

John Edwards - Democrat

John Edwards was born June 10, 1953, in Seneca, South Carolina. Being the first person in his family line to attend college, he first attended Clemson University and then transferred to North Carolina State University, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in textile technology. This choice of avocation was due to his father's career at a textile mill. However, he changed his goals and went on to earn his law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1977.

John Edwards' early legal career can be described as stunning, while his personal life can be described as a brave struggle in the face of tragedy. Having married early, he had four children, one of whom, Wade Edwards, was killed in an automobile accident at age 16 in 1996. This drove the couple to found the Wade Edwards Foundation, committed to "rewarding, encouraging, and inspiring young people in the pursuit of excellence". Only eight years after this, his wife was diagnosed with severe cancer in 2004, and the couple have continued to work together while she undergoes extensive treatment.

His legal career has been marked by aggressive trial lawyer activity. His name has become synonymous with winning multi-million-dollar damage settlements. He won a \$3.7 million for a client who was permanently brain-damaged by medical malpractice in 1984, a \$6.5 million settlement for a child with cerebral palsy who was mistreated by doctors in 1985, and a total of \$60 million for other clients.

Having become nationally famous in medical malpractice litigation to the point of encouraging hospitals and doctors to change their policies, he then established his own firm in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1993. He would go on to further court victories from there, including the famous case seeking damages against the Sta-Rite pool supplies manufacturer for a child who was severely injured by a defective product. The settlement in this case was \$25 million, the highest ever in North Carolina legal history.

He is the author of two books: "Four Trials" in 2003 detailing his more notable legal experiences and "Home: The Blueprints of Our Lives" in 2006, a series of interviews with people talking about their childhood homes. He also co-edited another book, "Ending Poverty in America: How to Restore the American Dream", which laid the grounds for his view that there are "two Americas", with a vast gulf separating the wealthy from the poor.

John Edwards was elected to be the Senator from North Carolina in 1998, where he was to serve one term before retiring from the Senate. During this term, he co-

sponsored 203 bills. Among his actions are co-sponsoring the Iraq War Resolution, supporting and voting for the Patriot Act, sponsoring the Fragile X Research Breakthrough Act, and the Spyware Control and Privacy Protection Act. He served on the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the U.S. Senate Committee on Judiciary. He was also a member of the New Democrat Coalition, an organization within Congress who support moderate Democrat positions and pro-business stances.

He left the Senate in 2004 to start his first run at Presidential election. He lost the primaries in 2004 to John Kerry, in a highly close race where the outcome was virtually a photo finish. In a display of uncommon grace on the part of both candidates, John Edwards became John Kerry's running mate, with Kerry for President and Edwards for Vice President, but only to lose.

He has announced his second bid as a Presidential candidate once again as of 2006. His main goals are stated as eliminating poverty, fighting global warming, providing universal health care, and withdrawing troops from Iraq.

John Edwards is seen as a fiery hard-left Democrat with a stellar rise to fame and a powerful connection with the lower and middle classes of America. He has consistently fought for the underdog, and his family roots as one of the "common people" together with his current status as an admitted millionaire give him a unique claim to insight into class divisions within the United States. He is both an accomplished public speaker, which stems from his experience convincing juries to find in favor of his clients, and an established literary talent, putting his education to good use. He also has the benefit of experience, having gone almost all the way in the previous Presidential election.

His latest political move is to connect strongly with the victims of the Hurricane Katrina victims, having made several speeches on a tour of the area. His campaign slogan is "Tomorrow begins today."

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