

“We Have Lost a Noble Man” - BASF/JDC Mourn the Passing of L. Julius M. Turman

May 15, 2018 – San Francisco, California – On Sunday, San Francisco lost a civic leader with the unexpected passing of L. Julius M. Turman. The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) and the Justice & Diversity Center (JDC) mourn the loss of a close friend and member of our legal community. “San Francisco has lost a true champion for justice and equality,” says Yolanda Jackson, BASF and JDC Executive Director. “Julius Turman has a long-standing history of involvement with the Bar Association of San Francisco and we, along with the City of San Francisco, have been the beneficiaries of his steadfast work toward LGBT and African American rights and equality and, most recently, his invaluable work on the San Francisco Police Commission. Julius gained a reputation for ‘doing the right thing’ even when it was not popular. He will be missed.”

“We have lost a noble man,” adds 2009 BASF President Russell S. Roeca, Roeca Haas Montes De Oca. “Julius always made those around him smile, he exuded warmth and passion for the marginalized, and lived his life and career acting with conviction for his beliefs.”

Most recently, Turman served as President of the San Francisco Police Commission, a role from which he stepped down only weeks ago. BASF’s Criminal Justice Taskforce worked closely with Turman on issues of police reform and policy. “Julius was a central pillar of our San Francisco legal community, as well as the LGBT and African American communities,” says immediate Past President Merri A. Baldwin, Rogers Joseph O’Donnell. “He was a warm, funny, astute person and a committed advocate. His service on the Police Commission was exemplary: he was the right person for that very hard job, respectful of all viewpoints and compassionate but tough. I will miss Julius. It is a sad day for all of us.”

Turman was a veteran civil litigator and former Assistant United States Attorney. His passion was to ensure equality and fairness for all through effective legal advocacy. He pursued this passion through service with numerous nonprofit legal organizations, including Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and the Charles Houston Bar Association. Julius also recently served on the Executive Committee of the BASF Labor and Employment Section.

“Julius was a champion of justice,” says 2007 BASF President Nanci L. Clarence, Clarence Dyer & Cohen. “He channeled his fighting spirit with great wisdom and gave us all the gift of his intellect, wit and prodigious energy. I will never forget the joy of sharing a rollicking good laugh with him—even in the midst of doing serious and important work. We did not get enough time with him and he’ll be missed.”

From 2005 to 2008, Turman served on BASF’s board and led the effort, along with 2012 BASF President Kelly M. Dermody, Loeff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, to write a groundbreaking report on best practices in the hiring, retention and promoting of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender employees.

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“I am shocked and saddened to hear of the passing of Julius Turman,” said Dermody. “Julius and I were about the same vintage, and we schemed and collaborated for progressive causes for almost my entire legal career. I also had the unique privilege of both working side-by-side with Julius (including when we were co-chairs of BASF’s LGBT Equality Committee), as well as across the aisle professionally when we were opposing counsel to each other in a class action case. He was the same gracious, wise, caring, and wry person across settings. He is gone far too soon, and will leave a big hole in the lives of all who knew him.”

“Julius was an important member of the Bar Association of San Francisco family, and he served the bar, as he did with all things, with bravery, compassion, empathy and an open heart, adds 2006 BASF President Joan M. Haratani, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. “We grieve his passing, and extend our sincere sympathy to his family and loved ones.”

BASF and JDC join in extending our deepest condolences to Julius Turman’s family and friends.

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The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) is a nonprofit voluntary membership organization of attorneys, law students, and legal professionals in the San Francisco Bay Area. Founded in 1872, BASF enjoys the support of more than 7,500 individuals, law firms, corporate legal departments, and law schools. Through its board of directors, its committees, and its volunteer legal services programs and other community efforts, BASF has worked actively to promote and achieve equal justice for all and oppose discrimination in all its forms, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, sex, disability, and sexual orientation. BASF provides a collective voice for public advocacy, advances professional growth and education, and attempts to elevate the standards of integrity, honor, and respect in the practice of law.

The Justice & Diversity Center (JDC) advances fairness and equality by providing pro bono legal services to low-income people and educational programs that foster diversity in the legal profession. JDC is the largest legal services provider in San Francisco. JDC’s primary purpose is the delivery of free legal services to low-income San Franciscans, as well as the non-profits that serve them. JDC delivers free legal services through its Legal Services Programs division, which consists of the Pro Bono Legal Services Program, Homeless Advocacy Project, and the Immigration Program. JDC provides enrichment programs to diverse youth and young adults through its Diversity Educational Programs. JDC’s programs serve approximately 9,500 disadvantaged San Franciscans a year, with the overarching goal of assisting the community’s most vulnerable members with accessing the judicial system and strengthening their personal, professional, and economic security.