

Retired Law School Professor Charles F. Crutchfield Dies

Charles F. Crutchfield, who retired from the Law School faculty in 1985, died on July 18, 2004, in San Antonio, Texas. He was 85.

Crutchfield came to South Bend, Indiana, in the mid-1960s from Gary, Indiana, where he had been in private practice for several years. His move to South Bend reflected a change in the focus of his practice: he became an attorney for, and later program director of, the Legal Service-Legal Education Program. He became its director when the growing program received a federal grant to expand St. Joseph County's legal aid program.

Crutchfield joined the Law School faculty in 1974. While a faculty member, he never lost his focus on legal aid services. In 1976, he received grants from the Lilly Endowment, the Cummins Engine Foundation, and the Public Welfare Foundation to establish a Street Law Program, which is a practical, participatory education program about law, democracy, and human rights that is taught by law students to local high school students.

While at the Law School, Professor Crutchfield was active with the Black American Law Students Association (now the Black Law Students Association) and received an award from the group upon his retirement. At the 1985 Annual Alumni Banquet held by BALSAs, Kerry Phillips presented Professor Crutchfield with a plaque to commemorate his work with the organization. Then, Phillips said, "We want to say to you tonight in the strongest terms that we love you, and your presence does make a difference."

Upon learning of Professor Crutchfield's death almost 20 years later, Phillips said, "After almost 20 years of community-based lawyering, I can most assuredly state this about Professor Crutchfield: His presence at the Notre Dame Law School and the influence which he exerted on many of



his students helped to remind us of the real need to utilize our legal training and talents to work for the betterment of all segments of our society, including the disadvantaged. The examples set by Professor Crutchfield during the course of his career have helped many of us to never lose sight of the "big picture." We are all better lawyers as a result of having been touched by Professor Crutchfield. He will be sorely missed, but not forgotten."

Of his former colleague, Professor Tex Dutile said, "Crutch was a warm and caring colleague—always ready to laugh, always ready to help. His role of teacher-lawyer proved invaluable to all, but especially, given the years he was at Notre Dame, to our black students."

In a 1985 *South Bend Tribune* article announcing his retirement from the Law School, Crutchfield said, "Retirement is a nasty word to me; slowing down is a better word." The fact that he passed the Texas bar at 69 and continued to practice law is a testament to this sentiment.

After retiring, Crutchfield and his wife, Jewell, moved to Texas.

He was born July 19, 1919, and attended Vincennes University, completing his bachelor's degree at Indiana University while he served in the Army Air Corps and Air Force as a criminal investigation officer. While in the Air Force, he also completed a master's degree from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and began his legal studies at John Marshall Law School in Chicago. Upon retirement from the Air Force, Crutchfield completed his legal studies at Indiana University's law school.

Those wishing to make donations in honor of Professor Crutchfield may do so to the Black Law Student Association or to the Notre Dame Law School Student Funded Fellowship Program.