

Charles L. Becton



Charles L. Becton received his BA degree from Howard University in 1966, his J.D. degree from Duke University School of Law in 1969, and his L.L.M. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1986. From 1981-1990, he was a judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals, and in 1985 he was named North Carolina Appellate Judge of the Year. For 30 years, Becton was a litigator who tried scores of major criminal and civil case. Becton has been included in The Best Lawyers of America since 1993, and he is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, the American Board of Trial Attorneys, and the International Society of Barristers. He was President of the North Carolina Bar Association in 2008 (the first African-American male to hold that post), the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers in 1995, and President of the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers in 1980.

During the past 35 years, Becton has taught trial advocacy skills to more than 20,000 lawyers. He has served as the John Scott Cansler Lecturer at the University of North Carolina School of Law, and as a Senior Lecturer in Law, as well as a Professor of the Practice, at Duke University Law School. He has taught and lectured at trial advocacy skills institutes across the country, in Canada, and in the Republic of South Africa. He is currently the RJR Nabisco Endowed Chair at North Carolina Central School of Law where he teaches Rhetoric and Advocacy.

Becton has received numerous awards including three national trial advocacy teaching awards. In January 1988, Becton received the William J. Brennan, Jr. Trial Advocacy Award for his work in improving the skills of trial lawyers. In June 1990, Becton was the first recipient of the Charles L. Becton Trial Advocacy Award given annually by the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers. In July 1990, Becton was a co-recipient of the Roscoe Pound Foundation's Richard S. Jacobson Award from the Association of Trial Lawyers of America recognizing the nation's best trial advocacy teacher.

In January 1990, he received the North Carolina Association of Educators "Excellence in Equity" Award. In May 1995, Becton received the South Carolina Trial Jury Foundation's Distinguished Service Award. In October 1995, Becton received the Robert Keeton NITA Trial Advocacy Teaching Award.

In May 2006, Becton was the first recipient of The Advocate's Award from the NC Bar Association Litigation Section. In October 2006, he was appointed to the NC Innocence Inquiry Commission, and he received the American Bar Association's Torts and Insurance Practice Section's Pursuit of Justice Award. In 2013, Becton received the Elon University School of Law Leadership in the Law Award.

In 2013 and 2014, Becton was asked to lead institutions of higher education. He served as Interim Chancellor at North Carolina Central University 2013-14 and as Interim Chancellor at Elizabeth City State University 2014-15.

Becton is married to former Administrative Law Judge Brenda Becton, and they have three children -- Nicole, Kevin and Michelle.