it saddened her that Stevenson — now almost 95 years old — hadn’t been honored sooner.

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“It’s a long history with that young lady, and I’m sorry that no one recognized her with the service that she has rendered to this community,” said Leake, who confirmed with the county clerk that Stevenson hadn’t previously been honored with a proclamation. [**Note:** In 2017, Gov. Roy Cooper presented her with a **proclamation** on behalf of the state.]

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“I know she is smiling and probably shedding a few tears,” Erwin said.

Tommie Robinson, Stevenson’s friend of nearly 50 years and fellow community activist, said she is one of the strongest women he knows and deserving of the proclamation.

“She never assumed to be a leader, but she was there for the people. It was never about the limelight for her,” the 73-year-old award-winning artist told QCity Metro following the meeting. “I learned from her that if you want to bring about change, you had to work and speak up for it.”



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Janey Tate is QCity Metro’s multitalented writer covering west Charlotte, culture and small business. The Miami native loves Beyoncé, Badu, "Martin" and all things from the Black ‘90s and early 2000s era. Send her news tips to [jtate@qcitymetro.com](mailto:jtate@qcitymetro.com). Follow her on Instagram ([@janeytate704](#)) and Twitter ([@janey\\_tate](#)).

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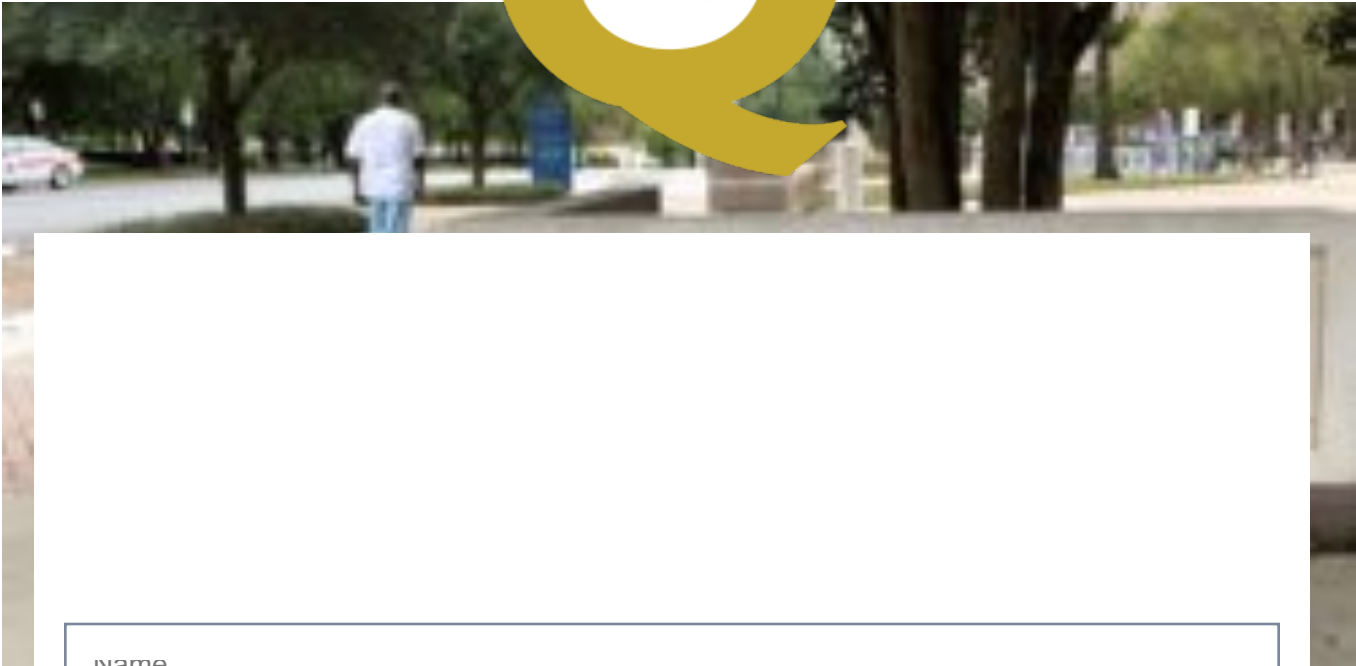
Courtney Waring, a first-grade teacher in Rock Hill Schools, said a heart transplant two and a half years ago saved her life.

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