

[via The Winston-Salem Chronical](#)

U.S. Rep. Melvin L. “Mel” Watt received the 2013 North Carolina A&T State University Human Rights Medal on Feb. 1 during the school’s 53rd Sit-In Anniversary Breakfast.

Watt, 67, was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1992, six years after serving one term in the N.C. Senate. He practiced law for 22 years, specializing in minority business and economic development law in a general practice firm best known for its civil rights work.

As one of only two African Americans elected to Congress from North Carolina in the 20th Century, Watt has been a member of the House Judiciary Committee, the House Financial Services Committee and the Congressional Black Caucus, where he served as chairman in 2005-06.

The Human Rights Medal is given in recognition of individuals who have strived to correct social injustice and have contributed significantly to the betterment of the world. It is awarded to courageous men and women whose actions reflect those that were demonstrated in 1960 by four A&T freshmen – Ezell Blair Jr. (Jibreel Khazan), Franklin Eugene McCain, Joseph Alfred McNeil and David Richmond Jr. The men led a group of students to take a stand for justice by sitting down and refusing to leave the segregated whites-only lunch counter of the F.W. Woolworth Store in downtown Greensboro. Their nonviolent protest became part of a nationwide movement that led to desegregation.