

Presidents of the Association of Negro Teachers



(Photo: Currie Ballard Collection—Oklahoma Historical Society)

*Oklahoma African American Educators
Hall of Fame, Inc.*



*The Fourth Annual Hall of Fame
Ceremony and Banquet*

*Oklahoma History Center
800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

Friday

September 26, 2014

7:00 p.m.



*Oklahoma
African American Educators
Hall of Fame, Inc.*



Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

“Thoughts from the President”

For the fourth year, we are celebrating the contributions of another group of esteemed inductees into the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. This class has approximately four hundred years of combined service to their profession and has embodied high standards for leaving a legacy second to none.

Education has and always will be the ingredient which provides opportunities for the masses, while stimulating the individuals to press onward fulfilling their potential. The inductees this year have served in various capacities within the realm of Oklahoma education and their influence is evident by the successes attained by their fruit.

The educational system in Oklahoma has and continues to flourish because of the character of those recognized tonight. The sacrifices of our inductees made it possible for the new generation of educators to enjoy the conveniences, accommodations and compensations they receive today. Please take time to acknowledge these inductees by saying, “Thank you.”

May we all hold firm to the belief in all people and embrace the vision of the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. which remains: “Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.” Proverbs 3: 27.

This evening would not be possible without the dedicated OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc. Board of Directors and Committee Members. Please recognize their efforts throughout this event. I sincerely hope you enjoy the occasion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donnie L. Nero Sr.", written in a cursive style.



Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.
President: Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.



Lifetime Members of the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.

*Mrs. Hilma Ligons Barnes
Patterson, New Jersey*

*Mr. Albert Johnson Sr.
Lawton, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Eunice Walker Edison
Lawton, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Freeta Jones-Porter
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Ms. Esther King
Warner, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Jack W. Paschall
Ada, Oklahoma*

*President John Hargrave
Ada, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Donnie Lee Nero Sr.
Clearview, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Kay Hargrave
Ada, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Shirley Ballard Nero
Clearview, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Orlando Hazley
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Don Shaw, Esq.
Idabel, Oklahoma*

2011 Inaugural Inductees

*Mr. Curtis Brackeen
Muskogee, Oklahoma*

*Rev. Willie B. Parker
Spencer, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Eddie Walter Warrior
Muskogee, Oklahoma (Posthumously)*

*Mrs. Willie Mae Etheridge
Checotah/Warrior, Oklahoma*

*Mr. William Robert Patterson
Lawton, Oklahoma (Posthumously)*

*Mrs. Jimmie Beatrice White Williams
Idabel, Oklahoma (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Henry Kirkland Jr.
Atoka, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Meshack M. Sagini
Langston, Oklahoma*

*Dr. La Verne Ford Wimberly
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Tom Anthony Withers Jr.
Clearview, Oklahoma (Posthumously)*

2012 Second Annual Inductees

*Mr. Harold C. Aldridge Sr.
Taft, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Gladys Marie Foshee
Sapulpa, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Albert Johnson Sr.
Lawton, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Chalon E. Anderson
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Sylvester "Prof" Franklin
Haskell, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Herbert Clarence King
Lawton, Oklahoma (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Loretta Brown Collier
Tulsa, Oklahoma (Posthumously)*

*Mr. Willie Frank Hurte
Oklahoma City, OK (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Frederick D. Moon
Oklahoma City, OK (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Mendell L. Simmons
Norman, OK (Posthumously)*

2013 Third Annual Inductees

*Mrs. Eva Gallimore Boyd
Chickasha, OK (Posthumously)*

*Mr. Charles L. Henry
Lawton, OK (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Wanda J. Pollard-Johnson
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Lou Eddie Goodlow Burris
Broken Bow, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Lettie Ruth Hunter
Oklahoma City, OK (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Betty G. Mason
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Ada Sipuel Fisher
Oklahoma City, OK (Posthumously)*

*Dr. Freeta Jones-Porter
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Willard G. Parker
Muskogee, OK (Posthumously)*

*Ms. Thelma Reece Parks
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

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and
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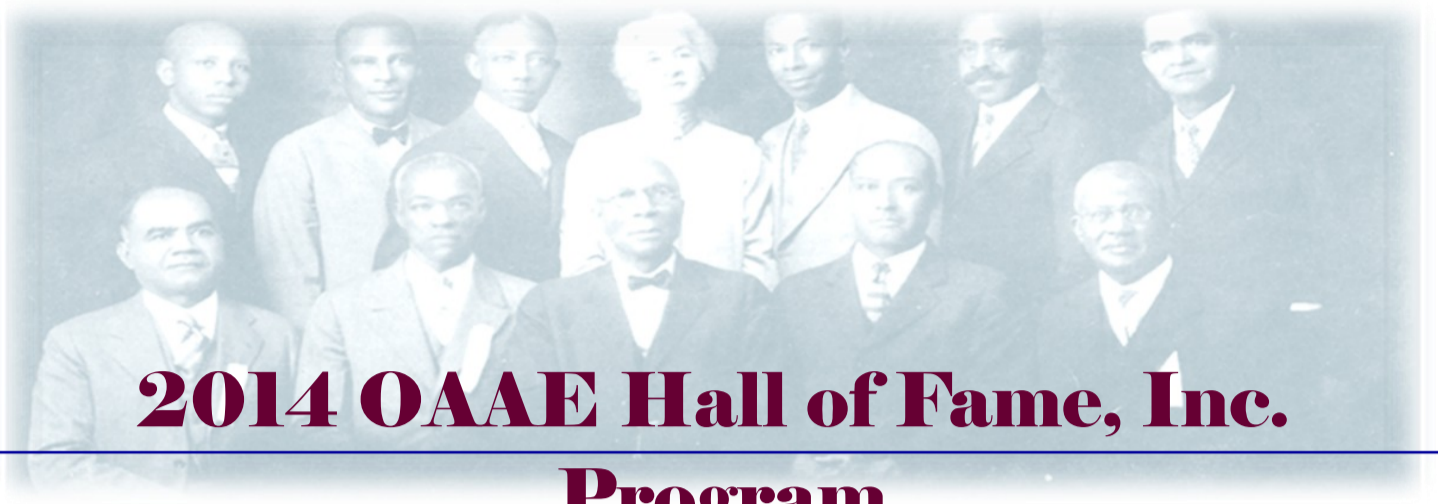
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Dr. John Hargrave

Oklahoma Historical Society Liaison: Larry O'Dell



2014 OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc. Program

Welcome

Mrs. Eunice Edison
Lawton, OK
Membership Committee Chair
Board of Directors

Invocation

Mr. Jimmie White
Warner, OK
Treasurer
Board of Directors

Dinner

Opening Remarks

Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.
Clearview, OK
President - OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc.

2014 Induction Ceremony

Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

2014 Inductees:

Dr. Charles E. Butler
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Mr. Jesse "J.D." Johnson
Altus, Oklahoma

Mrs. Valerie Inez Carolina
Wewoka Oklahoma (Posthumously)

Ms. Mary "The Fox" Johnson
Ardmore, Oklahoma

Mrs. Lola Parker Dean
Porter, Oklahoma

Mr. Charles B. McCauley
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

Mrs. Juanita Lewis-Hopkins
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Mrs. Violet A. Patterson
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Mr. Millard L. House
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Dr. Willa Allegra Strong
McAlester, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

Closing Remarks

Mr. Larry O'Dell
Director of Special Projects/Development
Oklahoma Historical Society

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductees



Dr. Charles E. Butler ***“Unquestioned Integrity”***

Dr. Charles E. Butler is a native Oklahoman, the son of Solomon and Victoria Lorene (Celestine) Butler, both grandchildren of slaves from Mississippi and Louisiana, who came to Oklahoma after the Civil War. Dr. Butler was born on September 23, 1937 in Gay, Oklahoma.

Neither of Dr. Butler’s parents completed high school because there was no accessible high school in their county. Despite the fact, Dr. Butler’s father was an avid reader of history, economics, philosophy and especially the Bible. His mother was “the mathematics whiz who knew how to make things and make them work.” Both parents valued education highly and pushed their children to get an education. They both were very interested in establishing a family tradition and expectation of their children attending college and graduating. To them, it was an issue of “when” are you going and not “if” you are going! As a result all 9 children graduated high school, five graduated college, two with masters degrees, and one obtained a doctorate.

Dr. Butler graduated from Douglass High School in Lawton. He then decided to enlist in the Marine Corps and received a honorable discharge in 1958. The thirst for knowledge brought him back home where he enrolled in Cameron Jr. College. He completed his B.S. in Mathematics Education (1962) and his M.T. in Guidance Counseling (1966) at Central State college. He received his Ed. D. in Secondary School Administration (1970) from the University of Oklahoma.

Dr. Butler has over 52 years of experience in education, considering the fact that, in retirement, he maintains emeritus professorial status and continues to teach. He taught high school mathematics and counseled students from the high school through the post-doctoral level. He participated in providing education and technical assistance to educators and district personnel involved in the desegregation of Oklahoma public schools. As a result, he visited at least one-fourth of the school districts in the state. During his service on the Oklahoma State Schools Committee, he was responsible for the North Central Association accreditation process. For a period, while serving as Director of Student Teaching Professor of Education at the University of Oklahoma and he participated in the training process for hundreds of superintendents, principals, and teachers. In addition, as part of a federal court case, he was a member of a specially selected team of educators ordered to develop plans for the desegregation of two thirds of the students in the public schools in Louisiana.

As a member of the Oklahoma County Retired Teachers Association, OEA and NEA (Life), he continues to be active in programs designed to improve education for the students and strengthen the noble profession that he so heavily invested. He was instrumental in establishing a degree program in African and African-American Studies at the University of Oklahoma.

Dr. Butler is a member of the OKC Ebenezer Baptist Church and is married to Willie Doris (Adams) Butler and is the father of three children, the grandfather of six and the great grandfather of two.



Mrs. Valerie Inez Carolina (Posthumously) ***“Consummate Professional”***

Valerie Inez (Parker) Carolina was born in Spiro, Oklahoma on May 19, 1917 to Thedford and Myrtle Parker. She graduated from Lincoln High School in Fort Smith, Arkansas and received her B.S. in Education from Langston University in 1939 and M.S. in education from the University of Oklahoma in 1967. While at Langston, she met the love of her life, Charles G. Carolina. They married in 1940 and had two sons, Michael and Sammy. They were married for 43 years until his death in 1983.

Her inspiration for becoming an educator was an aunt, who herself was a teacher, and her high school English teacher. “Shy in school, Valerie once said that it was her English teacher that “kept encouraging and pushing her. She would assign me duties that I felt I couldn’t do, but would support me in following through on them.” This philosophy of support and encouragement would be a hallmark of Carolina’s life and career as a teacher. She once said the greatest reward of her job was seeing a timid child come out of his or her shell and become a part of what is going on around them.

Richard Ellwanger, her student said, “time spent under her tutelage fostered my creativity, my confidence and a life-long of learning. Her soft-spoken nature, gentle touch and quiet refuge, ...” Tandi McCormick commented, “She was my favorite teacher. I still have notes of encouragement from her that I’ve saved for all these years. The epitome of what an educator and what a person should be. She left an amazing legacy.”

She devoted 38 years to the teaching profession, the last 18 of which were in the Wewoka Public School System before retiring in 1982. She was selected as Teacher of the Year in Wewoka in early April 1973 and as Outstanding Educator in Seminole County a few days later. On September 22 of that year, she was chosen Oklahoma Teacher of the Year and subsequently nominated for National Teacher of the Year in 1974. She was the first African-American woman chosen as Teacher of the Year in Oklahoma’s history and is to date, the only of Wewoka’s many outstanding educators to be so honored.

Mrs. Carolina served her community well as a leader in the St. Paul Baptist Church, The Wewoka Chamber of Commerce, the Seminole Nation Museum, the Wewoka Library Board, the Wewoka Election Board and the American Cancer Society. In addition, she was active in her local, state, and national education associations.

Following her retirement, the Chamber of Commerce bestowed the “Outstanding Educator” plaque in her honor. After her death in November of 1985, the Chamber renamed the plaque the “Valerie Carolina Award” and gives it annually to an exceptional educator in the Wewoka Public School System.

Her greatest gift, however, is the legacy of love, patience and understanding she gave to students. She never let them become discouraged with themselves and was always willing to unfold her gifts to each student’s needs. From the seat of the old rocking chair she kept in her classroom, many students received comfort for hurt feelings or a much-needed boost to a wounded ego. She dedicated each day in the classroom to making each child feel unique and believed that children should be made to feel special every day of their lives..



Mrs. Lola Parker Dean ***“Difference-Maker”***

Mrs. Lola Parker Dean, born December 12, 1910 to Sherd and Ribbi (Harrison) Parker, worked with twelve siblings and parents on a farm east of Porter, Oklahoma where she developed her strong work ethics. She attended Harrison Chapel, the community one-room school and graduated from the Eighth grade. She then returned to the farm but had a deep desire to continue her education. After two years, she traveled to Muskogee to continue her education at Manual Training High School and graduated. Lola went back to the farm, back to work where she was needed more, worked hard, prayed and believed God would provide a way. Time passed and she continued her education at Langston University where she earned a teaching certificate. Lola returned to Harrison Chapel to serve as principal and teacher for grades one through eighth. She never let the segregated educational laws deter her desire to obtain an education and pursue her dreams. Therefore; each summer, she returned to Langston to continue her education until she earned her Bachelor’s Degree. Later she earned her Masters from Northeastern State College (University) in Tahlequah.

With all of the challenges and obstacles she had already encountered in her life, she vowed that she would be a difference-maker in the lives of her students. She developed practical, real-life lesson plans for her students that incorporated strategies for promoting positive self esteem, strengthening work ethic, and improving academics that encouraged her students to be successful. There were no failures in her class.

Using books handed down from the white schools and other antiquated materials, she taught her regular subjects, in addition to teaching sewing, cooking, canning, social and table etiquette, and speech. She also sponsored 4-H, had a meat-judging team, and coached basketball and track. In addition, she spent many of her evenings and nights teaching parents how to help their children to learn.

Upon receiving a letter of dismissal from Lincoln High School advising her that her high school students would start attending Wagoner High School and her services were no longer needed, she stood firm in her belief of equality. She applied for an English teaching position at the Wagoner High School but was denied the job. She knew that she had the qualifications, education, and experience and on April 28, 1965, she filed a law suit against the Board of Education in Wagoner County.

In fact, in a letter that her attorney mailed to the Wagoner Board of Education he stated, “Do not fill the vacancy until you have a place for my client.” On the advice of her attorney, she did not attend any of the hearings in Muskogee, although her father did attend. After the second hearing, one of the Board members asked him, “Sherd, why are you interested in this Black woman?” He stated, “That Black woman is my daughter.” She was hired at the next board meeting. She became the first African-American hired to teach in Wagoner County.

Parker’s professional affiliations include: OEA, NEA, Wagoner and Mayes County Rural Community Action Agency, and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. She earned many volunteerism awards. The March of Dimes honored her for outstanding service in helping to prevent birth defects. She received the Oklahoma Farm Bureau’s Black Heritage Distinguished Award of Excellence in recognition of her continuous support of agriculture education in the state.

Lola Parker Dean devoted more than 30 years to education in Oklahoma. Her steadfast determination and strong will made her a force in education in Oklahoma in an era when an African-American woman was supposed to be demure. At 103, she has slowed a bit, but still has plenty of drive.



Mrs. Juanita Lewis-Hopkins ***“A Teacher Extraordinaire.”***

Juanita Lewis-Hopkins, born July 23, 1923 in Tulsa to C.J. and Lillian Alexander, became a lifelong Tulsan and career educator. She received her formative education at Booker T. Washington Elementary School, Carver Junior High School, and Booker T. Washington High School. She graduated Summa Cum Laude and earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English with a minor in History and French from Langston University in 1943. Later, she obtained a Masters Degree in English from the University of Tulsa.

Mrs. Hopkins began her teaching career in 1954 at Carver Junior High School in Tulsa where she taught English for six years. She later taught English and Journalism at Marian Anderson Junior High School. In addition, she chaired the Communications Department. She served in that capacity for 23 years until she retired in May of 1983.

Because of her high expectations, love and compassion, respect for parents and community, and dedication to teaching, many of her former students describe her as “a teacher extraordinaire.” Her focus was always on the children. She wanted her students to understand the true history of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and America, as opposed to the revisionist historian’s view. She was the first organizer of the “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day” in Tulsa and was honored with the “Keeping the Dream Alive Award.” She was one of the founding members of the Coalition for Quality Education. After the Tulsa Board of Education closed Carver in May 1971, she, along with others, went on to start the Carver Freedom School in 1971. The Coalition held sit-ins at the service center and became known as “Freedom Fighters.” Carver reopened in 1972-73. Mrs. Hopkins is a founding member of E.W. Woods Community School in 1988-89 when TPS closed Anderson and Woods school removing the neighborhood schools.

Mrs. Hopkins received many honors during her career. Some include the 1973 Tulsa chapter NAACP Service Award, the 1973 North Branch YWCA Award for Community Service, the 1988 Eta Phi Beta Sorority Women of Distinction Award, the 1988 Alpha Kappa Alpha Image Award, the 1989 Morton Health Prevention Program Unsung Hero Award, the 1995 Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Community Service Award, and Leader of City of Tulsa awarded by then Mayor Susan Savage.

Mrs. Hopkins is a member of TCTA, OEA, NEA, Morton Comprehensive Health Board, AKA Sorority, Inc., and Tulsa Chapter of the NAACP. She is also a member of St. Monica Catholic Church. A student described her as “compassionate, honest, and an inspiration to young people and adults. She has contributed all of her adult life to serving the Tulsa community standing in the background while others receive the recognition.”



Mr. Millard L. House **“A Driving Force”**

The House-Hardeman families established their ties to Oklahoma when they participated in the Oklahoma Land Run of 1889. Millard Leon House, the son of John Wesley and Jeannette House and the seventh child of eleven children, was born in rural Logan County, Oklahoma east of Langston. During the early years, the family worked as independent farmers. To supplement the family income, the older children attended school only six months of the year and spent mid-August to mid-November in New Mexico picking cotton. In spite of missing school, Millard successfully completed his educational goals. Mr. House attended Langston High School until it closed and finished his last two years at Coyle High School graduating in 1962. He entered Langston University and in 1966, graduated with a B.A. in Education, the first for the House family. While at Langston University, he focused his attention on teacher education and student government. Later, he obtained a M.Ed. Degree from Northeastern State University and did further study at Oklahoma State University. His peers elected him senior class president and the friendliest class male his senior year. While at Langston, he met and married the late Anna B. Shumate.

A resident of Tulsa, Oklahoma for forty-seven year, Mr. House began his educational career as a social studies teacher at Gilcrease Junior High School in 1966. In 1970, he moved into school administration as the Director of Human Relations overseeing the employees of the Tulsa Public School District. From 1970-1976, he was a driving force behind the desegregation of the Tulsa Public Schools. During this process, he served as a consultant for the Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas school districts. In addition, he served as a desegregation consultant for the United States Air Force. While serving as the Director of Human Relations, he developed a handbook on group dynamics. Eighty thousand handbooks were sold to other districts by the Tulsa Public Schools.

Dale Hogg said, “He broke barriers and established himself as a leader and innovator during very challenging times... He personally obtained a grant from the University of Oklahoma which allowed for the production of a seven-part television series called ‘All About Integration’... He struck a balance with the community that kept the Tulsa School system on a positive track and the offer of a quality education to all students. One tremendous result is his contribution to the well-known success of Booker T. Washington and its balanced ratio of students, outstanding teachers and administrators.”

Mr. House established a nationally recognized mentorship program for Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. The mentorship program involved male students, parents, families, educators and professionals. The program fostered leadership skills, personal development, study skills and stewardship. Mr. House serves as a consultant at The University of Tulsa – School of Urban Education in a teacher preparedness workshop for student teachers. After thirty-seven years, the program continues to prepare teachers. In addition, Mr. House, as an adjunct professor at Tulsa Community College, wrote the first human relations syllabus for their human relations course which it continues to utilize today.

Mr. House has two very successful children, a daughter, Signee’ Bland and a son Millard II, and four beautiful grandchildren. He is a member of the Tulsa, Oklahoma Metropolitan Baptist Church.



Mr. Jesse (J.D.) Johnson **“Impeccable Qualities”**

Mr. Jesse D. Johnson was born on September 23, 1930 in Wyatt, Missouri, where his parents worked as field hands. When he was two years old his family moved to Brooksville, Oklahoma where he received his early education. During his sophomore year, he moved to Cushing, Oklahoma to live with his uncle who thought J.D., as he became known as, would receive a better education living in a city environment. Mr. Johnson graduated in May 1949.

Mr. Johnson played basketball at Langston University graduating in 1955 with a B.S. in Education. He earned his Masters in Education in 1975 and a Counseling Degree in 1978 from Southwestern State College.

In 1956, Mr. Johnson began his career in Altus, Oklahoma as one of the first black teachers hired in Jackson County to teach at the all-black school of Lincoln High. He taught social studies, Industrial Arts, and coached football, basketball and baseball. Mr. Johnson always used the athletic arena as teachable opportunities. He was a surrogate father to many students and instilled in them values that cannot be garnered from a textbook, such as integrity, fair-play, respect, and compassion for all mankind. He taught through words, actions, and deeds. Students gained positive self-esteem and learned to appreciate their ethnicity. He taught how to be a modest winner and a graceful loser. He believed that an individual who cannot follow surely cannot lead.

From 1966 to 1974, Mr. Johnson taught at Altus Southeast Junior High School. He respectfully mentored his peers, taking under his “wings” the young teachers, especially minority teachers whose exposure to and experiences with the majority race in the field of education were limited due to the circumstances of the educational environment of the times. He helped the minority students adjust to integration as he himself learned to survive in the uncharted waters caused by integration. He organized and directed summer programs geared for all minority children during summers of 1956-2000 and continued to mentor and teach the young men who took his reins. He sponsored (monetarily) and coached little-league softball and baseball as well as American Legion. He was a foster parent to students of military families who chose to remain in Altus and finish their senior year. In addition, he was a guardian to Veterans and made daily visits to veteran homes to make sure they received the best care.

In 1972, his peers named him the Jackson County Teacher of the Year. In 1973, his fellow coaches inducted him into the Jackson County Athletic Hall of Fame. In 1974, Mr. Johnson transferred to Altus High School. There, he continued his legacy in the classroom and after receiving a degree in counseling in 1978, he moved to become counselor. In 2000, after 44 years of dedicated service in education, Mr. Johnson retired. He is married to Fannie Chapel of Silver City and they have three children.

Jake E. Heard said that “Segregation, racism, and various other challenges, such as limited resources, did not stop the desire that Mr. Johnson had to live out his dream as a teacher and coach. With all odds against him, he used these challenges as a lesson to shape and mold his students and athletes to strive for the best through hard work and dedication.” In the words of Mr. Johnson, “doubt and fear will be the enemies that you will battle, but you have to believe through your hard work you can defeat them.”



Mrs. Mary “The Fox” Johnson
“Student Advocate”

Mrs. Mary Alexander Johnson was born July 17, 1944 in Washington, D.C. She received a B.S. Degree from Allen University, Columbia S.C. and a Masters Degree in Education from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK. She is certified as a Reading Specialist and in Secondary Administration and has graduate credits from Howard University in Washington, D. C. Although her roots are in Washington, D.C. and Laurens, South Carolina, most of her adult life is grounded in Oklahoma.

In 1973, Mrs. Johnson began her first teaching experience in the Fox Public Schools of Oklahoma where she taught elementary and high school social studies. She was also an Instructor in psychology and sociology and an Academic Minority counselor at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Mrs. Johnson saw the need to introduce the historical African- American Greek letter organizations and cultural awareness programs to her students. She later moved to the Ardmore Public Schools where she remains as an educator and counselor.

Mrs. Johnson, affectionately known as "The Fox", is one of Oklahoma's great treasures. "She positively touches the lives of countless people in and out of the state of Oklahoma. She is a warrior for issues that defy the inalienable rights of others. "The Fox" will tackle any problem that threatens the well being of communities and will strategically find solutions for situations that need to be addressed. She earns the respect and endearment of people from all walks of life and from various backgrounds."

Mrs. Johnson is the founder of the African-American Youth Achievers program, a youth leadership program that teaches the importance of staying in school, becoming involved in extra-curricular activities, highlighting culture awareness while preparing students for higher education. Many of these students are among those who are awarded scholarships and other opportunities at various colleges and universities. She wants to give children an opportunity to have avenues outside of Ardmore, to see and have a vision. She takes her students to OU, OSU, Langston, Oklahoma City, Cameron, Murray State, Southeastern and colleges in Texas and Kansas. She has made it her goal to know "who to call" when one of her students needs an answer. The payoff for Johnson is witnessing the end result. "The greatest gift is to see them go on to college, then on to their career and succeed. I enjoy what I do. I am here for my students every day and I always give them my best."

Johnson served on a variety of community boards and worked closely with various groups in hopes to better the community. Some of those include H.F.V. Wilson Community Center board, Ardmore Arts and Humanity Council, the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Program, and the Housing and Urban Development Advisory Board.

She holds awards and honors from Langston University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, the American Legion, Miss Black Oklahoma State Pageant and many more. Gov. Henry Bellmon nominated her to a four-year term on the Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities Board of Directors. Gov. George Nigh nominated her to the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority Board.

Johnson says that despite a teaching career that spans for more than 40 years, she has no plans for retirement. Johnson and her husband, Albert, have one son, Albert Johnson Jr.



Mr. Charles B. McCauley (Posthumously)
“Consummate Professional”

Charles B. McCauley was born May 17, 1944 in Oklahoma City to George and Elzora McCauley. Mr. McCauley had three sisters Wanda, Gwen, and Flossie and three brothers Jessie, Maurice, and Donald. He grew up in Oklahoma City, where he graduated from Douglass High School. He went on to earn his Bachelors degree in Industrial Arts and a Masters in Education from Central State University, now the University of Central Oklahoma.

Mr. McCauley married Earlene Carr and their marriage lasted over 40 years. They reared two daughters, Amber McCauley Williams and Kesha McCauley. He has three grandchildren.

His educational career spanned over 42 years. He began his career as a middle school teacher in the Oklahoma City Public Schools where he taught for five years. He left this position to begin what became a distinguished 36 year career with the Oklahoma Education Association as the first African American Professional Staff Person. He later obtained the position of being the first minority manager at the Association. Mr. McCauley had many responsibilities where he worked with teachers on behalf of the children of the State. He loved Public Education and the promise it provides to "all children." He worked tirelessly to ensure that OEA's vision of a great public school for every student was realized. Some of the areas he endeavored included Membership and Organizing, Human and Civil Rights, and Member Benefits. He organized and managed the Oklahoma Delegation at the National Education Association Representative Assembly for 36 years, and the Oklahoma State Teacher's Convention, and many more of the OEA institutions and conferences.

In addition, the community in which Mr. McCauley lived knew his presence. He was a lifetime member of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity where he chaired the Kappa Ebony Bowl for over 28 years. Under his leadership, more than 1,000 youth participated in the annual event representing teams from more than fifty (50) churches, civic, and youth organizations. More than \$25,000.00 in cash awards have been presented in addition to certificates, plaques and other forms of recognition. The Awareness Bowl is designed to encourage young people to learn about and gain an appreciation of the accomplishments made by Black people. He was an honored educator of the Urban League, a volunteer for Contact Telephone Helpline and other Community Service Organizations.

Mr. McCauley valued his relationship with God above all things. He was a faithful member of the Greater Mt. Olive Baptist Church, OKC for over 40 years. Mr. Charles B. McCauley passed away after a short illness on December 31, 2013.



Mrs. Violet Alford Patterson
“A Taskmaster”

Mrs. Violet Alford Patterson was born near Clearview, Oklahoma in 1927 to Emily and Wesley Alford. She attended Little Hill School before moving to Weleetka, Oklahoma where she attended school through the eighth grade at Weleetka Dunbar. Dunbar did not have a school for Blacks, so she had to travel to Clearview Douglass High School to continue her high school education graduating in 1946.

Mrs. Patterson’s love for education began at a very early age. She grew up admiring her older sisters as they went to college and came back to the Clearview and Weleetka areas to teach. She knew that education would be her area of study. Mrs. Patterson received her B.S. in Business in 1950 from Langston University, her M.S. in Business in 1967 from Oklahoma State University and did further study at Oklahoma State University and Northeastern State University. Mrs. Patterson is married to Lee V. Patterson Sr. They have two daughters, Dr. Emily Patterson Harris and Gwynell Patterson Wilson; two sons Dr. Lee V. Patterson Jr. and James A. Patterson and five grandchildren.

Mrs. Patterson began her career at the State Training School for Boys in Boley, Oklahoma as a Business Manager and Business Instructor. In 1968, she began her stint at Booker T. Washington High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma as the Cooperative Office Education Coordinator. After some years, she became the Business Department Chairperson. Her assignment involved training young people to become efficient and well-trained office workers. As an educator, she encouraged countless young men and women to take their education seriously and pursue careers that would benefit themselves and their communities. She was a taskmaster, but her belief in her students’ abilities caused them to rise to the occasion time and again. She taught them lessons that go beyond the textbook.

Mrs. Patterson became highly involved in many professional organizations such as the Administrative Management Society, Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association, Oklahoma Business Education Association; just to name a few. In addition, she taught Sunday School for 30 years in the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education.

After retirement from Tulsa Public Schools in 1986, Mrs. Patterson taught as an adjunct instructor at Tulsa Junior College and Langston University at Tulsa. Because of her dedication, she was awarded Oklahoma’s Outstanding Business Educator of Vocational Business and Office Education Award and was Inducted into the Booker T. Washington Hall of Fame in 2000 and received the Educational Service Award from Business Management Department at Langston University/UCT. She is a past President of Tulsa Chapter Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Because Mrs. Patterson knows the value of a good education, she led a scholarship program to assist young people with their college expenses while she served as President to the Women’s Missionary Unit of the First United Baptist District Association. After she retired from that position, the scholarship fund was named the *Violet Patterson Scholarship Fund* in her honor.



Dr. Willa Allegra Strong (Posthumously)
“Inspirational Educational Leader”

Dr. Strong was the oldest daughter of William M. and Ruby Johnson Strong, both Texas natives. She was born June 28, 1906, in South McAlester, Indian Territory and her siblings Ruth born in 1908, M.L. in 1913, and Paul in 1917. William worked as a garage mechanic and Ruth gave piano lessons, and later taught music in the public schools.

Dr. Strong attended the first L’Ouverture school built in 1908. She graduated in 1924 from the same school that she was destined to be principal. Following high school graduation, Dr. Strong attended the University of Kansas where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree. She returned to L’Ouverture in 1929. She continued her studies at the University of Chicago for her Masters degree and then Syracuse University and the University of Oklahoma to receive her Ph. D. in Education. She was then elected principal at both the L’Ouverture elementary and high schools, a title and position she held for 30 years. In addition, she was active in the community, serving as a faithful member of Ward Chapel A.M.E. Church. Her close relationship with God at an early age provided her with the faith and wisdom to face the new challenges and goals of her students and teachers.

Dr. Strong developed a reputation as one of Oklahoma’s foremost African American educators. In 1956, she was elected president of the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers after having served twice as president of the East Central District Association and vice president of the Oklahoma State Association. The McAlester Community Concert Association and the Human Relations Council were two of her special interests.

Dr. Strong was an inspirational educational leader whose life devotion was to ensure the achievement of each child who passed through the doors of L’Ouverture School. She instilled a “can do” spirit and attitude in the minds of both children and faculty. The students were taught to be proud of their heritage, to stand up for right, to serve the community and to be somebody!!!

In 1968, the McAlester Public Schools integrated, which began the end of L’Ouverture as a separate identity in the system. This action transferred 115 L’Ouverture high school students to the McAlester High School, leaving L’Ouverture with only the first eight grades. Dr. Strong was not pleased and told her patrons, “I’ve talked with our school officials and we have no choice but to integrate. We realize this is part of the pattern, calling for new attitudes and guidance to make the judgment. A group of black leaders met with Congressman Carl Albert, who told us, ‘segregated schools are morally wrong and integration of schools is something that is bigger than Congress.’”

At the final integration of the grade school, Dr. Strong was assigned as vice principal of the McAlester Junior High School, but illness caused her to be ineffective in that position and she retired on June 30, 1970, after 41 total years to service. Dr. Strong died August 12, 1971, from breast cancer and was buried in Oak Hill Cemetery. On that day the McAlester City Council passed a resolution renaming 11th Street from South Street to Electric Street in her honor, naming it “Strong Boulevard.” However, such a beautiful monument cannot fully express the love and gratitude felt for her by the L’Ouverture Alumni and the entire community of McAlester.

Inductees

2011



Curtis Brackeen

Willie Mae Etheridge

Dr. Henry Kirkland Jr.

Rev. Willie B. Parker

William R. Patterson

Eddie Walter Warrior

Dr. La Verne Ford Wimberly

Dr. Meshack M. Sagini

Jimmie B. White Williams

Tom Anthony Withers Jr.



Harold Aldridge Sr.

Chalon Anderson

Sylvester "Prof" Franklin

Dr. Loretta Collier

Gladys Foshee

Willie Frank Hurte

Albert Johnson Sr.

Herbert "Prof" King

Dr. Fredrick D. Moon

Dr. Mendell L. Simmons



Eva Louise Boyd

Lou Eddie Burris

Dr. Ada Siquel-Fisher

Charles L. Henry

Lettie Ruth Hunter

Dr. Freeta Jones-Porter

Dr. Betty G. Mason

Dr. Wanda Johnson

Willard G. Parker

Thelma R. Parks



Honoring The Past - Celebrating The Present - Looking To The Future



OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF NEGRO TEACHERS

In Oklahoma Territory, the first separate schools (schools specifically designated for African Americans only) opened in Oklahoma City and Guthrie in 1891 and in Kingfisher in 1892. Annual training institutes, conducted in Oklahoma City for Oklahoma County teachers and aspiring candidates who were preparing for teaching examinations, were at first racially mixed. Among the black group were professionals with powerful intellect, broad social commitment, and common interests, including their small, primitive, isolated schools, an avid interest in reading, and an intense racial pride.

The institutes led to the organization of the Ida M. Wells Teachers' Association in 1893. It included black teachers in fourteen counties and twenty-six communities of Oklahoma Territory. By 1900, these teachers had enrolled a total of 3,929 children in the territory's separate schools. The association struggled to secure improved in school facilities and to promote professional advancement for black teachers. Jefferson Davis Randolph served as the first president. The group later expanded into the Territorial Association of Negro Teachers. By 1907 statehood, Indian Territory had a similar association, and the two provided a nucleus for the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers (OANT).

In December 1907, one month after statehood, sixty-seven black teachers of the former Twin Territories met at Colored Agricultural and Normal University in Langston to reorganize their associations into the statewide Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers. Inman E. Page, then in his ninth year as university president, hosted the meeting. According to Evelyn Strong, OANT historian, both environmental and professional challenges contributed to the nature of the group's early leadership and to the development of its mission. Presidents between 1907 and 1924, with one exception, were school principals. J. H. Brazelton served as OANT's first president, elected in 1907. In 1908, Inman E. Page succeeded him.

In the early period leaders focused on expanding membership, developing leadership, acquiring knowledge of the state school system and of the educational environment in black communities, and improving professional competence through in-service training. Toward the end of its life, the organization primarily pursued legislation to relieve problems of separate school finance. This evolved because most black educators were acutely aware of the unfair, inequitable funding for separate schools. Children endured poor quality instruction, dilapidated buildings, and inadequate books and supplies. Smaller black communities had little or no representation in the decision-making at local or state levels.

By the 1920s, many of Oklahoma's 1,170 black teachers expressed a need for opportunities in leadership and self-expression, although older leaders desired to retain professional power. The membership compromised on a new constitution in 1924. Under it, the association improved its organizational and administrative procedures. It initiated new media of communication, new district and departmental divisions, a broader statewide educational program for black teachers, students, and communities, new leadership destined to impact OANT's future programs, and renewed interest in legislation to improve facilities. The 1920s shaped the association's educational and legislative activities for the next two decades.

OANT pursued a variety of activities in the 1930s. Cooperative ventures with the Langston University Alumni Association were led by Frederick D. Moon. A 1935 project resulted in legislation that provided tuition to send black teachers and others to out-of-state colleges and universities (blacks then could not attend any college or university in Oklahoma other than Langston, by state law). This measure operated until 1948, when Oklahoma schools began to provide graduate and professional training, and 1954, when public schools were desegregated. Another development was the reestablishment in 1935 of OANT's official organ, *The Journal*, edited by W. E. Anderson of Okmulgee.

The 1940s were OANT's most productive era. During World War II, the association directed an intensive effort toward revising the Oklahoma Constitution and statutes to broaden public education's financial base and provide equitable funding to separate schools. As a consequence, in special referendum elections, Oklahoma voters approved constitutional amendments on July 2, 1946, and July 6, 1948. Between 1946 and 1953, these two measures brought about more than \$18 million in appropriations for separate schools.

On November 5, 1946, the people approved four constitutional amendments for "Better Schools." These resulted from an initiative petition jointly sponsored by the Oklahoma Education Association (OEA) and OANT. One amendment brought additional financial support to separate schools through county levies of the "Moon mill," named by some blacks in honor of Moon, who had marshaled the drives to achieve voters' signatures for the initiative petitions that secured its inclusion as one of the four.

U.S. Supreme Court decisions in 1954 and 1955 augmented the social changes of the 1940s. In response, OANT organized a program to prepare for transition to school desegregation and to protect black teachers' welfare. OEA also geared various activities to those purposes. Most notable were the development of research studies and communications designed to retain black teachers in desegregated school systems. On October 28, 1955, OANT decided to merge with OEA. Even as it disbanded, OANT worked untiringly to retain employment for black teachers after 1955. Nevertheless, as many as four hundred of them, many holding graduate degrees, were replaced by inexperienced white teachers who were recent college graduates.

OANT members had earlier begun to join OEA, and OANT was entirely dissolved by 1958. During its half-century of existence, OANT had commanded unswerving support. Records reflect that in 1955, 1,500 of Oklahoma's 1,622 black educators were members. Historically, the association's primary mission had been to raise the standards of education for black children. OANT achieved that purpose, while making a major contribution to civil rights.

Author: Dr. Melvin Todd (Oklahoma Historical Society)

Notes & Autographs

OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc.

In 2010, The Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. was constituted and incorporated as a nonprofit organization to recognize and to honor those professional Oklahoma African Americans, who have taught at least five years in the State of Oklahoma, who have exemplified a commitment while demonstrating exceptional abilities in realizing ideals, service or leadership in the teaching and guidance of their students.

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