

luncheon program at the Marriott at Metro Center, featuring remarks from D.C. Court of Appeals Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby; Associate Justice Edward Clark Clifton of the Superior Court of Rhode Island; Kim Keenan, general counsel for the NAACP and former D.C. Bar president; D.C. Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric T. Washington; and D.C. Bar President Tom S. Williamson.

The highlight of the afternoon was Green's speech, in which he spoke about his experiences as one of the nine black students who tried to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, after the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Green said he remembers wondering why students at Central High got the newer books and the fancy equipment and why the school was closed to him. "When the opportunity presented itself, I asked, why not go to Central? Why not challenge conventional wisdom? Why not challenge segregation? Why not prove to myself, my neighbors, my city, and my country that change is possible and that I would not let a little thing like segregation stand in the way of opening the world?"

### **Ernest Green of Little Rock Nine Recalls Early Days of Integration**

There were lots of nods in agreement. There were tears. And at the end of his speech, Ernest G. Green, one of the Little Rock Nine, received a standing ovation. Green served as the keynote luncheon speaker at the 25th Annual Conference of the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts on March 20 to 23.

During the conference, attendees from across the country watched a portion of the documentary *Legacy Oral History Project*, took private tours of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and attended town hall plenary sessions that covered a range of topics, from enhancing language access in the courts to human trafficking.

On March 22 guests attended a