

Patricia Timmons–Goodson

Patricia Timmons–Goodson is an Associate Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. A native of Florence, South Carolina, she is one of six children born to U.S. Army Airborne Ranger Edward Timmons and his wife, Beulah.

Timmons–Goodson received her B.A. and J.D. degrees from Carolina in 1976 and 1979, respectively. She began her legal career as a prosecutor in the office of the Cumberland County District Attorney. In 1984, at the age of only 29, she was appointed District Court Judge, a position she held for 13 years until she was elevated to the North Carolina Court of Appeals in 1997.

Timmons–Goodson retired from the Court of Appeals in 2005, thinking that she had completed her service to North Carolina, but within only a few months Governor Michael Easley asked her to accept appointment to the North Carolina Supreme Court. She is the first African American woman to serve as a judge in her home county of Cumberland, the first to be elected to any state appellate court and the first to serve on North Carolina’s highest court. At Timmons–Goodson’s induction ceremony, Chief Justice Sarah Parker pointed out that this was the first time that the court had two women among its seven justices.

As a Carolina undergraduate, Timmons– Goodson was inducted into the Order of the Valkyries and the Order of the Old Well in recognition of her outstanding leadership abilities. She is a member of the Central Selection Committee for the Morehead–Cain Scholarships and has served on the Board of Directors of the General Alumni Association. On University Day 2008, she administered the oath of office to Carolina’s 10th Chancellor, Holden Thorp. Timmons– Goodson’s many honors and awards include the 2007 William R. Davie Award, the General Alumni Association’s Distinguished Young Alumna Award, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, and honorary degrees from Johnson C. Smith University and St. Augustine’s College.

She is married to Dr. Ernest Goodson, Class of 1976 and a 1979 graduate of Carolina’s School of Dentistry. They are the parents of two sons, Ernest and Aaron.

For outstanding accomplishment in the field of jurisprudence, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is pleased to confer on Patricia Timmons-Goodson the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.