

*Association of Negro Teachers Presidents*



(Photo: Currie Ballard Collection—Oklahoma Historical Society)

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



*The Tenth Annual  
Ceremony and Banquet*

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

*Friday*

*September 24, 2021*

*7:00 p.m.*



*2021 Induction Ceremony - Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.*

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



Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

*"Thoughts from the President"*

As we view America today with the multiplicity of climate change issues resulting in wildfires, droughts, and floods; a deadly virus claiming the lives of thousands; a nation still in the grips of social injustices; and the continued wars among countries, it is time to reflect and celebrate "good" and the best of manly deeds which is human recognition.

This honored class of 2021 has approximately 350 years of combined services to their profession. With this recognition, their diligence and service in the teaching profession is now elevated to a place of honor. We must not ignore the trodden pathways of this year's honorees. Their influence upon the lives of students, colleagues, and dignitaries world-wide will resonate forever.

In addition to the distinguished educators whose credentials speaks for themselves and are with us, in addition, the departed honorees are recognized posthumously for their years of commitment and service. It is imperative that we collect, preserve, and share their stories through the eyes of those they influenced.

We encouraged you to visit the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. Museum in Clearview, Oklahoma to access the stories of current and past inductees through the interactive display kiosk.

May we all hold firm to the belief in all people and embrace the vision of the OAAE 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.

Further, we ask that you take a minute to thank the dedicated Board of Directors and Committee Members for their efforts over the past ten years and the Oklahoma History Center for being a partner from our inception. I sincerely hope you enjoy the occasion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

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



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# Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.



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## 2011 Inaugural Induction

Mr. Curtis Brackeen  
Muskogee, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Willie Mae Etheridge  
Checotah/Warrior, Oklahoma  
Dr. Henry Kirkland Jr.  
Atoka, Oklahoma  
Rev. Willie B. Parker  
Spencer, Oklahoma  
Mr. William Robert Patterson  
Lawton, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

Dr. Meshack M. Sagini  
Langston, Oklahoma  
Mr. Eddie Walter Warrior  
Muskogee, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Jimmie Beatrice White Williams  
Idabel, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Dr. La Verne Ford Wimberly  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Mr. Tom Anthony Withers Jr.  
Clearview, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

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## 2012 Second Annual Induction

Mr. Harold C. Aldridge Sr.  
Taft, Oklahoma  
Dr. Chalon E. Anderson  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dr. Loretta Brown Collier  
Tulsa, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Gladys Marie Forshee  
Sapulpa, Oklahoma  
Mr. Sylvester "Prof" Franklin  
Haskell, Oklahoma

Mr. Willie Frank Hurte  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dr. Mendell L. Simmons  
Norman, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mr. Albert Johnson Sr.  
Lawton, Oklahoma  
Mr. Herbert Clarence King  
Lawton, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Dr. Frederick D. Moon  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

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## 2013 Third Annual Induction

Mrs. Eva Gallimore Boyd  
Chickasha, OK (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Lou Eddie Goodlow Burris  
Broken Bow, Oklahoma  
Dr. Ada Sipuel Fisher  
Oklahoma City, OK (Posthumously)  
Mr. Charles L. Henry  
Lawton, OK (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Lettie Ruth Hunter  
Oklahoma City, OK (Posthumously)

Dr. Freeta Jones-Porter  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dr. Betty G. Mason  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dr. Willard G. Parker  
Muskogee, OK (Posthumously)  
Ms. Thelma Reece Parks  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dr. Wanda J. Pollard-Johnson  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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## 2014 Fourth Annual Induction

Dr. Charles E. Butler  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Valerie Inez Carolina  
Wewoka, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Lola Parker Dean  
Porter, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Juanita Lewis-Hopkins  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Mr. Millard L. House  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Mr. Jesse "J. D." Johnson  
Altus, Oklahoma  
Ms. Mary "The Fox" Johnson  
Ardmore, Oklahoma  
Mr. Charles B. McCauley  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Violet A. Patterson  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Dr. Willa Allegra Strong  
McAlester, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

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## 2015 Fifth Annual Induction

Mrs. Nancy Ola Randolph Davis  
Spencer, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mr. Manyles B. Gaines, Jr.  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Dr. Ernest L. Holloway, Sr.  
Boley, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Marilyn Ballard Jackson  
Clearview, Oklahoma  
Mr. James Roy (J.R.) Johnson  
Muskogee, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

Mrs. Clara Mae Shepard Luper  
Hoffman, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Dr. Gloria Joan Pollard  
Spencer, Oklahoma  
Dr. Jimmy V. Scales, Sr.  
Idabel, Oklahoma  
Dr. Virginia L. Shoats  
Muskogee, Oklahoma  
Dr. Valree Fletcher Wynn  
Lawton, Oklahoma

# Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.



## 2016 Sixth Annual Induction

Mr. Jerry Lee Belton, Sr.  
Boynton, Oklahoma  
Dr. Karen M. Clark  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Dr. Leon Edd, Jr.  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Jo Ann Goodwin Gilford  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Ms. Claudette Goss  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Mr. Cedric Johnson  
Muskogee, Oklahoma  
Dr. Anquanita Kaigler-Love  
Lawton, Oklahoma  
Mr. Wallace Owens, Jr.  
Guthrie, Oklahoma  
Mr. Herman Cornelius Robbins  
Tulsa, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Lena Lowry Sawner  
Chandler, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

## 2017 Seventh Annual Induction

Mrs. Olive Ruth James  
Wewoka Oklahoma  
Mr. Calvin Rob Johns Sr.  
Seminole, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Helen Louise Franks Miner  
El Reno, Oklahoma  
Dr. Cecelia Nails-Palmer  
Tulsa, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Dr. Henry Ponder  
South Carolina - Wewoka, Oklahoma

Dr. Dennis L. Portis III  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mr. Nathaniel Quinn Sr.  
Boley, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mr. E. M. "Nat" Watson Jr.  
Edmond, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Mildred Tilford  
McAlester, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Charlotte J. Walker  
Clearview, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

## 2018 Eighth Annual Induction

Mrs. Amelia Louise Swain Alford  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Dr. Ann Marie Allen  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Marilyn Frances Duncan  
Wilburton, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Emma Lee Jones Freeman  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mr. James L. Furch  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Mrs. Joyce Ann Henderson  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Mr. Benjamin Harrison Hill  
Tulsa, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Judith Ann Carter Horton  
Guthrie, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Dr. Delois Ann McGee  
Checotah, Oklahoma  
Mr. James A. Senter  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

## 2019 Ninth Annual Induction

Mrs. Montecella Lucinda Driver  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Mr. Joe B. Gordon  
Wagoner, Oklahoma  
Mr. John Edward Haney  
Guthrie, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Gertrude Marie Lewis  
Broken Bow, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mr. Lee Virgil Patterson Sr.  
Tulsa, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

Mr. Leander "Lee" Roland  
Spencer, Oklahoma  
Mr. Louis Irving Ryan Jr.  
Vinita, Oklahoma (Posthumously)  
Mrs. Joyce Ann Stripling  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Dr. Goldie V. L. Thompson  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Mrs. Mildred Nadine Wallace  
Wewoka, Oklahoma

## E. M. "Nat" Watson Jr. Scholarship

### 2021 Recipients



**Jfrica Terry Rowlan Richie, Jr.** attended Chickasha High School where he graduated in May 2021. He was a class Valedictorian with a 4.1 GPA, five-time defensive player of the game in football, honorable mention linebacker in the district, and two-year varsity starter in football, and participated in basketball, track, and weightlifting. He was a member of National Honor Society, STUCO, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Additionally, he maintained perfect attendance during his four years in high school. He is a freshman at the University of Oklahoma where he is majoring in architecture. His parents are Keosha Richie and Terry Richie of Chickasha, Oklahoma. He plans to walk –on football next semester.



**Charie A. Barnett** graduated from Morris High School in May 2021. While in high school, she played basketball for four years and in 2020-21, the team won the Heartland Conference Championship game. Charie was a three-year member of National Honor Society where she participated in numerous community service projects. She was a member of the Gifted and Talented program, Upward Bound, and the Morris High School band for five years. In 2019, they were voted District 2-A Oklahoma Band Association Champions. She is a student at Northeastern State University at Tahlequah, Oklahoma and will major in nursing. Her parents are Robert and Kamilah Barnett of Morris.

# 2021 OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc. Program

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*Welcome*

*Dr. Wanda Johnson Pollard  
Board of Directors: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Invocation*

*Mr. Jimmie L. White Jr., Treasurer  
Board of Directors: Warner, OK*

*Dinner*

*B & B Catering  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Opening Remarks/  
Introductions*

*Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr., President  
Board of Director: Clearview, Oklahoma*

*E. M. "Nat" Watson Jr.  
Scholarship Recipients*

*Mr. William "Bill" Ford  
Principal Founder E. M. "Nat" Watson Jr.  
Shawnee, Oklahoma*

*Citations/  
Acknowledgements*

*State Officials*

*2021 Induction Ceremony*

*Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.  
President: Clearview, Oklahoma*

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## 2021 Inductees

*Mrs. Captoria Wells Aldridge  
(Posthumously)  
Taft, Oklahoma*

*Ms. Shirley Hurd  
(Posthumously)  
Idabel, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Raushan Ashanti-Alexander  
Chickasha, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Marsha Jo Akins Jordan  
Edmond, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Leroy H. Alfred  
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Jimmie L. White Jr.  
Warner, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Ycedra Daughy  
Choctaw, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Marvin R. Williamson  
(Posthumously)  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Orlando Hazley  
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Ardell Drake Withers  
(Posthumously)  
Clearview, Oklahoma*

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*Closing Remarks*

*Mr. Larry O'Dell  
Director of Communications & Development  
Oklahoma Historical Society*

## *Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee*



### *Mrs. Captoria Wells Aldridge*

*(Posthumously)*

*"A Meticulous Educator"*

*Mrs. Captoria Wells Aldridge* was the eldest of seven children born July 24, 1921 to Horace Wells and Daisy Smith Wells in Taft, Oklahoma. She attended school in Taft and graduated from Moton High School in 1938. She attended Langston University at Langston, Oklahoma where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in home economics. Later, she earned her Master of Science degree in Education from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. In 1942, she married Harold C. Aldridge and together they began a family in Taft, Oklahoma. Mrs. Aldridge had three children, Dr. Harold Aldridge, Jr., Dr. Dayle Aldridge, and Captoria Aldridge Thornton.

In 1946, Mrs. Aldridge received her first teaching assignment in a two-room, segregated school, at Coal Creek Elementary, where she taught grades one through eight. Prior to the start of school each day on cold mornings, she started the fire in the wood stove so that the room to heat the room before students arrived. Later, she returned to teach at the school where she was educated, Moton High. Before she began teaching secondary education exclusively, Mrs. Aldridge taught elementary students in the morning and home economics to secondary students in the afternoon. Coupled with her rigorous schedule, she was also the cheerleading sponsor and wife of the championship-winning basketball coach. Transporting the cheerleaders to and from games and preparing banquets for the team and their families were duties that she handled effortlessly.

In her capacity as a home economics teacher and sponsor of Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) and Future Homemakers of America (FHA), she was charged with teaching meal preparation skills to her students. Earlier in her career, she used those skills every day to prepare the school's lunches. Mrs. Aldridge and her VICA members traveled to Oklahoma City to attend conferences. She knew the importance of exposing these small-town students to opportunities learned within the confines of the conference.

Mrs. Aldridge was an active and involved member in the community. She was a lifetime member of the Flipper Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Taft, Oklahoma where she served as a missionary and was a Sunday School teacher. She was a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Silhouettes of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., and Muskogee County Election Board precinct worker. Prior to desegregation, she was a member of the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers. That organization later merged with the Oklahoma Education Association and she continued her membership. Additionally, she was a member of the Oklahoma Retired Education Association and Muskogee County Retired Education Association.

After 36 years of service as an educator, Mrs. Aldridge retired in 1982. In nominating her mother, Captoria Thornton stated, "Mrs. Captoria Wells Aldridge was an educator's educator with a heart for service. She loved being a teacher and her students knew she was the genuine article." She made a positive impact on the lives of her students and other individuals in the community.

*Mrs. Captoria Wells Aldridge* was a firm believer that education is the great equalizer. She imparted that belief in her own children and the children she taught in the classroom. She never gave up on a child and her students continue to carry the training and skills learned from her with them today.



## Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



### Mr. Leroy H. Alfred “A Heart for Serving”

*Mr. Leroy H. Alfred* was born to F. Nit and Dovie Alfred on February 8, 1944, at the old Morton Health Care Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is the middle child of six siblings: sister, Jean and brothers, Kenneth, Bobby, Darrell, and Craig.

Mr. Alfred was raised in Beggs, Oklahoma. An avid reader, academic achievement was not difficult for him. Weighing the pros and cons of being an athlete and academics, he decided that studies were more important for his future endeavors. He finished third in his graduating class of thirty from Phyllis Wheatley High School in Beggs. He would be the first member of his

family to attend a four-year university. In 1963, he enrolled in Langston University, returning to Tulsa to work with his father each summer to help finance his education, and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Langston in 1967. After graduation, he was called into the U.S. Army by conscription, served two years, and awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service during the Viet Nam War. He earned a Master of Education Degree in Elementary School Administration from Northeastern State College (Northeastern State University) in Tahlequah, and an Administration Certification from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Mr. Alfred was an educator in the Tulsa Public School System and devoted thirty-eight years to fulfilling his dreams of teaching; seven years in the classroom, teaching math and physical education, at Hawthorne Elementary School. His instructional skills as a strong male role model kept students on-task, enhanced student learning by using various instructional approaches to achieve academic goals and problem-solving skills. As a result, these methods were incorporated into his home room teaching assignment. He then accepted an administrative role, serving four years at Jackson Elementary and four years at William Penn Elementary as vice-principal. Mr. Alfred then served a total of twenty-three years as elementary principal at Frost, Lindsey, Anderson, and Alcott Elementary Schools.

As an administrator, Mr. Alfred demonstrated leadership, organization skills, analytical thinking skills and the ability to motivate teachers and students. He initiated, designed, and implemented programs to meet specific needs of the school. This approach was instrumental in aiding Alcott Elementary School. He was described as a hands-on educator, who took personal pride in working with and teaching children. Within two years, Alcott Elementary worked its way off the state at-risk school list with a model professional development program and ambitious plans. “I did not come in with wholesale changes right away,” said Mr. Alfred, “It took some time to change the philosophy.” Alcott Elementary was later chosen by Oklahoma State University as a math and science demonstration school for using hands-on teaching techniques.

Mr. Alfred mentored others as a member of the Tulsa Area Alliance of Black School Educators by supporting inexperienced administrators and sharing research in education, especially as it pertained to African American children. He was honored as Principal of the Year on two occasions. He was a member of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, National Elementary Principals Association, and the Tulsa Elementary Principals Association.

Seamlessly shifting gears, Mr. Alfred would help by taking the lead through chaotic situations, while integrating his charitable humanitarian interests to benefit impoverished people, particularly those seeking to better their lives and educate their children. After retiring, he continues to mentor children and volunteer for the Tulsa District Schools whenever possible. He also volunteers at Vernon AME Church where he has been a member for forty-three years. He has received Vernon AME Men’s Day Award on two occasions, Vernon AME Member of the Year, and Certificate of Appreciation from First Baptist Church of Beggs, OK. He is a 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree Master Mason with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Oklahoma, Oklahoma Jurisdiction.

Mr. Alfred enjoys reading, boating, and camping activities. He is a basketball aficionado, horseback riding enthusiast, and he loves motorcycles. He is known for helping the elderly, and others by using his vehicle to transport them to doctor appointments, to church or to pick up staples. He manages the housing program established at his church to provide families with housing, meals, tutoring services, and homework assistance.

*Mr. Leroy H. Alfred* is an educator who understands the importance of building community, empowering teachers, providing direction, and defining priorities. The instructional and problem-solving skills he utilized prepared students to succeed in and out of the classroom.

## *Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee*



### *Dr. Raushan Ashanti-Alexander*

*“Educational Excellence Without Exception”*

*Dr. Raushan Paul Ashanti-Alexander* was born Paul Dean Alexander to John and Laura McDonald Alexander on March 14, 1950, in Chickasha, Oklahoma. He was the second of nine children, his twin sister Paula is the oldest; sisters: Sharron and Karren; brothers: Horace, John (deceased), Bruce, Duncan, and McDonald. Though both parents were a great influence on him, it was his mother that ignited his love for learning and the need to be a "lifelong learner."

Dr. Ashanti-Alexander attended Chickasha's all Black, Lincoln Elementary and Junior High Schools. In 1961, he realized that he wanted to attend college during a "Sixth Grade Day" tour at Langston University. At Chickasha High School, which was predominately White, he distinguished himself by being the first African American to be awarded the Joe David Foley Sportsmanship Award and the American Legion Citizenship Award. Dr. Ashanti-Alexander graduated from Chickasha High School in 1968.

Southeastern University of Oklahoma in Durant recruited Dr. Ashanti-Alexander to play baseball but he later transferred to Central State University in Edmond. In 1972, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Studies Education. It was while serving in the United States Army that his intense research and study of African history and the Bible that he committed his life to Christ, changed his name, and entered the ministry (1973-79). He earned a Master of Education degree from University of Central Oklahoma, 1977; Master of Science degree in Guidance and Counseling, University of Nebraska, Omaha, 1986; Educational Doctorate (E.D.), University of Oklahoma, 1999; Phillips Theological Seminary, Tulsa, 2006; and a Harvard School of Business Certificate of Management, 2007.

As a Colored Methodist Epistle minister, Dr. Ashanti-Alexander began his 45-year career in education in his hometown with a teaching assignment at Chickasha Middle School in Social Studies on two occasions; history at Enid High School; Social Studies, Beveridge Junior High School, and counselor, South High Omaha, NE; and Social Studies, Roosevelt Middle School, Oklahoma City; Administrative Intern, Northeast High School, Oklahoma City; U.S. History teacher, Douglas High School, Oklahoma City, and Social Studies teacher at Chickasha High School. His administrative assignments were vice-principal, Moon Middle School, Oklahoma City, and Chickasha Middle School, and principal assignments at McClain High School, Madison Middle School, Pershing Alternative, and Lindsey Alternative School, Tulsa, and Lincoln Elementary School, Chickasha.

During his tenure, Dr. Ashanti-Alexander's awards and accomplishments include: Chickasha Public Schools Co-Principal of the Year Award, Christian Methodist Episcopal – Living Legend Award, Global Citizen Award from the World Experience Foundation, Alternative School Administrator of the Year, member Oklahoma Education Association (OEA) and founding member of Oklahoma Education Association Black Caucus. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity-Beta Eta Lambda Chapter.

As an educator, Dr. Ashanti-Alexander sees no contradiction in his work whether as a teacher, an administrator, or in the church, serving as pastor of Oklahoma's CME Churches in Chickasha, Cushing, Sapulpa, and Tulsa, or in CME leadership roles on the local, state and region levels; community/civic involvement as the Ward 3 Representative on the Chickasha City Council or president of the Chickasha Tri-County Branch of NAACP #6138 for the last ten years. When it comes to African, American or Chickasha's history, Dr. Ashanti-Alexander's extensive research ranks him as a scholar, whose expertise is recognized in the classroom as well as at speaking engagements at all levels.

*Dr. Raushan Paul Ashanti-Alexander* lives in Chickasha, Oklahoma and is the principal of Lincoln Elementary School and the pastor of the historic Miles-Brown CME Church in Chickasha. He and his wife, Rosalind, have six children and eleven grandchildren. He believes that children and all people should know and be proud of who they are and where they come from, despite their race, creed, socio-economic status, or educational background.

## *Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee*



### *Mrs. Ycedra Daughty* *'The Determined Educator'*

*Mrs. Ycedra Daughty* was born in Shawnee, Oklahoma to Alice and Wilbur Leatherman. Her mother, a teenage high school dropout but later returned to receive her high school diploma, named her Ycedra. Ycedra attended the all-black school, Dunbar Elementary School, in Shawnee grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup>. She completed high school at the integrated Shawnee High School. As one of the 17 African American students enrolled at the high school, only she and three others graduated.

Mrs. Daughty loved attending school and knew she wanted to be a teacher at early age, she enjoyed “playing school.” Her inspirations came from her mother, third and fourth grade teachers Mrs. Word and Mrs. Early on she knew she wanted to attend college at Oklahoma Baptist University to study music but was told, due to segregation, she would not be allowed. Her only option would be to attend Langston University. She was determined and was eventually admitted to Oklahoma Baptist to become the first African American to enroll and major in Music at the University and graduate.

Mrs. Daughty began her teaching career in Amarillo, Texas teaching stringed instruments at Whittier Elementary. After a few years in Amarillo, she moved back to Oklahoma City where she substituted taught before she was hired as a first-grade teacher at Hawthorn Elementary. She remained at Hawthorn for eleven years before she moved to Capitol Hill Elementary to teach for two more years as 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher before entering the school system as an administrator.

Those years included Administrative Intern for Coolidge and Hoover 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Center, Assistant Principal for two years at Dunbar Elementary School. Principal for fourteen years at Edgemere Elementary in Oklahoma City, Principal at F. D. Moon Elementary School in Oklahoma City, Principal at Oakridge Elementary for nine years.

Mrs. Daughty received many notable achievements in her illustrious career among them her most notable was to change the academic status of F. D. Moon (under leadership) after being appointed in 2007.

Due to Mrs. Daughty’s longevity and tenure at Edgemere Elementary School, the student population grew to capacity and beyond. Her leadership style, popularity with the students and staff, and community support led to many successful years of meeting the mandated percentage of students that tested proficient and above as evidenced by yearly test results. In addition, the school was awarded a flag and additional funding to purchase books. She was known for establishing afterschool programs at each school sites.

Mrs. Daughty would like her legacy to be one in which ‘parents, teachers, the community, and neighborhood to remember as one who loved them.’ Her educational career lasted for 45 years.

Mrs. Daughty was married to Kenneth Daughty, and they have two sons, Kenneth Jr., and Andre Daughty, 2 daughters-in-law Danielle and Rashell, and 4 grandchildren (Kenneth III, Kashiell, Jaden, and Cambria).

*Mrs. Ycedra Daughty* was an administrator never found in her office during school hours but found inside classrooms reading to students, providing teachers a break (and teaching the lesson), outside with teachers during recess duty. Not only was her school popular, test scores improved, teacher’s lounges, closets, and offices turned into small group teaching spaces, and the community succeeded. She was determined to leave her school and students better than found.

## *Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee*



### *Mr. Orlando Hazley* *“Compassionate Role Model”*

*Mr. Orlando E. Hazley, Jr.* was born June 16, 1933 to Orlando E. Hazley and Jennie Lee Hazley in Enid, Oklahoma. He and his siblings were quite rambunctious, and his parents knew just how to reign them in; firmly and lovingly. In sixth grade, he moved to Seattle, Washington to live with his older sister and her family. Four years later, he returned home to Enid to complete his education.

After earning his high school diploma in 1952, he relocated to attend Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma. After one year in college, he was drafted by the United States Army. After training, he was assigned to the Air Force base in Guam where he worked as a clerk-typist. It was there that he developed and honed his athletic prowess. Mr. Hazley played football and ran track and excelled at both sports. In 1955, he became a Worldwide Air Force champion in the 100-yard dash. In 1956, he received a full scholarship in track and field to Oklahoma State University in Stillwater where he became the first African American to earn athletic letters. In 1960, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in physical education; however, it was the thirty hours he accumulated in science that sealed his future in education. Later, he returned to college to earn his master's degree at Central State University (UCO) in Edmond, Oklahoma.

Mr. Hazley's teaching career began Moon Junior High School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to teach science. After six years there, he accepted a coaching and teaching position at Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He was an avid science teacher and his love for teaching was obvious to the students. His goal was to impress upon each and every student the joy and importance of learning. He believed that teaching was comparable to investing in students. He strived to ensure that every student who he taught knew of his expectations for them.

In 1973, Mr. Hazley was selected to be the Assistant Principal at Booker T. Washington in Tulsa. He stepped into the role with vigor and a readiness to elevate the minds of students. In this role, he was charged with insuring that the district implemented programs were beneficial for students. Because the students were expected to demonstrate academic growth, they had to be able to navigate the dynamics of the programs.

In 1977, Mr. Hazley was tabbed to be the principal at McClain High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The most critical challenge at the secondary level was truancy. A student had to be present in order for the teacher to teach, and the student to learn. Mr. Hazley developed an accountability method to track and reclaim truants. It required that the truant student along with a parent meet with him and create a plan for the student to return to learn. The number of students on the truancy list decreased expeditiously; the method proved successful for McClain High School.

In 1986, due to his success at reclaiming truants at McClain, he took the helm at the Tulsa Public Schools Drop-out Program. For five years, he executed the mandates of the court system by identifying dropouts and contacting parents. In 1991, after 36 years in education, Mr. Hazley retired.

Mr. Hazley is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. where he was selected Outstanding Alpha Man. In 1965, he was honored by the Tulsa Links organization for his dedicated service in the community. He was inducted into the Oklahoma State University Hall of Honor in 1984. In 2001, Mr. Hazley was honored as Outstanding African American Men in Sports. Additionally, he was a member of Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association, Oklahoma Education Association, National Education Association, and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc. For twenty-four years, he sang with the Rotary Men of Note - North Tulsa Rotary Club.

Mr. Hazley was married to the late Velda Tutt Hazley of Hennessey, Oklahoma and then to the late Antoinette Johnson Hazley of Tulsa. He has a daughter, Natasha C. Hazley Franks of Orange, Texas and a son, Orlando Jeffry Hazley of Tulsa. He has eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He and his wife, Linda, reside in Tulsa.

*Mr. Orlando E. Hazley, Jr.* strived to meet all students where they were academically. He refused to give up on any student, and he firmly believed it was important to provide ample opportunities and experiences for students to find their niche. With his guidance, support, and encouragement, many of his students did find their niche and excelled; and today, are productive and successful citizens in society.



## Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



### Ms. Shirley Hurd

Posthumously

“Educator, Nurse, Humanitarian”

*Shirley Hurd* was born December 30, 1949, to Zach and Dorothy Hurd in Idabel, Oklahoma. Her early life was spent with her five siblings on a small farm in the Boss community. Shirley picked cotton, chopped cotton, pulled cucumbers, and picked up pecans. She attended elementary and junior high school at Richland, an all-Black community school; then matriculated to Booker. T. Washington High School in Idabel. Shirley was an avid learner and quickly realized that education,

not farming, was her future. So, she immersed herself in learning.

After graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in 1967, she worked in the obstetrics unit at McCurtain Memorial Hospital in Idabel. While working there, her superiors observed her compassion for the patients and her strong work ethic. Determined to make nursing her career; she joined the Job Corps and relocated to Joplin, Missouri. She completed the program and returned home; then enrolled at Eastern Oklahoma College in Wilburton. Upon earning an associate degree at Eastern College, she enrolled at Central State University (later named University of Central Oklahoma) in Edmond, Oklahoma. In 1974 she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. Shirley was determined to continue to the next level. After an arduous search of colleges, she applied to and was accepted into the master’s program at the University of Colorado at Boulder and earned an M.S.N. degree in 1976.

In 1977, Shirley made a bold move; she applied for an instructor position in the nursing department at her alma mater, UCO. She was hired and for 28 years, it would become her sole teaching and instructing position. In her job capacity—she was responsible for classroom and clinical instruction for senior level nursing students. That required her to instruct the students in Critical Care Nursing in the classroom, then track and monitor them at various clinical sites to which they were assigned in the OKC area. In 1984, she requested and was granted a sabbatical to attend Texas Women’s University in Denton where she completed 60 hours toward her doctoral degree. Shirley returned to her job at UCO in 1986.

A colleague, Nelda Fister, said, “Shirley’s high integrity and high standards were evident in everything she did, and those standards laid the groundwork for her professional career.” Shirley primarily taught the senior level in community health, critical care, leadership management, and research. She was committed to her professional duties and responsibilities. During her tenure at the University of Central Oklahoma; she not only served as a faculty member, but she was also the course coordinator and assistant chairperson in the department of nursing.

Shirley also served as a university senator, was a member of the nursing advisory board, and frequently served as a mentor to new and adjunct faculty. She was active on standard and ad-hoc departmental and college committees, including the library, admission-retention, curriculum, and college grade appeals committees. More than once, she served on the committee responsible for preparation of the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) and Oklahoma Board of Nursing Visit documents for the reaccreditation of the nursing program as well as on committees charged with the responsibility of reviewing faculty for promotion and tenure. Shirley never missed a nurse pinning ceremony or graduation. She often served as senior class sponsor and as faculty advisor for the Zeta Sigma Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (1981-1983).

Her professional and personal memberships included: National League of Nursing, Oklahoma Nurses Association, Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, and Booker T. Washington/Slater/Riverside Alumni Club of Oklahoma City. Hurd’s honors and accomplishments included: Outstanding student in the doctoral program at Texas Women’s University; guest speaker at the Southeastern District Women’s Brunch and Conference on Health at Olive Branch Church in Wright City, Oklahoma; appeared as a panel member on the PBS program, *Frontline* where she shared her expertise regarding the profound increase in hypertension in the African-American community; and in 2010, her philanthropic work and support of the youth was recognized when the newly built Macedonia Baptist Church in Idabel dedicated the Shirley Hurd Youth Education Room.

Shirley retired from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2008. She died in 2009 from complications of colon cancer. Her siblings, Annie Scott, Donald Hurd, Sharon Hill-Wooten, and Tony (Anita) Hill and adopted brother, Johnny Wayne (Velma) Lewis reside in Idabel.

*Shirley Hurd* developed a stellar work ethic as a youngster in Idabel and she carried it all the way to the halls of the University of Central Oklahoma, and throughout her life. Her innate ability to impart knowledge on the multitude of nursing students whom she instructed was an influencing factor in the quality of nurses who graduated from U.C.O.

## *Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee*



### *Mrs. Marsha Akins Jordan*

*“It’s How Much You Care”*

Marsha Jo Akins Jordan was born on March 28, 1955, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to R. J. and Bobbie Akins. Marsha Jo attended elementary and secondary schools in Hugo, Oklahoma. She lived in The Belmont Addition of the community. As the 7<sup>th</sup> child of 12 children, she was raised in situational poverty. However, she and her siblings were taught to do more, work harder, and be better. Those early experiences had a great impact on her life. She graduated from Hugo High School and attended post-secondary school at Central State University (University of Central Oklahoma) in Edmond, Oklahoma. Mrs. Jordan obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice with emphasis on Juvenile Delinquency. Later, she attended graduate school and obtained her first Master of Science Degree in Public Administration, and her second Master of Education Degree in Special Education Mild/Moderate.

Mrs. Jordan knew she wanted to become a teacher/educator at the age of nine because of her love for reading and learning. Her fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. Louisteen Harris at Hugo was her inspiration.

Mrs. Jordan began her illustrious career in the field of education in Las Vegas, Nevada where she made significant differences in the lives of students, parents, and the community. There, she taught elementary education at Matt Kelly and J. E. Manch Elementary Schools, Shiloh Christian Academy, Cornerstone Christian Academy, and Mountainview Christian Academy. Mrs. Jordan was the first African American English Adjunct instructor at the Community College of Southern Nevada. When she returned to Oklahoma, she taught in the Upward Bound program at Langston University, Langston Oklahoma.

Mrs. Jordan believed the best part of her teaching was the relationships she built with her students and families. “It is the joy of my passion,” and she would like to be remembered as a passionate, caring educator who empowered her students to embrace their education and become dreamers, builders, thinkers, and innovators to positively impact and change the world in which they live. Mrs. Jordan stated, “Not only did I expect my students to learn, but I also expected them to excel in every endeavor they engaged in.” In totality, Mrs. Jordan’s educational experience total over 30 years in three different schools in the Oklahoma City Public Schools.

Some of her achievements include Outstanding Graduate Student-Teacher Education Department- UCO-2012; Teacher of the Year Award – North Highland-2008; published first book “The Belmont Addition” in 2007 and her second book “Reigning Wisdom” in 2014. She was the first African American to Speak at the Hugo Public Library and for the Hugo Public Schools African American History Week. In addition, she was recognized as an accomplished author by the Hugo Daily News. She is married to Darrel Jordan Sr., and they have three children, Kerwin, Daria, and Darrel Jordan, Jr. and recently retired from the Oklahoma City Public School District.

*Mrs. Marsha Jo Akins-Jordan’s* favorite quote “Students don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” which epitomizes her journey as an educator. She cared about her students, and they knew that she cared. It was a win-win for them and for her.

## Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



### Mr. Jimmie L. White Jr.

*“An Accomplished Historian”*

*Jimmie L. White, Jr.* is the eldest of five children born to Jimmie L. and Vanilla R. White of Langston, Oklahoma. He graduated from Guthrie High School in 1969 and enrolled at Oklahoma State University in the fall of that year. In 1973, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education Social Science and a Master of Arts in History degree in 1975.

His professional teaching career began in 1973 when he was hired to teach sixth grade social science at Capitol Hill Middle School in Oklahoma City. In 1976, he was hired as a history instructor by Connors State College in Warner, Oklahoma. Jimmie remained employed with Connors until he re-

tired on June 30, 2013. He later returned as an adjunct instructor until 2020.

Julie Dinger, Connors College Interim Assistant Vice-President of Academic Affairs said in her letter of recommendation, “Mr. White has shown time and again through his career the importance and value of education, helping to create relationships and processes that enhance and improve education for Oklahomans.” In 1997, Mr. White was appointed by then Governor Frank Keating to serve on the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Commission. His effort on the commission was instrumental in increasing awareness of this pivotal time in Oklahoma History. Additionally, Jimmie volunteers as a guide for the tour of all-Black towns in Oklahoma where he lends his expertise on the history of these towns. While at Connors, Mr. White established the Social Science Division’s Distance Education Program in 1989 and was appointed chair of the program in 1990; making him the first African American to hold that position.

Mr. White was/is an active member and participant in various civic and professional organizations. He is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and served two terms as state president. Other memberships include The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc., Higher Education Alumni Council of Oklahoma, and Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges, Black Heritage Committee of the Oklahoma Historical Society, Life member of NAACP, vice-president of the McIntosh County NAACP, first African American elected as chairman of the McIntosh County Democratic Party, and treasurer of the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.

Awards earned by Mr. White include: first Minority Assistantship by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education in 1975 and 1976, Most Outstanding Black Instructor at Oklahoma State University by the Afro-American Society in 1976, Langston University Distinguished Service Award in 1980, United States Jaycees Outstanding Young Men of America Award in 1980 and 1981, Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition by Congressman Mike Synar in 1982, Wanda Bass and McCasland Award for Excellence by the Oklahoma Heritage Association in 2004.

As a historian, Mr. White continuously strived to ensure that accurate accounts of history were presented. Some of the presentations and more relevant publications were: History of Connors State College,” *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, vol. 1, 336-337, “James Brooks Ayers Robertson Governor of Oklahoma, 1919 – 1923,” *Oklahoma’s Governors, 1907 – 1929: Turbulent Politics*, vol. XVI, The Oklahoma Series, 87-114, and “The Black Tiger of the Twin Territories: William Henry Twine, Attorney, Editor, Community Man.” *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, vol II 1528 – 1529.

Relevant presentations include: “Black Towns of Oklahoma,” Mu Chi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa of Connors State College, November 4, 1992, “Martin Luther King: The Hate That Made Him Love,” National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Eufaula, Oklahoma, January 17, 1993, “Black Skin, Red Blood: The History of the Black Warriors of America 1770 – 1974,” Muskogee Veteran Medical Center, Muskogee, Oklahoma, February 23, 1993, “No Longer Invisible: The Men Who Reveal Black History,” Boynton/Moton High School, February 1, 2001, “Tulsa Race War of 1921,” Mid-American Conference on History, Oklahoma State University, January 21, 2002, “Struggle and Hope: Oklahoma Black Towns,” Kari Barber. Documentary Consultant, 2013.

*Jimmie L. White, Jr.* always began his classes with the Native American proverb that explains why history is vital to the survival of a people, “A people without history is like wind upon the buffalo grass.” He endeavored to ensure that his students knew not only their own history but the history of all people.

## *Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee*



### *Mr. Marvin R. Williamson*

*Posthumously  
"The Literacy Teacher"*

*Mr. Marvin Williamson* was born to a family of nine children in Ardmore, Oklahoma in Carter County. He was an outstanding scholar and athlete who graduated from Ardmore's historic Fredrick Douglas High School in 1960. He began his post-secondary career at Langston University on a football scholarship, and later transferred to the College of Emporia, where he graduated from in 1964.

Mr. Williamson lived with his extended family in California after graduating from college. He was drafted into the Army in 1965, where he served as an Intelligence Operations Specialist. Upon his honorable discharge, he moved to Oklahoma City and worked as Director of Program Development for Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OIC). He took his mission there very seriously and thus began a career of 'inspiring and motivating adult learners through academic and career education.

The OIC was patterned after a program in Philadelphia that was extremely successful in that community and Mr. Williamson created that same success in Oklahoma City for its residents and later OIC International was created to provide job training skills and services on a global scale in Lagos, Nigeria. Mr. Williamson was part of a team of colleagues that implemented OIC principles to assist 150,00 Nigerian soldiers with education and employment skills. On his return from Nigeria, with his young family he began working with the Oklahoma State Department of Education as a researcher. He was one of only a few African Americans working in research, planning and evaluation.

Mr. Williamson published and co-authored numerous statewide studies under the OSDE umbrella, focusing student assessment and evaluation. At a later time, he even began his doctoral studies at the University of Oklahoma. Marvin left the Oklahoma Department of Education but continued as an educator as the Director of Resources and Development for Millwood Public Schools from 1983 to 1990 during this time he implemented a number of improvements to the educational assessment process and learning environment at Millwood. While there, he introduced competency-based assessment and was a key contributor to the high academic and educational achievement the school received in the 1980's. During this time Marvin also served as a founding member of the Central Oklahoma Assault on Literacy Program (AIOP) and eventually became state director. Mr. Williamson was fully involved with the community and coordinated a statewide fundraising effort with then Mayor of Atlanta, Mayor Andrew Young.

Mr. Williamson continued his support for literacy throughout his life. He was an active member of numerous organizations that supported literacy and reading such as the Oklahoma Education Association, National Education Association, Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration, Oklahoma Literacy Coalition, Governors' Task Force on Literacy, and the Mayor's Commission on Literacy.

Mr. Williamson returned to the Oklahoma State Department of Education as the Administrator of Adult Education and Literacy for the Western Region of Oklahoma; he traveled far and wide establishing literacy centers wherever communities needed them. After many years he retired from the SDE and went to work for the Oklahoma Public School District he was totally immersed in his work and focused on teachers and students who were learning English as a second language, providing oversight, training and guidance. He was affectionately called 'Mr. Marvin' and continued to contribute to the lives of his students, families, and community by providing sound academic instruction, culturally relevant materials and ensuring clear pathways to future success.

He held many important positions that included: Supervisor Adult Education, Education Coordinator – Western Region, Director of Business School Partnerships, Director of Resources and Development, Co-Ordinator Planning Resource and Development, Chief Counselor Nigerian Government, Director of Job Placement OIC, Intelligence Operations Specialist. Mr. Williamson was true Literacy Leader and as well as an ambassador of Goodwill for the state of Oklahoma.

*Mr. Marvin R. Williamson* was a strong advocate for reading literacy. His passion was not only to ensure that students were competent readers and thinkers; but also, productive citizens who practiced what they learned.



## Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



### Mrs. Ardell E. Drake Withers

*Posthumously  
"A Passion for Giving Back"*

Mrs. Ardell Evella Drake was born on July 11, 1916 in Clearview, Oklahoma to Sam and Mendie Edwards Drake. Ardell was the third of ten siblings Lillian, Luvenia, Irene, Selma, Etta, Alma, Everett, W. G. and Willie B. As one of the elder children raised in the home, Ardell developed a deep devotion to family and strong leadership qualities in life. She assumed the role of matriarch upon the death of her mother. These qualities would continue to evolve throughout her career in education.

Mrs. Withers attended Clearview Public School and graduated high school in 1935. In 1936, she entered Langston University where, as a recipient of the Government Work Program (NYA), she worked several jobs to finance her studies, and graduated in 1940 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education. While attending Langston, Tom Withers, Jr. of Cushing, Oklahoma, met and married Ardell. In 1946, they made their home in Clearview. Adell Thomesene Withers Cudjoe and Tom Withers, III were born to this union. Mrs. Withers' thirst for knowledge motivated her to attend East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma, earning a Master of Science Degree in Education in 1967.

Instead of pursuing her profession in areas where the potential of greater financial security existed, she chose to teach for forty-one years in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma where she would share her talents and dreams with those, whom she deemed needed it most. Mrs. Withers began her teaching career at Galilee Elementary; a two room, two teacher school for four years. Later, she was assigned to Northfork Elementary, Little Hill Elementary, Shiloh Elementary, and Grassy Lake Elementary schools. On 1956, due to the declining average daily attendance, these rural schools were consolidated into the Clearview Public School, where she taught seventh and eighth grade social studies.

As an African American educator in rural Oklahoma, she was often perceived as not only the teacher; but also, parent, counselor, consultant to community leaders and foremost, a trustworthy person. She was responsible for developing and implementing interactive lesson plans in accordance with county and state curriculum, assessing student progress by means of pre- and post- test data, and providing students with academic opportunities to ensure their success. She often stayed late in the classroom to help students who needed additional help with mastering specific skills.

When the population of Clearview declined, due to a lack of employment opportunities and fewer people pursuing a career in farming, the number of school age children declined. Consequently, in 1964, students in grades nine through twelve were transferred to Weleetka High School. Mrs. Withers continued teaching at Clearview Elementary School until it too was annexed into the Weleetka School District. In 1969, she was assigned to teach seventh and eighth grade social studies at Weleetka High School. It was her last teaching assignment. In 1968, Okfuskee County chose her as Classroom Teacher of the year, and Ardell represented the county in competition at the state level. Mrs. Withers retired from the school system in 1981.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Withers maintained professional affiliations with the Okfuskee County Classroom Teachers Association, Oklahoma Education Association, National Education Association, and Oklahoma Retired Teachers Association. In 2001, the Oklahoma Retired Teachers Association honored Mrs. Withers by presenting her with their (VIP) Very Important Member Award.

Mrs. Withers served as secretary/treasurer of the Clearview Community Improvement Corporation, which she organized; chairperson of the Weleetka Rural Fire Association, Inspector of the Election Poll 311 for twenty-five years, Worthy Matron of Omega, Number 106, Order of the Eastern Star; Activities Director for the Clearview Rodeo, and member of the Amigos Club. Mrs. Withers was a life-long member of Tyree Chapel A.M.E. Church where she served as secretary-treasurer.

*Mrs. Ardell Drake Withers* was an educator with a passion for teaching. She invested in, encouraged, and loved each and every student; in return, they respected and admired her. Her ability to connect with her students was a prime reason that so many of her students became successful and productive adults.





# Reflections

2019 Induction Ceremony



## **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)*





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



*Become a Member  
The Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.*

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Teachers are expected to reach unattainable goals with inadequate tools.  
 The miracle is that at times they accomplish this impossible task.  
 Haim G. Ginott



# Memberships

OKLAHOMA AFRICAN AMERICAN EDUCATORS HALL OF FAME, INC

## Life Membership Options

Life Membership in the OAAE Hall of Fame consists of three options in becoming a life member of our hall of fame. Please read the options below and return to the address below. Thank you for your support for a great cause in recognizing our great educators throughout this state.

### OPTION 1: \$250.00 for two (2) years

\$50.00 of five (5) payments for two years

\$25.00 of twenty (20) payments for two (2) years

Two years limited payments (any means)

If payment plan is not completed in two (2) years, money is forfeited

### OPTION 2: \$500.00 for one (1) year

\$50.00 for ten (10) months

One year payment, any means possible for one year

If payment plan is not completed in one year, money is forfeited

### OPTION 3: \$500.00 one-time payment

Individuals must select option plan and sign off on said plan before signing life membership proposal.

### AGREEMENT:

I \_\_\_\_\_, agree to option \_\_\_\_\_ to fulfill my obligation to become a life member of the OKLAHOMA AFRICAN AMERICAN EDUCATORS HALL OF FAME LIFE MEMBER.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TREASURER/PRESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Membership

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Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\$35.00 Individual Membership

\$35.00 Associate Membership

\$10.00 Student Associate Membership

\$500.00 Individual Life Regular Membership

\$500.00 Individual Life Associate Member

\$250.00 Corporate Annual Membership

### Article 1.0 – Members and Membership

1.1 Regular voting members in good standing shall be anyone who is a current employee or retiree of the Oklahoma public or private educational system.

1.2 Associate Non-voting members shall be anyone who is a supporter of the Oklahoma public or private educational system.

Oklahoma African American  
Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.  
MEMBERSHIP  
110126 N 3830 Rd  
Clearview, Oklahoma 74880

## ***Shirley Ann Ballard Nero Endowment Fund Focus on All-Black Towns***

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) is honored to announce the creation of the Shirley Ann Ballard Nero Endowment to benefit historical programming for historical black towns. Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr. donated the initial amount to the fund. The OHS will continue to fundraise to increase the endowment to include an annual Juneteenth event at the Oklahoma History Center.

Shirley Nero, a native of the all-black town of Clearview, Oklahoma taught at Sapulpa and then Porum Public Schools for thirty years. Nero received, on four occasions Teacher of the Year honors. In 1994, the Sapulpa School Board presented Shirley with the Distinguished Service Award. She serves on several boards including the Oklahoma Preservation Committee, the Friends of Oklahoma History Multicultural Board, and the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame. In 2016 she was a recipient of the Pinnacle Award, which honors outstanding women for their work as role models to women and children in the Tulsa community.

The Shirley Ann Ballard Nero Endowment provides annually for research, programming, exhibits, and/or events related to the Historically Thirteen Original All-Black Towns in Oklahoma. Oklahoma history and especially the state's unique story of these black towns is one of Shirley's passions. No other state had as many all-black communities/towns as Oklahoma. This occurred for several reasons, primarily the granting of land to freed slaves of the Five Civilized Tribes, and African Americans making land runs and settling near one another.

We humbly ask that you please consider the OHS with your generosity. A gift of your generous support is that many superior programs will be offered, one-of-kind artifacts will be preserve, and unique and interesting exhibits will be created. Your special gift will help the OHS take a major leap forward to collect, preserve, and share the extraordinary history of Oklahoma!

You will be pleased to know that you will be listed as a donor in a future issue of Mistletoe Leaves and the OHS EXTRA Newsletter. Moreover, you will be recognized as a member of the Oklahoma History Legacy Circle, which was created to recognize donors, living and deceased, who make or have made contributions of \$1,000 or greater to an OHS endowment fund. Because endowment donations provide perpetual income to the OHS, membership in the Legacy Circle is also perpetual.

If you are able, please consider the OHS with your generosity in the future. There is so much more to be collected, preserved and shared and your support is vital.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Larry O'Dell  
*Director of Special Projects Development*

Please make a tax exempt donation tonight to the Shirley Ann Ballard Nero Endowment Fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation:

To: Shelly Crynes  
Development & Membership Coordinator  
Oklahoma Historical Society  
800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-7917  
405 521-2491 Fax 405 521-2492 [www.okhistory.org](http://www.okhistory.org)



### ***Gone But Not Forgotten***

## **We Need Your Help Today!!!!!!**

Remember those "good 'ole' teachers" we had back in the day? Those who are responsible for us being who and where we are today.

You can help keep their legacies alive by providing their names, the name(s) of a relative or a contact person to procure information to be included into our archival database.

This information will be evaluated and considered for future inductions into the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. Those who taught during the segregation era will be given priority consideration.

As we age and depart from this earth, it is imperative that we capture these contributions, averting further loss of past generations.

Please email your information to: Shirley Nero, [annnero@aol.com](mailto:annnero@aol.com) or Donnie Nero, [dr.donnielee@aol.com](mailto:dr.donnielee@aol.com).

# 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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## Thank you for your support!

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.

President Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

110126 N 3830 Road  
Clearview, Oklahoma 74880





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