

Chadwick Boseman Stars as Thurgood Marshall in Upcoming Film “Marshall”

By Naomi Richard

Actor Chadwick Boseman plays the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, as he battles through one of his career-defining cases in the upcoming biopic *Marshall*, set to hit theaters nationwide October 13. Marshall, appointed to the Supreme Court in 1967, is most famous for his victory in the landmark 1954 *Brown*

vs. *Board of Education* case, which desegregated public schools.

Boseman is an established and accomplished actor, slated as the upcoming Black Panther (2018) and he played baseball great Jackie Robinson in the biopic *42*. In a recent press interview, Boseman explained the journey to landing the roll as Marshall. “Every biopic that comes through my attorneys and agents are



Chadwick Boseman in *MARSHALL*
Photo credit: Barry Wetcher / Distributor: Open Road Films

‘I, Thurgood Marshall, Do Swear... To Do Equal Right’

AFRO Archived History

by: Ruth Jenkins
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Fifty years ago Thurgood Marshall was sworn as a Supreme Court justice, making him the first African American to hold such a distinction. The AFRO was in the room as he took the oath of office, as the below story details.

96th justice takes seat on high court Oct. 14, 1967

WASHINGTON—Mrs. Cyrus W. Marshall Sr. got a double thrill, Monday.

Her nephew, Thurgood Marshall, 59, set another in a series of racial precedents by taking a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. And shortly before the oath was administered to him President Johnson made a surprise entrance and quietly sat down immediately in front of Mrs. Marshall.

Mr. Justice Marshall is the 96th justice and the first colored justice to serve on the nine man Supreme Court since its beginning in Feb. 1790.

He was nominated to the court by President Johnson last June 13, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Aug. 30.

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Judge worked from no-name prospect to MLB All-Star, young Black players with athletic ability could do the same



New York Yankees' Aaron Judge waits to bat before Game 1 of baseball's American League Division Series against the Cleveland Indians, Thursday, Oct. 5, 2017, in Cleveland. (AP Photo/Phil Long)

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There hasn't been a bigger star in baseball this year than Judge, who broke Mark McGwire's 30-year record for home runs hit by a rookie in a single season with 52 (McGwire had recorded 49 homers back in 1987). Judge also broke Babe Ruth's single season record (32) of home runs hit in Yankee Stadium with 33.

That's two huge records, held by two of the biggest legends in baseball history, destroyed within one season by a Black man. A Black man that — outside of hardcore baseball aficionados — no one even knew existed just a year ago.

But that's what makes Judge so special to me. That's what makes me believe there could be so many more “Aaron Judges” playing pro baseball right now, completely flooding the Major Leagues with Black talent.

Unlike other young superstars in the big leagues, such as Washington Nationals' 24-year-old MVP Bryce Harper or Chicago Cubs' MVP Kris Bryant, 25, Judge, wasn't a No. 1 or No. 2 overall draft pick who saw immediate success. The 25-year-old slugger was taken at the end of the first round in the 2013 draft and honed his skills over four years in the Minor Leagues before earning a starting spot on the Yankees' Major League roster. This past

season was considered Judge's rookie year as a starter, not as a pro player.

That makes me think if Judge can take a few years to mold himself from a no-name prospect to an All-Star player, so many more Black players with his athletic ability could be doing the same.

Judge is a huge human being. At 6-foot-7-inches tall, 282-pounds heavy, he's obviously larger than the average pro baseball player. But those same measurements are very typical of Black athletes we see dominating the NFL and NBA. If Judge lost 20 pounds, he would be the average size of a small/power forward in the NBA or a tight end in the NFL. If he gained 10-15 pounds, he could play defensive end or even offensive tackle.

Judge actually played football and basketball in high school and was a star at both. He even received scholarship offers to play tight end for several major football programs, including Notre Dame and Stanford. But he wanted to play pro baseball, and I don't blame him.

Outside of the obvious financial advantages of pro baseball, Judge wouldn't have had four years to polish his craft in the minor league had he chose to pursue a career in football or basketball. There is no minor league system in the NFL and the

shelf life for players is extremely short; you either make a 53-man roster or you're home watching from the couch with the fans. The NBA has a growth/development league but it doesn't come close to mirroring the farming system of pro baseball. Most basketball players who miss the cut on making an NBA team end up playing ball overseas and out of sight.

And then there's still the clear financial advantages of choosing to play pro baseball over basketball or football. Unlike in the NFL, the contracts are guaranteed in MLB. If you sign a \$70 million deal, you're getting paid \$70 million. You don't have to worry about any of that “only 25 of the 70 is guaranteed” crap the NFL pulls on its players. And there's no salary cap in baseball, allowing superstar players to demand deals worth several hundreds of millions.

Even minor league prospects get paid better in baseball. Judge signed a deal worth nearly \$2 million in 2013 to go play Class A level in the minors. After the season he just had in the majors, he'll break the bank on his next deal.

What more motivation do you need? It's time to get this real “chicken,” fellas. It's right there waiting for us on the baseball diamond.

like, ‘we will read it first before it gets to you.’ Second of all I'll be like, ‘no, no, no.’ So it took me knowing Reggie [Reginald Hudlin] and wanting to work with Reggie and Paula Wagner, a long time successful producer. She was friends with my agent...Then John Marshall [Thurgood Marshall's son] wrote a letter saying he wanted me to play the role. Then it was a yes!”

The biopic *Marshall* depicts a young Thurgood Marshall facing one of his greatest challenges while working as a lawyer for the NAACP. Marshall travels to conservative Connecticut when wealthy socialite Eleanor Strubing (played by Kate Hudson) accuses black chauffeur Joseph Spell of sexual assault and attempted murder. He soon teams up with Sam Friedman, a local Jewish lawyer who's never handled a criminal case. Together, the two men build a defense while contending with racist and anti-Semitic views from

those who deem Spell to be guilty.

The screenplay, co-written by Michael and Jacob Koskoff was sold to producer Paula Wagner, who is the powerhouse behind the *Mission Impossible* franchise, *Jack Reacher*, *The Last Samurai*, *The Eye* and *Vanilla Sky*, to name a few. Wagner also sits on the National Board of Directors for the Producers Guild of America.

As mentioned, the film is directed by Reginald Hudlin, movie producer of the box office sensation *Django Unchained*, which grossed over \$400 million dollars worldwide. Other cast members include Josh Gad — a multi-talented comedian, dancer and dramatic actor with a recent *Beauty and the Beast* credit — Sterling K. Brown, Dan Stevens, James Cromwell, Keesha Sharp, Jussie Smollett and more. It is rated PG-13 and distributed by Open Road Films.

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS Meet Attorney Pamela Foster Davis, PDF Law Firm



Shortly after I graduated from high school, one of my friends was arrested and charged with Attempted Capital Murder of a police officer and sentenced to life in prison. I couldn't understand how he was sentenced to life in prison when he didn't kill anyone. The injustice of his punishment stayed with me for years to come. That was one of the pivotal moments that made me want to go to law school.

Since graduating from the University of Texas at Austin and Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University, I have been blessed to help many people. Whether externing with the Harris County District Attorney's Office, starting a legal clinic with S.H.A.P.E Community Center in Houston, Texas, opening a law firm in Houston, working as an Assistant Attorney General in Houston, managing the State/Federal Relations for the Office of the Attorney General in Austin, and now opening the PDF LAW FIRM here in Austin, each experience has prepared me to exude professionalism and confidence in all that I do.

I work with every day people to help them reduce the stress of dealing with personal injuries, family matters, and wills/probate issues. As a result, each of my clients are treated with respect as we work toward obtaining a fair settlement. I recently helped a client settle her personal injury claim for policy limits and to also recover money under her Under Insured Motorist (UIM) coverage. I have also recently helped a client resolve a difficult custody matter and after trial, the client walked away with more than the ex-spouse offered before court. Finally, I constantly help clients when they lose a loved one to navigate the often-confusing probate process.

If you or a family member are undergoing a frustrating legal situation, I'd enjoy helping you to evaluate your situation and giving you pointers on how to gain leverage on your case. Call the PDF LAW FIRM at 512-681-4485, located at 111 Congress Avenue, Suite 400, Austin, Texas, 78701.