

Presidents of the Association of Negro Teachers



(Photo: Currie Ballard Collection—Oklahoma Historical Society)

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



## *The Second Annual Hall of Fame Ceremony and Banquet*

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

*Friday, September 28, 2012      7:00 p.m.*



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



**Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.**

*“Thoughts from the President”*

It is hard to believe we are celebrating the contributions of our second class of esteemed inductees into the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. This class has over a combined four hundred years of 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 fruit is evident by the successes attained by their product.

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.



# Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.

## Dedication To

### Dr. Ernest L. Holloway Sr.

September 12, 1930

December 26, 2011



The Board of Directors of the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. dedicates this Second Annual Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Banquet to the memory of Dr. Ernest L. Holloway Sr., who served as a charter Board member of the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. His passion for learning and equality are key components for his impeccable tenure on this Board.

Dr. Ernest L. Holloway was born in Boley, Oklahoma. He graduated from Langston University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture after which he returned to his native home of Boley to teach at the local high school. He eventually returned to his Alma Mater, Langston University, where he served with fidelity for over forty years. He ascended through the ranks from registrar to the professoriate to dean of student affairs, vice president for administrative affairs, and ultimately to the Presidency. As Langston's 14th and longest serving President from 1979 to 2005, Ernest L. Holloway provided unmatched leadership, thus ushering the University through multiple periods of advancement and progress making it *Oklahoma's Choice* for a quality education.

Dr. Holloway was more than a just a President. Some may describe him as a rebuker, leader, civic leader, visionary, and a man whose influences will live in perpetuity. We will forever pine for Dr. Holloway and his passion for others. The OAAEHOF, Inc. and hundreds of other organizations remain indebted to his contributions.



## *Life - Time Members of the*

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

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*Mrs. Eunice Walker Edison  
Lawton, Oklahoma*

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

*President John Hargrave  
Ada, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Shirley Ballard Nero  
Clearview, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Orlando Hazley  
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Attorney Don Shaw  
Idabel, Oklahoma*

## *2011 Inaugural Inductees*

*Mr. Curtis Brackeen  
Muskogee, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Meshack M. Sagini  
Langston, Oklahoma*

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

*Mr. Eddie Walter Warrior  
Muskogee, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Henry Kirkland Jr.  
Atoka, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Jimmie Beatrice White Williams  
Idabel, Oklahoma*

*Rev. Willie B. Parker  
Spencer, Oklahoma*

*Dr. La Verne Ford Wimberly  
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*Mr. William Robert Patterson  
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Welcome

Mrs. Bobbie Allen Booker  
Ceremony Chair: Tulsa, Oklahoma  
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Invocation

Mr. Orlando Hazley, Tulsa, Ok  
Finance /Nominating Committee  
OAAE HOF Board of Directors

Dinner

Opening Remarks

Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr., Clearview  
President: OAAE Hall of Fame  
Board of Directors

2012 Induction Ceremony

Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

*2012 Second Annual Inductees:*

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

*Mr. Willie Frank Hurte*  
*Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

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

*Mr. Albert Johnson Sr.*  
*Lawton, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Loretta Brown Collier*  
*Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Herbert Clarence King*  
*Lawton, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Gladys Marie Foshee*  
*Sapulpa, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Frederick D. Moon*  
*Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

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

*Dr. Mendell L. Simmons*  
*Norman, Oklahoma*

Closing Remarks

Mr. Bruce Fisher  
Administrative Program Officer  
Oklahoma History Center

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



***Harold C. Aldridge Sr.***  
***“Pioneer Educator”***

**Harold C. Aldridge Sr.** was born November 17, 1917, in the small Arbeka community outside of Boley, Oklahoma. He currently resides in Taft, Oklahoma. He earned a Bachelor’s degree in Industrial Arts and Math from Langston University and his Masters Degree in Industrial Arts from Northeastern State University.

Mr. Aldridge had 37 years in education. He spent most of his educational career in the Moton School System in Taft, Oklahoma. He worked in many positions that included classroom teaching for 15 years, coaching for 19 years, vocational technical coordinator for 15 years, and principal for 7 years. His areas of teaching were in math and industrial arts.

Students under his tutelage have gone on to receive high honors and launch successful careers. Although his education career was noteworthy, he garnered an impressive high school coaching record where he won numerous district and regional tournaments and four state championships. These accomplishments led to his 1981 induction into the Oklahoma Coaches Hall of Fame and in 1995 induction into Langston University’s first Athletic Hall of Fame.

Mr. Aldridge strongly believes in supporting his community. While in the position as a vocational educator, he developed the talents of his students by assigning them practical jobs such as construction on church buildings and homes. The citizens of Taft elected Mr. Aldridge to serve on the Taft City Council where he focused on important issues such as the quality education for students. This commitment extended into other civic organizations including the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., which he joined in 1941 and in 1988 became a life member.

In 1942, Mr. Aldridge married Captoria Wells Aldridge. She is now deceased. They have three children: Dr. Harold Aldridge Jr., Dr. Dayle Aldridge, and Captoria Aldridge Thornton. The accomplishments of the Aldridge children is evident of the commitment of Mr. Aldridge’s dedication to community and the educational system. In addition, he has four grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren, and three great- great grandchildren.

Harold C. Aldridge Sr. is one of the standard-bearers for a quality public educator. He has influenced countless students to achieve educational, athletic and personal success. It is evident, as a pioneer in Oklahoma education that Mr. Aldridge helped to transform the communities and schools in which he lived and worked.

### ***Chalon Edwards Anderson, Ph.D.*** ***“Professional and Mentor”***



**Dr. Chalon E. Anderson** is a native of Oklahoma City born June 26, 1949. She attended the University of Central Oklahoma where she received a Bachelor of Science and Masters of Education in Health Education and Gerontology respectively. She is also a certified radiological technologist. She received from Oklahoma State University her Ph.D. in family relations and gerontology. She became the first African American female to receive a doctorate in Gerontology in Oklahoma.

At the University of Central Oklahoma, she now holds the honor of Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychology where she began teaching in 1991. Dr. Anderson has developed graduate courses at the University of Central Oklahoma and at the University of Oklahoma in the Human Relations Department. At OU, she was an adjunct faculty member in Advanced Programs, which provided graduate education to U. S. military personnel. Through that program, she taught internationally at military facilities in Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy, and South Korea. Prior to joining the faculty at UCO, she taught in the Radiology Program at Rose State College from 1984 to 1991.

Dr. Anderson published three books and over 19 articles. Her presentation resume includes over 70 presentations at the national, regional and state levels covering minority health, aging, cultural diversity, lifespan development, biological and psychological aspects of aging and numerous other subjects.

Over the years, Dr. Anderson received numerous honors, awards and recognitions for her services to and support of students. She served on state and national boards addressing policy issues for senior populations. The State of Oklahoma selected Dr. Anderson as a volunteer representative at the 2005 White House Conference on Aging that convened in Washington D. C. Other awards include 3 Merit Awards for Scholarly/Creative Achievement and Teaching at the University of Central Oklahoma, prestigious Hauptman Fellowship Award for research, the McNair Scholars Research Grant Mentor Award, the Research Grant Mentor Award of the Dr. Joe C. Jackson College of Graduate Studies and Research, the Dordick Award.

She served for many years as a member of the Leadership Council of the American Society on Aging. Other memberships include the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, a current member and past national officer for the Sigma Phi Omega National Honor Society in Gerontology, and a member and past board member of the Oklahoma Psychological Society.

During her 25-year career, she taught and trained many students who are now professionals in the areas of health, social science, and education. Dr. Anderson served as a mentor to many students. She exemplified mentorship, as evidenced by her tireless dedication to her students’ professional development.

She is married to Floyd Anderson, CPA and they have two children, Dr. Andraya Anderson-James and Steven E. Anderson, Esq.



***Dr. Loretta Brown Collier (Posthumously)***  
***“Advocate for Excellence”***

**Dr. Loretta Brown Collier**, born in Langston, Oklahoma, spent her entire life from elementary through college in the small college town. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Langston University, her Masters Degree from the University of Tulsa and her Doctorate of Educational Administration at Oklahoma State University.

In 1961, Dr. Collier began teaching English, reading and speech at George Washington Carver Junior High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma where she later became chair of the English Department for the Tulsa Public School System. In 1969, she moved from Carver to Monroe Junior High School, where TPS promoted her to a counseling position and later to guidance dean.

In 1975, Dr. Collier became a counselor at Booker T. Washington High School and rose through the ranks as an assistant principal and ultimately principal. In 1987, TPS promoted her to Director of Certified Personnel for Tulsa Public Schools. She retired from that position in 1995.

Dr. Collier was a truly phenomenal educator. As principal of Booker T. Washington High School, Dr. Collier faced many challenges. One in particular, she had the responsibility of carrying out a court ordered mandate of desegregations in the TPS system. She reorganized the school into a magnet school unlike most schools in the United States facing similar challenges. All student volunteered to attend Booker T. Washington High School, therefore leading the school into a voluntarily desegregation.

As principal, Dr. Collier was committed to building leadership capacity both in the classroom and in the office. These leaders provided the foundation for a first tier school to apply for and receive the United States Department of Education “School of Excellence” designation. Also during her tenure, she targeted the curriculum for increased rigor and focus. Under Dr. Collier’s leadership, this transformation in teaching and learning enabled her school selections to participate in the International Baccalaureate Programme, a school model that focused on global awareness and deepened instruction in world languages, and knowledge and information acquisition and use. Participation in the IB Programme permitted many students to enter college with enough earned college credits to classify them as juniors. During her tenure, the school had numerous National Merit and National Achievement Scholars, and Booker T. Washington High School gained the reputation of qualifying students to enter highly selected colleges in the United States and abroad.

Dr. Collier was dedicated to the profession and passionate about providing opportunities for students to learn, explore, and grow. She always kept students and their well-being at the forefront. When students needed an advocate, she assisted them in opening the doors to success. Her commitments to excellence and to students have been the hallmark of her career.



***Gladys Marie Foshee***  
***“Mentor and Teacher”***

**Mrs. Gladys Marie Foshee** was born the youngest of five children in Okmulgee, Oklahoma on September 19, 1941. She, along with her brothers and sister, grew up working in the family’s café in Okmulgee where Mrs. Foshee learned the work ethics her parents instilled in her. She attended Okmulgee Dunbar High School where she was named valedictorian of the Class of 1959.

Mrs. Foshee received a scholarship to attend Langston University to study science and mathematics where, in 1963, she graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree. It is here where her professors sparked her interest in science and math. The professors would use flamboyant and meaningful science terms to communicate with their pupils. She learned the eloquent scientific language her students identify with her

until this day. Her teaching career began at Booker T. Washington High School in Sapulpa, Oklahoma before desegregated schools. Here she engaged her students in mathematics and science through hands-on learning activities in the classroom.

Following her marriage to Ronald Foshee, she moved to Hawaii and taught for four years at Ilima Intermediate School in Honolulu. Upon her return to Sapulpa, she continued her teaching career and earned her Masters Degree in Agricultural and Science at Oklahoma State University. She taught science, chemistry, and math at Sapulpa Junior High with the love, challenge, and enthusiasm of teaching.

Among her accomplishments, she organized the first science fair at Sapulpa Junior High School. In addition to being a member of both the Oklahoma and National Education Associations, she was one of the co-founders of the Sapulpa NAACP. She also assisted in beginning the General Education Diploma (GED) Program at the Sapulpa Library and worked at the Hissom Institution Center in the Biology Labs.

Mrs. Foshee’s students fondly remember her for her use of the scientific vocabulary while teaching her students. For example, she would say, “Raise your phalanges, use your cerebrum, close your mandible or sit your gluteus maximus down,” and many more. Mrs. Foshee retired in 2000.

One of her colleagues said that Mrs. Foshee’s “creative science lessons and sincere interest in her students learning were effective, because her science classes would fill before the next school year began.” Other colleagues said she “was quite firm with you if she felt you were wrong or could have done better, while still radiating her warm and caring nature. She had high expectations for her students as scholars and as human beings, and set a positive personal example, encouraging them to reach out to learn new ideas and take advantage of new educational experiences. She was as much a counselor as an instructor!”



## ***Sylvester "Prof" Franklin*** ***"Lifetime Educator"***

**Sylvester "Prof" Franklin** was born November 30, 1924 in Paris, Texas. His family moved to Oklahoma in 1926 and settled 5 miles south of Haskell. After his mother's death in 1930, his aunt raised him until the Navy drafted him in 1943. Prior to going into the Navy, Prof Franklin married his high school sweetheart Victoria Wells.

He was in several battles during World War II, which included the Battle of Okinawa, one of the most important battles of the Pacific War. In 1950, he received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Langston University, where he majored in mathematics and chemistry with a minor in biology. In 1954, he received his Masters in Science Degree from Northeastern State University.

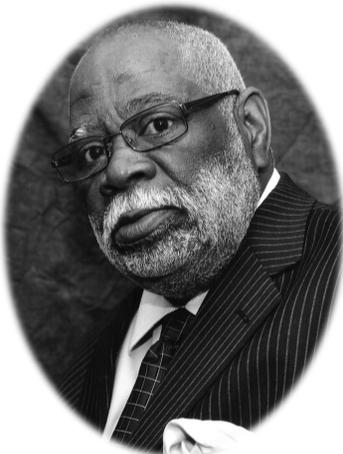
Prof Franklin began his first teaching job in 1950 at Booker T. Washington School in Haskell, Oklahoma. Prof Franklin remained there for seventeen years until 1967, when the school closed and integrated with the Haskell Public Schools. He began teaching middle school mathematics in the fall of that year after integration. In 1986, Mr. Franklin retired from full time teaching and remained at the school teaching part time. He is still being an effective GED classroom teacher and an inspiration to everyone in the community today.

He is currently in his 63<sup>rd</sup> year of teaching. Dr. Landon Berry, former Superintendent of Haskell Public Schools, states, "Prof Franklin is a hardworking, enthusiastic man who has demonstrated a tremendous amount of intrinsic motivation and self-pride which has enabled him to accomplish many things in his life."

Prof Franklin has spent a lifetime of educating the youth and adults of Haskell. The community and Haskell Board of Education dedicated the Franklin Event Center in honor of Sylvester Franklin. The school Superintendent noted that in Prof Franklin's 62 years of teaching, he missed only two days of work. At the age of 87, he is like the *energizer bunny* when it comes to caring for his students. He attends his students' activities, graduations, and even their weddings. Many students who had math, science and GED instruction from Mr. Franklin have become very successful people in life.

Prof Franklin and his late wife, Victoria, have four children. The three daughters became educators, two in Tulsa Public Schools and one is teaching in Haskell Public Schools. Their only son became a chemist and worked for the Hunt-Wesson Oil Company until he retired.

Prof Franklin has given so much of himself to students and staff for years with time, money, and support. He has not only taught students curriculum, but has instilled in them so much more in the form of integrity, honesty, respect, and responsibility.



## ***Willie Frank Hurte*** ***"Inspiring Teacher, Administrator, and Coach"***

**Willie Frank Hurte**, born May 16, 1939, is a native of Ardmore, Oklahoma. He attended Ardmore Public Schools, graduating from Ardmore Douglass High School. While a student, he experienced playing on championship teams. After high school graduation, he attended Langston University on a football scholarship. While on the football team as defensive captain, they won three Oklahoma Collegiate Conference Crowns and played in three bowl games in 1958, 1960, and 1961.

Mr. Hurte received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Education at Langston University in 1962 and Masters Degree in Public School Administration from Southeastern State University in Durant, Oklahoma in 1980. In addition, he served from 1962-1964 in the United States Army.

In 1967-68, Mr. Hurte taught Health and Physical Education, coached assistant high school football/track, and junior high boys basketball at Fox High School, Fox, Oklahoma. In 1982, he assumed duties as the Head Football Coach at Langston University. During his tenure, ninety percent of his players recruited graduated from college.

In March 1988, he worked for the Oklahoma State Department of Education as Assistant Director of School Plant Section. He organized workshops for School Superintendents for Maintenance and Safety of school facilities.

In 1992, the Oklahoma City Public Schools employed Mr. Hurte as the Assistant Principal/Dean of Students and Athletic Director at John Marshall, Capitol Hill and Northeast High Schools. Following that assignment, he worked at the school district's Central Office as Area Athletic Director for Douglass, Star Spencer, Southeast High Schools and Moon, Rogers and Webster Middle Schools. Due to his outstanding leadership in those positions, Region VIII selected him as Athletic Director of the Year. On January 31, 2003, he retired from the Oklahoma City Public Schools.

In 2000, Langston University inducted Mr. Hurte into the Langston University Athletic Hall of Fame. Also, in 2005 the Oklahoma Coaches Association inducted him into the Oklahoma Coaches Association Hall of Fame. The Central Oklahoma Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. recently recognized him for his outstanding leadership and contributions to the Oklahoma City Community.

Mr. Hurte and his first wife, who passed away, had three daughters, Valerie, Ruby, and Terri, and reared a great nephew, Gregory J. Turner. In 1999, he married Daisy Mayfield-Franklin. With her two daughters, Tori and Clarissa (Michael), they have five daughters combined and five grandchildren.

Mr. Hurte wore many hats, overcame challenging odds and achieved many accomplishments. He reached back as he climbed upward and provided stable pillars along the way. He states that he knows firsthand that it takes a village to raise a child and foster the necessary partnerships with family, school and community to impact lives successfully.

***Albert Johnson Sr.***  
***“Influential and Dedicated Leader”***



**Albert Johnson Sr.** was born at Fort Sill in 1927 and attended elementary and secondary school at Douglass School in Lawton, a segregated school. Following high school graduation, he attended Winston-Salem State Teachers College in North Carolina to earn his Baccalaureate Degree in 1950. Subsequently, he received his teaching certification from Langston University in 1951. In 1959, he earned his Masters Degree in Education at the University of Oklahoma.

He began his teaching career at his childhood school in Lawton, Oklahoma. Throughout his forty-four year career he served in various positions including teacher, coach, counselor, principal, Director of Federal Programs and Deputy Superintendent. Students and colleagues knew him to be very soft spoken while setting clear and high standards.

When Douglass School closed during the desegregation/integration period in Lawton, Mr. Johnson worked closely with the superintendent to assist him with the school district's desegregation process. He found it rewarding to see the entire community working together to make this happen.

Mr. Johnson's influence and tireless efforts extended well beyond his work day as he responded to the needs of the community by offering counseling services to parents, providing transportation to those in need and organizing a tutoring program at a local church.

He is active in numerous organizations such as the Lawton Chamber of Commerce, the NAACP, Drug Busters of Southwest Oklahoma, the Marie Detty Youth Services Board of Directors, the Southwestern Medical Board of Directors, the State Arts Council and Kids Across America.

Honors and awards include: The Oklahoma School Public Relations Association's Partners in Excellence Award, the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Youth Mentor Award, Toastmasters International Communication and Leadership Award, the Black Beaver Council Boy Scouts of America Century Member, the Cameron Campus Member Humanitarian Award, the Lawton Campaign Leadership Award and the Oklahoma Taskforce on Minority Aging Betsy D. Smith Award.

In 1991, Governor David Walters appointed him to the State Board of Education. Serving in that capacity, he became an influential member of the Oklahoma Alcohol, Drug Abuse Prevention Committee and the Life Skills Education Advisory Committee.

Mr. Johnson has always been a leader, dependable, strong and steady, yet unassuming. He has changed countless lives, giving hope, opportunity and encouragement. He is an Oklahoman to be treasured.

***Herbert Clarence “Prof” King (Posthumously)***  
***“Educator, Community Leader and Coach”***



**Herbert C. “Prof” King**, born in Kingfisher, Oklahoma on August 2, 1905, passed away in Lawton, Oklahoma on August 12, 1983. Students, fellow teachers, and citizens throughout the Lawton community knew him as “Coach” or “Prof.” He spent 38 years in education doing what he loved, teaching and coaching.

A 1926 graduate of Wichita High School, King participated as the first black on the National High School track team. In 1932, he earned his Bachelor of Science Degree at Tuskegee Institute.

At the University of Wichita, again as the first black athlete, he earned letters in football, track, baseball, and basketball. In 1929, The Conference named him All-Conference Central Conference in football and in 1931, selected him as All-Southern Fullback. In 1931, he received Honorable Mention on Chicago Defenders All American team.

Coach King began his teaching and coaching career at Moton High School, Taft, Oklahoma in 1934. From 1939-40, he taught math and coached at Lincoln High School in Gene Autry, Oklahoma. In 1940, he became the Athletic Director and Coach at Lawton Douglass High School in Lawton, Oklahoma where he coached a “winning” team for twenty-two years.

Coach King's career was so outstanding that the Oklahoma High School Coaches Association inducted him into the 1972 Hall of Fame for Oklahoma High School Coaches. His coaching career included four State football championships; two state basketball championships; and 13 district and four regional baseball titles. He retired from coaching in 1966 and served as Lawton Public Schools' Attendance Officer until his retirement on May 31, 1972. Following his retirement until his death, he served as the Procurement Clerk for the Great Plains Improvement Foundation.

As a community leader, he involved himself in many activities and supported the students and families. He made time for his students and taught them to be responsible young men and women. Coach King received many honors for his involvement in several clubs and organizations. On August 5, 1995, the city of Lawton honored him and renamed the North Lawton Community Center the H. C. “Prof” King Community Center.

H. C. “Prof” King married Grace L. Sharp and together they reared two daughters: Rosalind King Singleton and Carol King Green. He had a special love for his children and his grandchildren. His love did not stop with his immediate family; he and his wife fostered numerous young adults and teens in the Lawton area.

Coach King made a difference in the lives of his students. He saw the potential in students and worked to help them accomplish their goals and find success. His life exemplified what most of the black male educators did for their students and athletes. One former student commented, “When there was a need, he responded.”



**Dr. Fredrick Douglass Moon (Posthumously)**  
**“A Trailblazer for African American Education”**

**Dr. Frederick Douglass Moon**, known as the Dean of African American Education, was born on May 4, 1896, in Crescent, Oklahoma Territory and passed away on December 16, 1975 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He attended elementary school in Lincoln County, Oklahoma and entered, as a ninth grader, at the Oklahoma Colored Agricultural and Normal University (Langston University) at Langston and completed high school and two years of college. He went on to earn a Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts from the University of Chicago.

In 1921, Dr. Moon began his teaching career in Crescent, Oklahoma and assisted in gaining accreditation for the school. In 1929, he became president of the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers and in 1931, assumed duties as a teaching principal at Wewoka Douglass High School. During his tenure at Wewoka Douglass High School, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredited the school. Dr. Moon married Leoshia Harris of Oklahoma City in 1935. In 1940, he became principal of Douglass High School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and served in that capacity until 1961. Dr. Moon’s planning and diligence, coupled with the hard work of many, resulted in a one-mill building levy. Therefore, the dream of a new Douglass High became reality.

Dr. Moon served on the Oklahoma City Schools Board of Education in 1972 and became its first African American President in 1974. His tenure coincided with the federally mandated desegregation and the subsequent busing of students from neighborhood schools in order to bring about racial equality.

As a civic leader in the community, he served as director of the YMCA, president of the Oklahoma City Urban League, the Langston Alumni Association, and Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers. In addition, he served as vice-president of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the American Association of School Administrators. He also served on the Mayor’s Human Relations Commission and the Urban Renewal Authority. The Oklahoma School of Religion at Langston honored Dr. Moon with a Doctorial in Humanities. Dr. Moon authored numerous publications including *Organization and Administration of High Schools for Negroes in Oklahoma*, *A Fifth Freedom for the Negro*, and *Teacher Integration in the Border States*.

“It is through his leadership, creativity and vision that Douglass High School was able to see A Dream Come True,” said Wallace Johnson. Dr. Moon encouraged his students embrace education, dare to excel, reach for the sky, honor school, and above all respect teachers and fellow classmates. His towering presence and exacting standards for all who worked with him distinguished him as a gentleman of professionalism. He saw to it that he exposed his students to the best speaker at school, from Marion Anderson to Dr. Percy Julian.

Dr. Moon personified Frederick Douglass’ quote, “If there is no struggle, there is not progress.”



**Dr. Mendell L. Simmons (Posthumously)**  
**A “Dedicated Professional”**

**Dr. Mendell Simmons**, born the fifth of six girls on October 12, 1938, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, attended Dunbar Elementary and graduated with honors from Frederick Douglass High School in Oklahoma City. Before Dr. Simmons finished high school, she worked as a domestic worker, elevator operator and a communications cable maker. She completed her Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education at Langston University in 1969 and her Masters of Education and Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Oklahoma 1975 and 1982 respectively, while working full time.

Dr. Simmons married Robert (Bob) Simmons and they reared three children: Brynda (Griffith), Audrey (Smith), and Robert Jr. aka Bobby. They have seven grandchildren and one great grandchild. Dr. Simmons passed away on August 27, 2011. She spent 42 years in education, six of those years in first grade, 25 years as a financial aid advisor and academic advisor at the University of Oklahoma, and 11 years as instructor and academic vice president at the American Christian College and Hillsdale Freewill Baptist College

In addition to being a youth counselor, Dr. Simmons worked as a financial aid counselor at the University of Oklahoma and later promoted to academic advisor for Project Threshold, a federally funded program serving first generation college students, the economically disadvantaged or disabled students. She advised and mentored hundreds of African American and other students of diversity.

In 2000, following her retirement from the University of Oklahoma, she worked as an instructor and academic vice president at American Christian College and Seminary. American Christian College closed and she moved to Hillsdale Freewill Baptist College where she taught psychology.

Over the course of her tenure at Oklahoma University and beyond, numerous graduates and former students openly express the positive influence Dr. Simmons had on their lives. As an Academic Counselor, she provided counseling and advisement to hundreds of students. She established contact between students and tutors, identified and organized career and curriculum objectives, provided personal counseling and diagnostic testing as needed. She maintained student eligibility records and rendered academic progress reports. Other contributions included working with disadvantaged youth in the Norman, Oklahoma area. She designed and implemented programs specific to their needs and the Norman Youth Center. As a Special Education Teacher, she worked closely with the students, parents and administration to ensure students received a comprehensive evaluation and the best educational opportunity available.

In addition, Mendell valued her relationship with God and her service to His cause. She grew up within walking distance of her life-long church, Fairview Baptist Church where she served on many ministries.



*"Let The Show Begin"*



# OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc.

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*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.*

## **Sponsors:**

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Oklahoma Historical Society  
800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive  
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405 521-2491  
<http://www.okhitory.org>

Sharon Johnson Patton  
Editor  
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