

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

NEWS RELEASES

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## *The Kansas City Star: Husch Blackwell Chairman Discusses the Black Church's Influence on Civil Rights and His Upbringing*

Lewis Diuguid, an editorial board member of *The Kansas City Star*, featured Husch Blackwell Chairman Maurice Watson as part of an ongoing series of columns looking at 50 years of civil rights advances. Titled, “Black Church Must Undergo a Civil Rights Revival,” it details the impact that growing up in an African-American faith community had on Watson’s upbringing. As Diuguid writes, “... the black church also was the training ground for future leaders like Watson, who since April 2012 has been chairman of the prestigious law firm Husch Blackwell.”

The article provides insight into what shaped Watson’s commitment to serve and lead. Excerpts include:

- “Watson’s dad worked for Ford at the Claycomo plant, his mother for the state welfare department. He credits them, the church and the community for getting him through the Kansas City Public Schools, his leap to Barstow School, and then in 1976 to Harvard University, where he received his undergraduate and law degrees.”
- “The (civil rights) movement motivated Watson to achieve. It also opened America’s eyes to the talents of young African-Americans. ‘It creates a feeling of obligation for many of us,’ Watson said. ‘I learned the lesson that to those whom much is given, much is expected.’”
- “‘People have to be part of the community,’ said Watson. ‘If you are not part of a strong healthy community, you become part of a dysfunctional, dangerous community.’”