

FELMERS O. CHANEY



There could be no recognition of leaders in Milwaukee's African American community without mentioning Felmers O. Chaney. As Milwaukee's first African American police sergeant, long-time President of the NAACP and lifetime champion for civil rights, Chaney has devoted his life to Milwaukee's central city community, improving the quality of life and ensuring that the voices of the disenfranchised are represented and heard.

The first Black to graduate from Spooner High School in Spooner, WI, Chaney was a Milwaukee police officer for more than 36 years. When he patrolled Walnut Street and he became notorious for keeping order.

Always dedicated to Milwaukee's central city, Chaney served as president of the Central City Development Corporation, CEO of the North Milwaukee State Bank, and was president of Milwaukee's NAACP Executive Committee, where he fought tirelessly for equal and civil rights. Chaney also served as director of the Better Business Bureau, the Commando Project, and USO. He was also a former president of the Urban League, and of North Milwaukee State Bank.

In 2000, then Governor Tommy Thompson dedicated Milwaukee's new Men's Correctional Center on North 30th Street as the Felmers O. Chaney Correctional Center. Thompson cited Chaney's community service work and distinguished record when dedicating the facility, noting that the facility embraces the belief that Chaney held—people can change if they are given the opportunity, the resources, and the direction.

Even in retirement, Chaney remained active in community activities including serving as acting chairman for the community advisory board for the Milwaukee Women's Correctional Center/Marshal E. Sherrer Correctional Center Community Advisory Board. He also remained a member of the Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation Board, Wisconsin Crime Victims Council Board, the NAACP Board, and the Urban League.

In Memory Of: Felmers O. Chaney (1918-2012) and his spouse of 73 years, Jessie M. Chaney (1920-2013).