

Judge Harry Cole heads Marshall's statue commission

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Maryland moved one step closer, after months of contentious

debate, to erecting a statue of Thurgood Marshall outside the State House in Annapolis when the governor created a statue commission for the civil rights champion last week.

The Thurgood Marshall Statue Commission's seven members will develop the design competition process for the statue, determine the criteria for design selection, locate the appropriate location on the State House grounds for the statue, and oversee the installation of the statue.

"Thurgood Marshall was a man of great accomplishments who made significant contributions to our society," Governor William Donald Schaefer said. "It is fitting that we announce the Thurgood Marshall Statue Commission on the anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision to integrate our schools—one of Marshall's greatest triumphs."

The executive order was signed on May 17, 40 years after Marshall won the Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* case, which effectively ended legal segregated public schools.

The commission is comprised of Retired Judge Harry A. Cole, Maryland Court of Appeals; Fred Lazarus, Maryland Institute College of Art president; James Lewis, Morgan State University Art Gallery emeritus curator; Dianne Magruder, Strathmore Hall Arts Center board of directors'

chair; Dr. Edward C. Papenfuse, state archivist; Kenneth Rodgers, Commission of African-American History and Culture chairman, and Areca Sampson, Baltimore City School for the Arts student.

A controversy regarding the Marshall statue erupted during the 1994 legislative session when several legislators argued that the Marshall statue should replace the statue of Roger B. Taney, instead of joining it.

It was Calvert County-born Taney, who, in 1857, penned the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* decision. The chief justice's decision upheld slavery and declared that Black people were "beings of an inferior order" with "not rights which the white man was bound to respect."

Ironically, two of Maryland's most powerful African-American legislators, Del. Howard "Pete" Rawlings and Sen. Clarence W. Blount, came to the rescue of Taney's statue, which peers out over historic Annapolis to the harbor.

"We must remember our past so that we can better understand historical events and prepare for the future," stated Messers. Blount and Rawlings in a joint statement.

To support the statue of Thurgood Marshall, who was born in Baltimore on July 2, 1908, the General Assembly added \$100,000 in bond funds to the 1995 fiscal year capital budget.

The commission is expected to complete its work by June, 1995.