



WUM 2020 Keynote Speaker  
**NC Representative Deb Butler**

Deb Butler knows the value of hard work because she worked in restaurants, on landscape crews, in hospitals, and in furniture factories to afford her education. Those efforts yielded a BA from the University of Tennessee and well as a law degree from Wake Forest University School of Law. As a long-time small business owner, she believes very much that this country is still the land of opportunity, acknowledging, however, that those opportunities have become more difficult to access for far too many of our citizens.

The spirit of service to community is evident in Deb's contributions to volunteerism both at the hospital where she drove the courtesy van transporting hospital visitors and at the Historic Wilmington Foundation, the Cape Fear Green Building Alliance, and at the Wilmington Regional Association of Realtors where she served as a Director on their governing boards.

A supporter of business, Deb has held memberships in the Chamber of Commerce, Wilmington Downtown, Inc., and other economic development councils throughout the region. She often speaks to groups about finding your passion and then figuring out how to earn a living at it which is what she has done within the historic district of Wilmington. She estimates that she has restored upwards of 40 historic properties returning them to income-producing and contributing structures.

Deb believes in the philosophy of careful community planning and growth. And further, is a proponent of conservation and energy efficiency. She volunteered her Saturday mornings as the host of a radio broadcast known as "Retrofit Radio" where the public was invited to learn along with Deb about how to save money on energy costs while making the home a more inviting and comfortable place.

And finally, Deb sums it up this way, "I am very grateful for the opportunities that I have had in my life. The ability to work hard, to succeed, and to participate in my community have all been very rewarding. I know that I have a breadth of experience, a certain maturity, and a common-sense approach that will help rebuild the public's trust in government. I am honored and humbled to serve as the Representative for House District 18 in the North Carolina legislature.

Representative Butler has received the internationally acclaimed Tammy Baldwin /Breakout Award from the Victory Fund 2019, The Indyweek 19 in 2019 acknowledgment, InStyle Magazine's "Badass Women" issue inclusion, The Cocalourus Leadership Award among many other designations for her viral defense of the NC infamous veto override vote. Her phrase #Iwillnotyield has become a rallying cry across the country and has her proudly wearing the banner of "progressive sparkplug" with great pride.



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