



### **Jane and Adam Stein**

Jane Stein needed to come to Chapel Hill in 1971. Teaching math at Charlotte's Central Piedmont Community College with just a bachelor's degree equaled a career on hold and about to end, so she came to UNC for a master's in math that transitioned into a master's in operations research. Her husband Adam's civil rights legal work in Charlotte with Julius Chambers kept him at work so much, often on the road, that Jane figured he wouldn't feel abandoned when she moved to Chapel Hill. But Adam decided to come along. He had already litigated in the Orange County courts -- an experience that made him interested in coming here. He established a supposedly temporary Chapel Hill office for his legendary civil rights law firm, Chambers, Stein, Ferguson and Lanning -- for a year. That year in Chapel Hill has now extended to 46.

After her master's, Jane homed in on public health, working at UNC's Sheps Center and eventually getting a Ph.D. in Public Health from UNC. She was on the board of the Piedmont Community Health Center for nine years. Trips to Nicaragua helped inspire Jane to co-found, with five other women, CHICLE, the Chapel Hill Institute for Cultural and Language Education, which she ran for many years. The idea for the now-Triangle-wide Fiesta del Pueblo originated in her living room.

Adam, meanwhile, continued a groundbreaking career in civil rights law. In Chapel Hill, in the late '60s, he represented the striking UNC cafeteria workers. He and his partners went on to handle more famous cases than there is room to list: *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg* (the precedent-setting school desegregation case); *Griggs v. Duke Power* (the first and for a long time the most significant employment discrimination case decided by the Court); the Charlotte Three;

the Wilmington 10; Darryl Hunt; the Racial Justice Act; the first significant North Carolina redistricting case – and more. Beyond law firm work, Adam served as North Carolina’s first Appellate Defender, State Bar Councilor for Orange and Chatham Counties, President of the Orange County bar and North Carolina Advocates for Justice, and Board President of North State Legal Services, Inc. He received the top awards from the NC Advocates for Justice and the NC ACLU. The Steins were also jointly honored by the Chapel Hill Chapter of the ACLU.

With interests in community development and affordable housing (Jane served for several years on the Board of EmPOWERment), the Stein family developed Culbreth Park, a housing development with 50 affordable houses, and were given a citizens’ award from the NC Chapter of the American Planning Association. As a family, too, the Steins opened their own home to political gatherings over and over.

Jane and Adam are a little nostalgic for the village they moved to – now a city – where their three children grew up. All three children have done their parents proud. Eric is a housing policy expert, currently working at the Federal Housing Finance Agency and formerly at the Self-Help Credit Union; Gerda is Director of Public Information with North Carolina’s Center for Death Penalty Litigation; and Josh is North Carolina’s Attorney General;

The children played Rainbow Soccer in its early days, and went to the Seawall Elementary and school district’s one high school. Jane describes their children’s Chapel Hill environment as “nurturing, challenging, diverse, friendly, manageable, mostly safe, and relatively progressive.” Their children’s best friends even now are the people they grew up with in Chapel Hill. The move to Chapel Hill was a blessing for the family.

Looking ahead, Jane and Adam, now married for 59 years and living at Carol Woods, entertain hope for increased cooperation among local organizations with regard to low-cost housing. They find a lot to like about the town’s growth and increasing density, but just wish those free busses had come earlier.