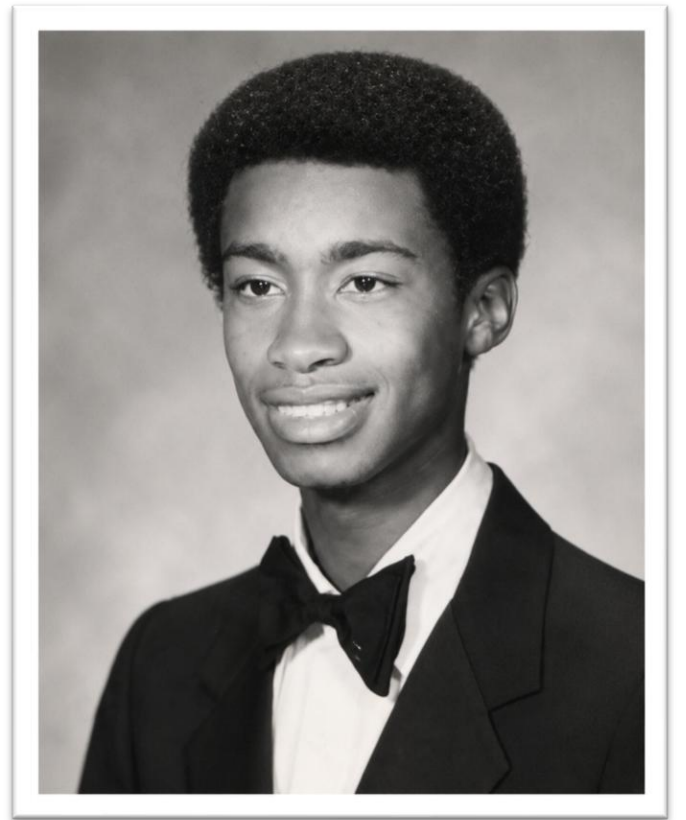


CHARLES WILSON '72

JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL'S 2026-27 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR



Since his graduation from Jesuit High School, the Honorable Charles R. Wilson has been a lifelong advocate of Jesuit education, quietly embodying the mission of being a “man for others” through his distinguished career in public service. He has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to justice, mentorship, and the legal profession, while remaining connected to his alma mater and its values of faith, service, and excellence.

Born in Pensacola and raised in Tampa from the age of seven, Judge Wilson was formed in the Jesuit tradition during his years at Jesuit High School, where he developed the intellectual curiosity and discipline that would guide his future career. He went on to the University of Notre Dame, earning his bachelor’s degree, and remained there for his legal education, receiving his Juris Doctor from Notre Dame Law School, becoming a “Double Domer.”

After completing law school in 1979, Judge Wilson began his legal career in Florida, including early service as an assistant county attorney and then as a sole practitioner in Tampa. Those early years in practice exposed him to a wide range of legal work in both state and federal courts and shaped his belief in the importance of preparation, fairness, and perseverance in the courtroom.

His judicial career began in 1986 when he was appointed to the Hillsborough County Court, where he presided over a broad docket of civil and criminal cases. He later served as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Middle District of Florida, gaining experience in federal judicial proceedings and building a reputation for careful analysis and even-handed judgment. In 1994, he was appointed by President Bill Clinton as United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida, where he led federal prosecutions and strengthened the operations of one of the busiest U.S. Attorney’s Offices in the country.

In 1999, Judge Wilson was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, where he continues to serve with distinction. Over more than two decades on the federal bench, he has participated in thousands of appellate decisions, contributing significantly to the development of federal law. He is widely respected for a judicial philosophy grounded in impartiality, collegiality, and efficiency, as well as his belief that judges have an obligation to decide cases decisively and clearly, while maintaining fairness and respect for all parties.

Beyond his work on the bench, Judge Wilson is deeply committed to mentoring young lawyers and clerks, many of whom credit him with shaping both their professional skills and their understanding of integrity in the law. He has also remained engaged with legal education and his alma mater, including service to Notre Dame Law School and continued connection to the Jesuit tradition that helped form him.

Judge Wilson and his wife, Belinda, a retired private-wealth management banker, have built a strong family life centered on faith and education. They are the proud parents of two daughters, Courtney and Kendall, both of whom are Notre Dame graduates and attorneys. His family remains a central source of pride and grounding in a career defined by public service and judicial responsibility.

In recognition of his extraordinary lifetime of service to the law, his unwavering commitment to justice, and his embodiment of Jesuit values, the Alumni Association proudly names the Honorable Charles R. Wilson as Alumnus of the Year. His career stands as a model of humility, integrity, and faithful service to the legal profession and the community.
