

Meet Christine Jones Brady:

Fighting for Civil Rights, Social Justice Part of Her Heritage

BY MARY BACON, ESQ. AND RYAN GORMLEY, ESQ.

When speaking with Christine Jones Brady, three traits are immediately apparent: her resolve for fairness, her deep commitment to social justice, and her determination to make a difference. So, it was not surprising to learn that civil rights and social justice are family traditions.

Brady, or “C.J.,” was born in St. Louis. Her father, Joseph Lee Jones, was a Black bail bondsman. Her mother, Barbara Jones, was a white social worker. They were married in 1961—six years before the U.S. Supreme Court struck down state laws banning interracial marriages in *Loving v. Virginia*. Looking to start a family, her parents had their sights on a beautiful house in the suburbs. Despite having the money for the house, the builder would not sell it to them. The builder’s reason to not sell them a house? Her father was Black.

Brady’s parents sued the builder—and her parents lost in federal district court, as well as their appeal before the Eighth Circuit. The U.S. Supreme Court accepted their case and agreed with her parents. In overturning the lower courts, the Supreme Court found that there is no right to refuse to sell a home to a buyer because of the buyer’s race.

Ultimately, Brady’s parents divorced, and she moved to Las Vegas with her mother. She was 3 years old at the time. Her mother became the first female director of Clark County Social Services. Her father died three short years later, and her mother remarried a locksmith named Bill Brady. Brady adopted Christine in 1976.



In elementary school, Brady was not initially inclined to dedicate herself to schoolwork. But after she fell in love with horses, her parents made her a deal: if she improved her grades, her parents would buy her a horse. From that semester on, she earned straight As and was happy to become a self-described “horse girl.” As early as age 9, she would sneak her horse out to go for trail rides in the desert. Decades later, she credits part of her grit and no-nonsense personality to being a horse girl.

In middle school, Brady was outspoken, opinionated, and frank. She always wanted to ensure her positions were clear. And while those traits landed her a regular seat in the principal’s office in middle school, it is clear that those same traits have contributed to her professional success today.

Brady attended Bishop Gorman High School. All of her time was dedicated to schoolwork, riding her horse, and being a school cheerleader. She graduated with honors and was accepted to Stanford University.

Stanford was instrumental both academically and personally for Brady. Academically, she focused on political science and delved into the American civil rights movement, opening up a world of Black history and contributions to society. Outside the classroom, she competed on the Stanford Equestrian Team, joined the Black Student Union, studied race and politics, protested against Apartheid, took a two-week civil justice seminar with Clayborn Carson, and traveled to Selma, Alabama, with the Black Student Union to participate

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in the 25th anniversary march from Selma to Montgomery by way of the Edmund Pettus Bridge. She met her father's family in Mississippi and learned more about her African American roots, contributing to her current love of soul food and gospel music.

Brady graduated Stanford at age 21, just in time for her mother to see her graduate before her mom's untimely passing from lung cancer. Brady stayed at Stanford to earn her masters in sociology with an emphasis in organizational behavior. After Stanford, she accepted a position as a program evaluator for the Government Accountability Office, got married, and had four children. Her adopted father's health began to decline, and Brady moved back to Las Vegas to help care for him.

After returning to Las Vegas, Brady's spouse became increasingly abusive. Later, after her husband was convicted of domestic battery against her, she left with her children. After the divorce, she received very little financial support for the children, and she utilized programs such as Women Infants and Children and Childcare Assistance. She worked no less than two jobs to make ends meet. Her main job was as a community organizer, and her evening job was teaching sociology classes at the College of Southern Nevada. She remembers being exhausted all the time.

Meanwhile, she talked about attending law school, something her mother always wanted her to do. In fact, it got to the point where her oldest son, then 11 years old, asked her if she was going to keep talking about law school or just do it. She told him she would go to law school. Brady's son helped time her practice LSAT tests, and she landed a seat in the night program at the William S. Boyd School of Law at UNLV.

Brady worked full time during her first year of law school, while raising and providing for her children as a divorced mother. And while most law students were at the law library or a happy hour, Brady was notorious for bringing her children to class and studying at Chuck E. Cheese.

Her drive to succeed did not go unnoticed.

"I've been in awe of Christine since we first met," Judge Linda Bell said. Bell supervised Brady when she was a law clerk at the Federal Defender's Office.

"At that time, she worked as an extern at the Federal Public Defender's Office. A single mom with young kids, Christine juggled law school, two jobs, and extracurricular school activities. No matter what life has thrown at her, I don't recall Christine ever uttering a mean or impatient word. She handles everything with kindness and grace. She's a truly amazing human."

Upon graduating from law school, Brady moved her family to Reno to clerk for Judge Patrick Flanagan. When her clerkship was finished, she made Nevada history as the first Black attorney in the Washoe County Public Defender's office. After more than a decade as a public defender, she accepted a position as the second assistant attorney general, working for the first Black attorney general in Nevada. In this role, she acts as a legal and policy advisor to the Attorney General of Nevada, responsible for overseeing areas of the office relating to consumer protection, criminal prosecution, investigations, and post-conviction matters. Among her many accomplishments at the Attorney General's Office, she is most proud of the work she's done on criminal justice reform, legislation to fight the opioid epidemic, and contributing to a team that works tirelessly to protect citizens and make Nevada better for everyone.

"When I think of my mom and her experiences with law, I just think about how far she's come," said Whitney McIntyre, Brady's daughter. "I'm stunned and so proud. I always think about how we were poor and struggling growing up and she had these dreams. As a divorced mother with four young children, life gave her every excuse to just give up. But she refused to. She balanced children with work and school. She would come home exhausted, and then she would spend time with us, read to us, and love us. She would read us *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* books and we would just sit there and laugh and have fun."

Throughout her career, Brady has served as a board member on the Nevada Council for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the Advisory Commission for



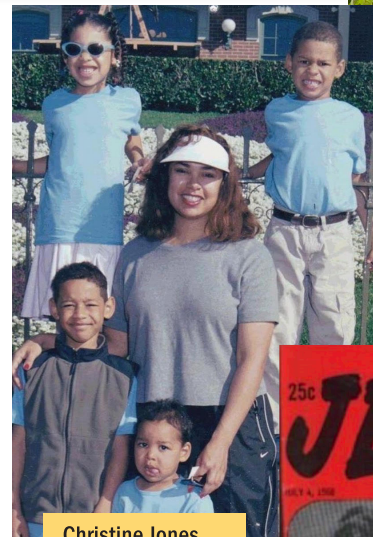
Christine Jones Brady poses with Nevada Attorney General Ford at the annual Las Vegas National Bar Association Gala, where she was awarded "Attorney of the Year."



Christine Jones Brady enjoys spending time with her granddaughter.



Christine Jones Brady with her dog, K9Major.



Christine Jones Brady enjoys a trip to Disneyland with her children Whitney Whitney (top row) and Wisdom, and William (bottom row) and Wynnton.



Christine's parents, Barbara (Jones) Brady and Joseph Lee Jones, were featured in *Jet* magazine in 1968 following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co.*, 392 U.S. 409 (1968).

the Administration of Justice, and Nevada's Sentencing Commission. Brady said she managed to do it all through her parents' love, the love of her children, and the grace of God.

In her spare time, Brady still loves horseback riding, playing with her dog, and being a grandmother to her three grandchildren.