

AN NC CHAMBER EVENT

# NC Business Playbook

OCTOBER 16, 2025  
DURHAM, NC

NC Chamber

**Dan Blue**  
**Senator**  
**North Carolina State Senate**

Daniel T. Blue, Jr. was born in Lumberton, North Carolina to Daniel T. Blue, Sr. and Allene Morris Blue.

Dan excelled in the public schools of Robeson County - he was valedictorian of his class - and later attended North Carolina Central University, where he earned a B.S. Degree in Mathematics in 1970. While there, he emerged as a leader in academics and campus politics. Blue furthered his career by attending Duke University School of Law, where he graduated in 1973.



Hired by one of North Carolina's leading law firms, Sanford, Cannon, Adams & McCullough, Blue became one of the first blacks to integrate the state's major law firms. However, a desire to own his own practice inspired him to form a practice with several associates in 1976. Today, he serves as managing partner of that firm, Blue LLP (formerly Thigpen, Blue, Stephens & Fellers), in Raleigh, North Carolina, where his two sons and daughter-in-law practice with him.

In 1980, Blue was elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives, representing Wake County. He was re-elected ten times and held several leadership positions in the House, including chairman of a Judiciary and an Appropriations Committee. He also served as Chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus from 1984-89.

From 1991 - 1995, Dan Blue was twice elected Speaker of the North Carolina House of Representatives. Dan Blue is considered a leader among his peers and is also a mentor to others who desire to become public servants. After serving 22 years in the North Carolina House of Representatives, he left the Legislature to run for the United States Senate in 2002. He returned to the House in 2006 and now serves in the North Carolina Senate, representing Wake County. He served as Senate Democratic Leader from 2014 until 2024.

Dan Blue has been recognized throughout the state and country as one of America's outstanding political leaders. He is the recipient of dozens of national and state awards, including the 4-H National Alumni Award and the Adam Clayton Powell Leadership Award. He has served on the executive committees of the Southern Legislative Conference, the State and Local Legal Center in

Washington, DC and as a member of the Democratic National Committee, and the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee. He also served two terms as President of the National Conference of State Legislatures, the umbrella group of all the state legislative chambers in the country. He has been involved in most major initiatives enacted by the General Assembly over the past several decades.

Dan is regarded as an exceptional lawyer and has represented clients across America on a wide range of issues before administrative agencies and state and federal courts involving hundreds of millions of dollars. He has been awarded the Joseph Branch Professionalism Award, the highest honor of the Wake County Bar Association, and various awards from statewide lawyers' groups. He has consistently been recognized as a Super Lawyer and is a permanent member of the Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference.

Mr. Blue is the recipient of nine honorary doctorate degrees: Barber Scotia College, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, North Carolina Central University, Pfeiffer College, Saint Augustine's College, Shaw University, UNC at Chapel Hill, and Winston-Salem State University. He has been a visiting instructor at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University and has been a faculty member of the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. He is the recipient of the Duke University Medal for Distinguished Meritorious Service.

Dan was elected to the Duke University Board of Trustees in 1995 and served as Chairman from 2009-11 and was elected trustee emeritus after 16 years on the board. He served as a member of the Executive Committee of the Duke University Health System, where he chaired the Audit and Compliance Committee. He has served on the Executive Board for the Center on Ethics in Government and Advocacy in Denver, Colorado, and the Advisory Council for the Association of Governing Boards for Colleges and Universities in Washington, DC. He serves as a corporate member of the Research Triangle Institute. Additionally, for several years Dan was a frequent commentator on N.C. Spin, a weekly television program on North Carolina political events, which is aired on dozens of radio and television stations. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, and a 33rd degree Prince Hall Mason (St. Annah Lodge #350-Worshipful Master, Boyer Consistory and Kabala Temple #177-Shriners). He serves as Senior Grand Attorney for the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons, Jurisdiction of North Carolina, Inc.

Dan Blue resides in Raleigh with his wife, the former Edna Earle Smith, a civic and community leader. They are the parents of three adult children. The family attends Davie Street Presbyterian Church where Dan serves as an Elder. Among his interests and hobbies are reading, education policy, and team sports, as well as anything that involves any of his and Edna's seven grandchildren.