
THE COALITION OF UNITED PROGRESSIVES CHARMECK CHRONICLE



Greetings!

We truly appreciate everyone's involvement.
This War on Oppression will only be won as one
mass movement.

Sections

- **Spotlight - by DonnaMarie Woodson**
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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

Charlotte's First Black Public Health Nurse



[Thereasea Clark Elder](#)
(September 2, 1927 – January 5, 2021)
By DonnaMarie Woodson

**Thereasea Clark Elder is the namesake for this park in the Rockwell Park community.
(T.ORTEGA GAINES OBSERVER ARCHIVES)**



Thereasea Clark Elder, Charlotte's first Black public health nurse, died at the age of 93 on January 4, 2021 at the age of 93.

In 1962, Thereasea Clark Elder became the first Black nurse to integrate the public health system in Mecklenburg County. She got her training in the US Cadet nursing

program. And, despite facing many obstacles, Elder's nursing career spanned nearly 50 years before she retired in 1989.

Mrs. Elder — best known and revered for her work as a nurse, was born in 1927 in Charlotte, NC. According to a history website from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, Mrs. Elder was raised on Hamilton Street in Charlotte's Greenville neighborhood. She was the sixth child of Booker T. and Odessa Clark. Her father worked as a porter and her mother did domestic work in homes. Elder described her childhood as wonderful, and that her family taught her the value of education and religious faith, which guided her life and career.



From a young age Mrs. Elder knew what she wanted to do, as a result, when she was a student at [West Charlotte High School](#), Mrs. Elder began working with [Charlotte Memorial Hospital](#). Because of segregation, she remained largely behind the scenes and rarely interacted with patients.

Mrs. Elder also devoted herself to community improvement, earning local and state recognition. She was the president of the [Greenville](#)

[Historical Association](#) was an active member of the [National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women](#). She founded the [Charlotte-Mecklenburg Black Historical Society](#) and was on the Board of [Greater Carolinas Chapter of the American Red Cross](#). She was recognized in 2013 by Johnson C. Smith for her work in strengthening the [Rockwell neighborhood](#).

Longtime friend Sally Robinson said Mrs. Elder's passion was history, and Mrs. Elder often called her to discuss new ideas and projects to embark on. "She is probably one of the strongest, most determined and enthusiastic women I've ever known. And I choose those words carefully," Robinson said. "She had a big heart and reached and loved so many people."



[Thereasea Clark Elder](#) (center)

Mrs. Elder's early career began as a nurse at Good Samaritan Hospital, which was segregated and served only Black patients. "Over the course of several years, she attended Johnson C. Smith University, the [U.S. Cadet](#)

[Nursing Program](#) and the [Lincoln Hospital School of Nursing in Durham](#). She also studied pediatrics at [Howard University's Freeman Hospital in Washington, D.C.](#)," the [Observer](#) reported in 2014.

Mrs. Elder graduated from West Charlotte High School during its inaugural year in 1938 and after graduating high school, Elder attended [Johnson C. Smith University](#) for a year but later transferred to [North Carolina Central University](#) to study nursing. Mrs. Elder described her experience in North Carolina Central University as "eye-opening," because the university provided opportunities for students to serve their community.

Mrs. Elder went to work at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Charlotte in 1948. That same year she married Willie Elder, a [World War II](#) veteran who ran a service station. During her time at Good Samaritan Hospital, she completed a certificate program in public health nursing at [the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#).

Working as a public health nurse for Mecklenburg County, she would go into communities and perform health checks or administer prescribed medication. Her success was measured by the decreased numbers of absences in schools and a greater health literacy among the families she was responsible for.

Mecklenburg County tasked Elder with the responsibility of breaking the color barrier in public health service. Along with another African American nurse, she was assigned to predominantly white districts. She experienced skepticism and received disrespectful language. Elder even treated patients in Ku Klux Klan territory within Charlotte.



Thereasea Elder reads posters from The Museum of the New South's "Courage" exhibit, while attending a reception in the UNC Charlotte Center City lobby for the 60-Year Celebration of Brown v. Board of Education: The Impact on Charlotte and the Carolinas on May 12, 2014. The event was sponsored by The Urban Education Collaborative at UNC Charlotte under the direction of Dr. Chance W. Lewis and the College of Education at UNC Charlotte under the direction of Dean Ellen McIntyre. David T. Foster, III
(DTFOSTER@CHARLOTTEOBSERVER.COM)

In 2001, Governor Mike Easley conferred upon her the **Order of the Long-Leaf Pine** for doing "great service to [her] community and the state." The Thereasea Clark Elder Neighborhood Park was created in her honor by the **Charlotte Parks and Rec. Department**.

Mrs. Elder peacefully passed away at home on January 5, 2021. She leaves to cherish her memories, two sons; Carl Elder (Annie), Cedric Elder (Linda); and a host of other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her husband, the late Willie Elder.



(Thereasea Clark Elder – Rockwell Community Leader (Photo: courtesy of Everett Blackmon))

Mayor Vi Lyles tweeted about the passing of her “mentor” calling Mrs. Elder a “*Charlotte icon and legend.*” In response, the SAFE Coalition asked city officials to rename a street after Mrs. Elder, who has had a park on Rockwell Church Road in her name since 2013, after her work improving the neighborhood.

Congresswoman Alma Adams, who represents North Carolina’s 12th District, tweeted that she was saddened by Mrs. Elder’s passing. “*She was a remarkable warrior, and a kind and gentle soul who was relentless in her commitment to serve our community,*” Congresswoman Adams also said. “*I was pleased to have had the opportunity to get to know Mrs. Elder and will truly miss her.*”

Works cited

<https://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/article248316235.html>

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

<https://qcitymetro.com/2021/02/25/joel-odom-the-youngest-person-in-charlottes-2019-mayoral-race-found-dead-in-his-home/>

Editorial

In Support of Raising the Minimum Wage

By

Tarik Kiley

2/28/2021



In 2018, I wrote an editorial called, “What About the Minimum Wage?”. In this article, I talk about how starvation wages under a pure capitalist system make it nearly impossible for workers to afford the goods they produce. And, I make note of

how the cost of living has increased over the years, how some people must work two jobs, and have trouble with spending more than 30% of their income on housing. It seems like the middle class is not what it used to be.

I would like to add that the promise of a college education is not what it used to be, especially with so many being strapped down with student debt, and workers have become more productive through the years with increased technological advancement, but workers’ pay rates have not kept up with their productivity levels. According to the AFL-CIO, “In fact, had the federal minimum wage

kept pace with workers' productivity since 1968 the inflation-adjusted minimum wage would be \$24 an hour."



Raising the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 per hour is part of Biden's ["Build Back Better, plan."](#) But it looks like it may not pass the US Senate. Why is it so controversial to raise the incomes of Americans and lift so many out of

poverty? It may be because the US Senate is mostly, White, and wealthy. It is possible that the make-up of the US Senate does not reflect the political will of Americans.

According to the Guardian, "The irony is that a \$15 minimum wage is hugely popular among Americans of all political persuasions, with two-thirds supporting it, according to a 2019 poll by the Pew Research Center." It also seems to be a partisan issue as well, with Democrats supporting it and Republicans opposing it.

So, then what is the conservative argument against raising the minimum wage? According to the New York Times, "They point to studies that assert mandated wage increases would lead to job losses, small-business closures and higher prices for consumers.

And they make the case that the economic trade-offs are not worth it, saying that more jobs would be lost than the number of people pulled from poverty and that those in states with a lower cost of living — often conservative-leaning states — would bear the brunt of the fallout." There is also the argument that making workers costly would lead to workers being replaced with machines.

While I agree with the argument about automation, I also believe that technological advancement is inevitable and would happen regardless of the level of the minimum wage. The Model T Ford automobile was invented, because of an advancement in society, not necessarily to replace people. Also, as technology advances, it is logical that people in certain jobs will no longer be viable. This means that people will work in the sectors of the economy that either complement or survive technological advancement.

THE TRUTH ABOUT WHO MAKES MINIMUM WAGE:

35 YEARS OLD The average age of minimum wage workers
88% are at least 20 years old and 35.5% are at least 40

56% of minimum wage workers are women

55% of minimum wage workers work full-time

44% have at least some college experience

A woman working full time at minimum wage will earn **\$15,080 annually**.
Nearly **\$4,000** below the poverty line for a mother with 2 kids.

3 OUT OF 5 WORKERS earning minimum wage are employed in service occupations (mostly food preparation)

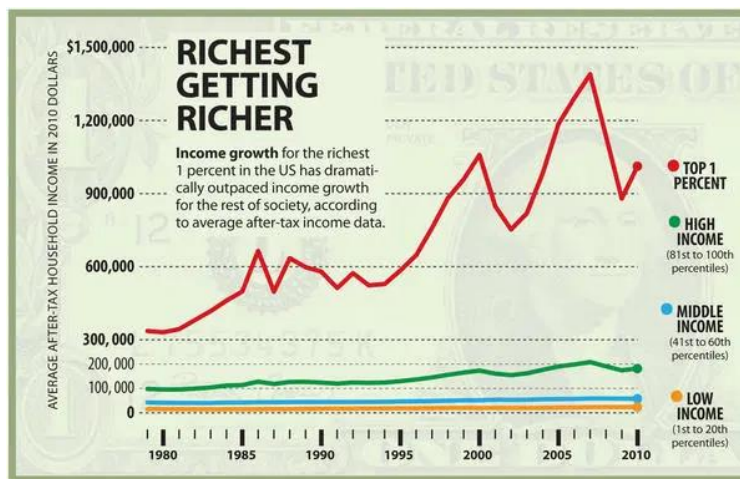
MomsRising.org
#RaiseTheWage
Tell Congress to #RaiseTheWage: <http://action.momsrising.org/sign/minimumwage>

But I think the reality here is the fact of the profit motive. Cheap labor has always been a factor in capitalism, and capitalists have always wanted to maximize their profits. With a raised minimum wage, business owners would have to share some of their profits with their workers. This is against the profit motive. Unfortunately, the profit motive really has no place in it for compassion. In other words, “My money belongs to me, and your poverty is your problem.”

Minimum Wage Earner	Median Wage Earner	CEO Guy
		
\$7.25/Hour	\$16.57/Hour	\$20,160.00/Hour
1 Gallon of Milk : \$3.70	1 Gallon of Milk : \$3.70	1 Gallon of Milk : \$3.70
Has to Work 1/2 Hour For 1 Gallon of Milk	Has to Work 13 Minutes For 1 Gallon of Milk	Has to Work .01 Seconds For 1 Gallon of Milk
The 99% needs a raise		
#gunting		#RaiseTheMinWage

Also, it should be noted that when ideas to benefit workers come to the political table, they are labeled as “socialism.” This is important to note because socialism does not work. Pure capitalism does not work either, but anyone can point to societies such as the USSR where socialism and communism failed miserably.

So, socialism is a scary word that people are afraid of because of its failures. But, simply because something benefits workers, does not mean it is the communism of the USSR. Henry Ford paid his workers a living wage because he knew that it would make no sense to produce cars that his workers could not afford to buy. Similarly, it makes no sense to build housing that no one can afford to live in, or to create medicine that no one can afford to use.



SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office.

RICH CLABAUGH/STAFF

When it comes to income inequality, the rich should not be punished for being rich, but they should also not keep the excess profit, without spreading the wealth and rewarding productive work. Think

about it, the workers who have greater disposable income, or cash on hand, for various leisure related purchases, benefit the economy by being able to spend more at various businesses which cater to their desires and wants.

Works Cited

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/feb/27/us-minimum-wage-senate-explainer>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/us/politics/republicans-minimum-wage.html>

<https://aflcio.org/what-unions-do/social-economic-justice/minimum-wage>

Announcements



N. Meck Democrats Monthly Meeting

Thursday, March 4th at 7:00 PM

ZOOM

N. Meck Progressives Cocktail Hour

Monday, March 8th at 6:00 PM

ZOOM

Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County

March Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 10th at 6:30 PM

ZOOM

2021 Cluster Organization Meeting

Precincts 135, 239, and 145

Saturday, March 13th at 9:30 am

ZOOM

Announcements



2021 Dems of N. Mecklenburg Organization Meeting

Saturday, March 13th at 1:30 pm

ZOOM

NC Utilities Commission (NCUC) Public Hearing about Duke Energy's Integrated Resource Plan

Tuesday, March 16th at 7:00 PM

The purpose of this hearing is to take non-expert public witness testimony regarding the utilities' filed plans.

(Contact Michelle Blumenthal for information)

n.meck.progressives@gmail.com



Please submit your group events to donnaMarie93@gmail.com by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the Announcements.



Condolences



Joel Odom R.I.P.

The youngest candidate in Charlotte's 2019 mayoral race, found dead in his home. Odom, 22, was found by his father, according to news reports. Joel ran in the 2019 Democratic primary to unseat Charlotte Mayor Vi Lyles. "Someone has to inspire young people," Odom told WBTV in 2019.

In October 2020, Odom partnered with the Salvation Army Center of Hope for Women to host a donation drive. which sleeps more than 300 women and children. "We're just trying to do our part to make sure our community has what it needs," Odom told WBTV.



As word of Odom's death spread, people took to social media to express their shock and sadness.

"Life is so short and unpredictable," Charlotte City Council member Dimple Ajmera tweeted. "Joel taught us to express our love to family and friends... Joel left this world a better place with his infectious smile, courage, and the vision for better tomorrow. We'll forever cherish our time with you friend."

The Executive Corner:

Executive Director - Jade X. Jackson

Rev Rodney Sadler, Joel Segal, DonnaMarie Woodson

Rev. Glencie Rhedrick

Coalition of United Progressives-CharMeck Chronicle

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