

Association of Negro Teachers Presidents



(Photo: Currie Ballard Collection—Oklahoma Historical Society)

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



*The Eighth Annual Hall of Fame
Ceremony and Banquet*

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

Friday

September 28, 2018

7:00 p.m.



2018 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"

This is the 60th anniversary year of the Oklahoma City sit-in celebration. As I reflect back on this historic event I am reminded of the quote, "Where there is no vision, a nation will perish." This organization, state and country is indebted to Mrs. Clara Luper and her supporters who fought for equality for all mankind. Also, this is the eighth year of the Oklahoma African American Educators (OAAE) Hall of Fame, Inc., a vision which has exceeded far beyond my imagination. Due to much planning and deliberation of the OAAE Hall of Fame Board of Directors and Committees members, a dream was brought to fruition. As the opportunity presents, please acknowledge their steadfastness in bringing this evening together.

This Eighth Class of inductees represents some of the best of the best in Oklahoma education. Their 390 years of experiences range from public elementary education to higher education and the legacies they bequeath are the "footprints" thousands have ensued through their journeys of life. Although some of the inductees have passed from this life, their influences will remain as vital as the air we breathe. All have truly made a difference in their respective communities, the State and Nation. Congratulations to each inductee and their families.

Throughout the years, the significance of the Oklahoma African Educators Hall of Fame became more evident. This organization's mission is to recognize the dedicated Oklahoma African American Educators in the State, specifically during the dismal era of "separate but equal" edict. As we consider the responsibilities of these educators of educating the masses with limited and substandard resources, a ceremony of recognition is miniscule as compared to their accomplishments. Thus, my standard answer to the question of, why have an Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame? Is, "why not?" Why did Clara Luper take those students to Katz for a sit-in for equal rights in 1958? Why did our teachers fight for equality in the classroom and equal pay? Thus, why not create a repository to recognize our best role models and educators?

I encourage the citizens of this great State of Oklahoma to embrace the vision of this Hall of Fame, which profoundly states, "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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr." The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

President: Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.



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Ex-Officio: The OAAE Hall of Fame President
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Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc.



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)

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

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

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)

2015 Fifth Annual Induction

Mrs. Nancy Ola Randolph Davis
Spencer, Oklahoma (Posthumously)
Mr. Manyes 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. Schoats
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 (Posthumously)
Mrs. Charlotte J. Walker
Clearview, Oklahoma (Posthumously)

E. M. "Nat" Watson Jr.

Athletic Scholarship



This scholarship is generously donated by Mr. and Mrs. William "Bill" Ford of Shawnee, Oklahoma. Mr. Ford played football under coach Watson at Shawnee High School. Coach Watson had a major impact on the life and success of Mr. Ford and in return this scholarship has been established to continue the legacy of making a difference in the lives of young athletes as Coach Watson did for so many.

This scholarship is open to male and female athletes who attend and graduate from an Oklahoma Public school that will attend college full-time at an Oklahoma accredited institution. Preference will be given to African American students. The amount to be awarded will be contingent upon monies available each year and may vary. The selection process will be concluded by April 1st of each year and the recipients will be notified in writing. Recipients will be asked to attend the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame banquet in September.

1. Application for this scholarship must be received no later than March 1st for consideration.
2. Application must be completed entirely and returned to: OAAE Hall Fame, Inc., 110126 N. 3830 Road, Clearview, OK 74880.
3. Applicants must have participated in a recognized sports program by the OSSAA for at least two (2) years, need not be consecutive years of participation.
4. Scholarships will be awarded contingent upon maintaining a minimum of 2.5 GPA for the fall semester of the recipients incoming freshmen year of college (immediately following graduation from high school) and completion of 12 hours during that same fall semester at an accredited institution in the state of Oklahoma (verified by college or university registrar enrolled).

For more information on scholarship, please visit OAAE website at oaaehof.org.

2018 OZAE Hall of Fame, Inc. Program

Welcome

*Dr. Gloria Anderson
Board of Directors
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

Invocation

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

Dinner

*B & B Catering
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Opening Remarks/
Introductions*

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

*Citations/
Acknowledgements*

*The Honorable Anasthasia Pittman
Senate District 48
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

2018 Induction Ceremony

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

2018 Inductees

*Mrs. Amelia Louise Swain Alford
Tulsa*

*Mrs. Joyce Ann Henderson
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Ann Marie Allen
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Mr. Benjamin Harrison Hill
(Posthumously)
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Marilyn Frances Duncan
Wilburton, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Judith Ann Carter Horton
(Posthumously)
Guthrie, Oklahoma*

*Mrs. Emma Lee Jones Freeman
(Posthumously)
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Dr. Delois Ann McGee
Checotah, Oklahoma*

*Mr. James L. Furch
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

*Mr. James A. Senter
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

Closing Remarks

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

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mrs. Amelia Louise Swain Alford *“Enduring Encouragement”*

Mrs. Amelia Louise Swain Alford was born in Clearview, Oklahoma on November 30, 1923 to Lloyd V. and Rosie Swain. Mrs. Alford attended Clearview Elementary School and graduated from Clearview High School. She enrolled at Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma where she earned a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education in 1945.

At 22 years old, she was assigned to her first teaching job in 1945 at Waurika Elementary School in Waurika, Oklahoma for two years. For another two year stint, she taught at Davis Elementary School before being assigned to Tullahassee Elementary where she remained for six years. Again, Mrs. Alford was assigned to a new school, Bartlesville Elementary, where she taught six years. Following stints at IXL, Slick, and Tulsa Dunbar Elementary Schools, Mrs. Alford accepted her final teaching position at Mark Twin Elementary in Tulsa, Oklahoma. This position was during the integration of Tulsa Public Schools. She remained there until she retired in 1984 after 39 years of service in her profession.

Mrs. Alford continued to be an integral part of her community post retirement. In 1981, she and her (late) husband, Romeo Alford, Sr. founded the Clearview Rodeo. Their goal was to revitalize the community and bring former and current residents together in an annual event. The rodeo continues to be a major draw to promote the town of Clearview. Mrs. Alford is the business manager and continues to work diligently each year to ensure its success. She also advises concession vendors and assists with producing the rodeo brochure.

Mrs. Alford is a member of Flipper A.M.E. Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she has served in various capacities during her 60-year membership. Some of her duties have included secretary, treasurer, trustee, choir leader, and Sunday School Teacher. She is also a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Omega Chapter #106.

The majority of her career was spent instructing in all-Black schools with antiquated teaching materials that were often passed down after the all-White schools had used them. She made the best use of the materials and supplemented when necessary; it was often necessary.

Mrs. Alford believed that most of her students’ learning was the result of social interactions. Therefore, she designed her classroom to facilitate cooperative learning in the classroom setting. She ensured that learning was not competitive; instead, it was collaborative - allowing for all students to achieve and excel.

Mrs. Alford’s classroom management skills were unsurpassed. Her colleagues often sought her out for advice on classroom management. She willingly advised and mentored her fellow teachers whenever and wherever she could.

Mrs. Alford and her late husband Romeo J. Alford Sr. have one son Romeo, one daughter-in-law Brenda, and one granddaughter Jordan. The Alfords were married for 47 years.

Jordan Alford remembers her grandmother sharing her insight the importance of wielding a community to shape it and make it better and how valuable your influence can be. Jordan said her grandmother was a “dedicated and godly woman who took it upon herself to give to her students until she had no more left to offer....She would point to her pupils long after they had left her classroom and say in my ear ‘taught them when they were your age,’ eyes welled with pride.... As members of a community, you are lucky to have touched one life along your “ Jordan’s grandmother, however, managed to touch a multitude of lives with her stern hand and enduring encouragement.

Amelia Louis Swain Alford is considered by many to be a trail-blazer in her profession. She entered the profession during an era when African-American teachers faced challenges and circumstances unparalleled to their white counterparts. She graciously accepted the challenges and overcame the circumstances.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Dr. Ann Marie Allen

“Beacon of Strength”

Mrs. Ann Marie Allen was born to Everett and Nancy Beard on October 6, 1947 in Muskegon, Michigan. Her mother was the first African American to open a beauty school in Michigan, The Gaynett School of Cosmetology. Allen graduated from Muskegon Heights High School in Michigan; then, attended Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan where she earned a B.A. degree in 1972. In 1979, she received a Master of Arts degree from Michigan State University in East Lansing and a second M.A. degree from Western Michigan University in 1984.

In 2001, Allen added the prestigious title “Dr.” to her name when she earned her PhD from the University of Oklahoma. Her dissertation topic: At-Risk High School Students Examine Practices, Obstacles, and Action Plans for Democratic School Reform.

Dr. Allen has completed extensive post graduate work includes Eastern Michigan in 1974; Adult Education Certification in 1988 at Central Michigan University; and OKC Superintendent’s Leadership Council in 2000. Additionally, she has certifications in Oklahoma Secondary Administrator Certification, Oklahoma Continuing Certificate, Michigan Central Office Administrative Certification in Adult Education, Michigan Continuing Certificate in K-8 all subjects 9-11 fine arts, and Instructional Theory in Practice (ITIP).

Dr. Allen began her career in education in 1972 when she was hired to teach middle school math and science in the Muskegon Heights Public Schools. She was also K-6 reading teacher and high school Title I reading teacher. In 1985, Dr. Allen became the Director for Adult and Community Education in Muskegon Heights. In 1992, she relocated to Oklahoma City to accept a position as Emerson High School Principal. During her tenure as principal, she implemented the SAVE program; which was designed for chronically truant teens. Moreover, she increased the use of the Prevent Program, a before and after school detention program. The Homebound Program for chronically ill students in the district and Home-Based Independent Studies were utilized as well as the Evening Night School; a tuition-based program located in four high schools.

Dr. Allen retained the position of Principal at Emerson until 2001 when she was selected to be the Area Administrator. As an Area Administrator, she served as a mentor, model, and coach to middle school, high school, and alternative education principals in 22 schools.

In 2002, she was chosen and accepted the position as Director of Adult, Alternative and Community Education for Oklahoma City Schools. She was the public relations specialist for adult literacy in the OKC metropolitan area. She developed the OKC Adult Learning Center, which included a GED Testing Laboratory, provided programming for English as Second Language learners, English Language Civics, GED prep, Family Literacy, and Work-based Professional Development Trainer for adult literacy staff. She also supervised and evaluated the staff at multiple sites in the district. Dr. Allen remained in the capacity for 14 years and retired in 2016 having amassed 44 years in the profession.

Dr. Allen has made national and international presentations during her illustrious career. In 1995, her presentations in Chicago, Illinois were “Understanding At-Risk Behaviors” and “Identifying Addictive Behaviors of At-Risk Adolescents,” for the American Education Research Association. In 1999, she was a presenter at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. Her presentation topic, “Effective Discipline Methods of Alternative Schools.” She is an on-going professional trainer for the Dunn and Dunn Model which involves brain-based instruction. As a guest lecturer (2000-2002) for the University of Oklahoma, her presentations focused on At-Risk Specialty Programs.

Dr. Allen’s memberships include: United Way Board member, Michigan Education Association, Michigan Council on Learning for Adults, NAACP, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Oklahoma Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of Secondary Principals, Oklahoma Adult Basic Education Association, Oklahoma Association of Alternative Schools, and Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administrators.

Dr. Ann Marie Allen was a beacon of strength for the students and adults who were enrolled in her programs. A true believer in no student left behind Dr. Allen always strived to ensure that each student accomplished some degree of success.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mrs. Marilyn Frances Duncan *"Above and Beyond"*

Mrs. Marilyn Frances Duncan's was born December 7, 1951 as the second child to the late Henry and Elizabeth Duncan in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Mrs. Duncan began her educational career in Muskogee, Oklahoma, at Sessions Kiddie College. Here Mrs. Duncan participated in the many programs designed to show parents knowledge the students had acquired in reading, writing, working mathematical problems, telling short stories and telling time. At Sadler Junior High School, Mrs. Duncan's educational interest continued to

grow. She liked the friendly competition that had developed with some of her peers. Additionally, she joined many clubs and sang in the school choir. Mrs. Duncan was also voted, "Miss Sadler" by her peers.

At Manual Training High School, Mrs. Duncan was active with numerous clubs, and continued concentrating on her studies. She graduated in May of 1970, tying for class Salutatorian and only a fraction of a point from being the Valedictorian in her class.

In the fall of 1970, Mrs. Duncan entered Northeastern State University at Tahlequah, Oklahoma on an Academic Scholarship. Later she was inducted into the Rho Theta Sigma honor society. She also became a member of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. In the summer of 1973, Mrs. Duncan graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree with emphasis in psychology and sociology. While working as a graduate assistant, and teaching General Psychology classes at Northeastern Oklahoma State, Mrs. Duncan completed her Master of Education Degree in Junior College Teaching/Counseling and Student Personnel in the summer of 1974.

After one year as a permanent substitute teacher at Taft High School, in Taft, Oklahoma, Mrs. Duncan applied and accepted an offer to teach at Eastern Oklahoma State College, Wilburton, Oklahoma in August of 1975, teaching Psychology and Sociology. During her tenure at Eastern, she served as sponsor of two clubs on campus: The N.A.A.C.P. of E.O.S.C. for nearly 35 years, and the PSYCHO (Psychology) Club, for more than 25 years, which she created, organized and sponsored. Under Mrs. Duncan's sponsorship, both clubs were very active and very competitive on campus and in the community, winning most competitions almost every year. Mrs. Duncan pushed for the students to always work hard and strive to be the best competitors there. This motivated the club members to work harder not only in the club, but also in class and in other aspects of their lives. They could see the rewards of hard work. It also helped them develop a sense of closeness and togetherness. "We were all like family".

Mrs. Duncan spent time with and got to know her students personally outside the classroom. Many students would fill her office daily for tutoring, counseling, working on club projects, or just to visit and talk. If one got out of line, she did not hesitate to make a visit to Miller and or Salmon Halls dormitories. You could hear students yelling down the halls, "Ms. Duncan is here!" She also developed a relationship with many parents who would seek her advice or would give her a call to say thank you for keeping their child focused and on track. Often times, she would help house and feed students left on campus during school breaks or the ones who just didn't have money to eat. On occasions, she has purchased caps and gowns for graduating students who couldn't afford one.

Mrs. Duncan truly invested in her students' success. Field trips and banquets were just a few events planned on her calendar for students. Her students participated in Black Heritage Week and invited schools and surrounding communities. During Mrs. Duncan's tenure at Eastern, on six different occasions, her students voted her Teacher/Faculty Member of the year.

During *Mrs. Marilyn Frances Duncan's* 42 years of service at Eastern State, she achieved many personal accomplishments and received many awards.

Mrs. Duncan was inducted into the Muskogee Service League Hall of Fame, served her Muskogee Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and the Phi Delta Kappa, CASA Board of Directors in McAlester. She spoke at celebrations and emceed the banquets and judged the "Miss McAlester-Contest," but most of all, she served above and beyond for the students she taught.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mrs. Emma Lee Jones Freeman

(Posthumously)
"Equality for All"

Mrs. Emma Lee Jones Freeman was a long-time educator with a career that spanned more than 30 years, she served on the faculty at Langston University in the late 1920's to early 1930's. She left to teach English and Physical Education at Moon Junior High School and Douglas High School in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The most significant and life changing event for many educators, occurred in 1947 when Emma Lee Jones Freeman filed a lawsuit to achieve pay equity for Negro teachers. The lawsuit was filed in the United States Court, 10th Circuit, Western District, against the Oklahoma City Public School Board of Education and the Oklahoma County Excise Board. NAACP Civil Rights Attorneys representing Emma Lee Jones Freeman were the esteemed Thurgood Marshall and Robert L. Carter, Washington, D.C., and Attorney Amos T. Hall, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The suit alleged discrimination, due to the unequal higher salaries paid to white teachers, compared to salaries paid to Negro teachers employed within the system. Salaries paid to Black teachers were approximately 75% - 80% of salaries earned by white teachers. Her lawsuit was settled in 1948. Correcting this inequity led to an immediate infusion of money that impacted the economy in every community where Black educators lived and worked in Oklahoma.

Mrs. Freeman said. "As a result of this lawsuit, Black teachers' salaries were dramatically improved. Now, better medical treatments could be secured for Black teachers and their families, along with better homes, educational opportunities for their children, as well as, advanced training for themselves, higher retirement and Social Security benefits." Bruce Fisher, Oklahoma History Center, stated, "It is often said that we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors, and African American Educators all over the state benefitted from the courage of Emma Lee Jones Freeman." It was noted that some wanted to know "Who was that Colored Woman living on the East Side stirring up all that trouble."

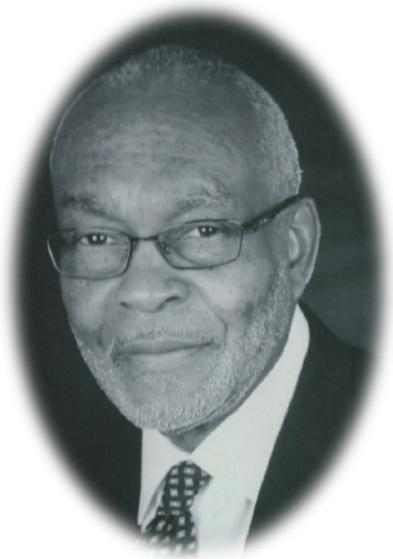
Mrs. Emma Lee Jones was born in 1908 to John Thomas and Loulysinka Jones. She was the youngest of seven children born of this union. They were former slaves who traveled by wagon train from Florence, Alabama to the Indian Territory in Oklahoma. Her father, a builder and civic leader, was a founding father of Trice Hill Cemetery and Trinity Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Freeman was christened as a baby in Bethany Presbyterian Church which later became Trinity Presbyterian Church.

Mrs. Freeman graduated from Douglas High School in Oklahoma City. She continued her education in several different locations including Detroit, Madison, New York, and Pittsburg, Kansas where she received her B.S. in Physical Education. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Kansas State Teachers College and her Masters Degree in Education from the University of Oklahoma.

Mrs. Freeman's affiliations included: Lifetime memberships in the NAACP, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc., and the National Federation of Colored Women's Club. She was a member of Trinity Presbyterian Church and the YWCA.

Mrs. Emma Lee Jones Freeman did not realize the impact she would later have on her great-great nephew Bernard Jones, as he made his way from the parking lot up the hill to the federal court house in Oklahoma City on a Monday afternoon on August 17, 2015. He wanted to turn around but he kept reminding himself that he was about to see a slice of history with roots that dated back to 1947. On July 31, 2015, Judge Bernard Jones had been appointed to serve as a Federal Magistrate Judge. Mrs. Freeman passed away on April 8, 1993.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mr. James Leroy Furch *“Developer of Thousands”*

Mr. James Leroy Furch was born in 1943 into a tightly segregated rural Oklahoma society. He is the youngest of five siblings who were raised by their grandparents. He and his family lived in a small, rented sharecroppers house. He states they were “happy and really enjoyed life.” Mr. Furch loved to work in the cotton fields, plowing with an old iron plow behind two horses. In the summer he chopped cotton, in the fall the family would harvest the cotton and then they would hook up the wagon and take it to town.

Mr. Furch remembers going to church – a lot. He credits religion with helping to make him a better person. Mr. Furch and his siblings went to Wheatly High School in Beggs, Oklahoma – the black school. Wheatly High School always had old books, old desks, old everything, handed down from the white school in Beggs. The two schools, Wheatley and Beggs, did integrate for sports; football and track and field which allowed Beggs to field better teams.

Mr. Furch enjoyed outdoor activities growing up; hunting, fishing, and of course, football and track. He was a high school state champion half-miler and at one point was the fastest black student half-miler in Oklahoma. His older brother, Randolph, was an even better athlete. He was touted as one of the best athletes to come out of Oklahoma.

A track scholarship was Mr. Furch’s ticket out of the cotton fields and away from hay bailing. He attended Langston University on a full scholarship for football and track. Four years later, he graduated and got his first teaching job in Okmulgee. He was drafted out of his classroom and into the Army. Mr. Furch was deployed to Viet Nam, Thailand, and Germany and was an exemplary soldier.

In 1974, Mr. Furch accepted a job at Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma teaching physical education and coaching. Mr. Furch returned to college and earned a Master’s Degree in 1975 from Northeastern State University. He also completed further graduate course work at Northeastern and Oklahoma State University. During his tenure at Booker T. Washington High School, he held various positions ranging from teacher (1974-79), counselor/dean (1979-1981), assistant principal (1981-1987) and principal (1987-1995). He served as Director of High schools for Tulsa Public schools until 2001. He worked as Area Superintendent until his first retirement in 2008.

Mr. Furch returned to TPS at the request of Superintendent, Dr. Keith Ballard to serve as interim principal at Will Rogers High, School McClain and for another stint at Booker T. Washington High school retiring for the second time in 2014.

In his own reflections from his educational career, Mr. Furch stated that he “had many opportunities to change students’ lives, manage people and determine the best ways to allocate district funds.” Some of his significant academic events included implementation of the International Baccalaureate Program at Booker Washington High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the formation and successful launch of Booker T. Washington High School Foundation of Excellence in partnership with Aloah Kincaid. Mr. Furch’s professional affiliations include: Tulsa Association of Secondary Principals, OEA, NEA, Leadership Tulsa (class of XI), he has also been honored as the Oklahoma Coach’s Association District 7.

Mr. James Leroy Furch said, “At the end of my career, I can say that I am an accomplished educator and administrator, not because I played major roles in laying the ground work for Oklahoma’s premier high school, but because I have had the opportunity to assist in the development of thousands of individuals that have become model citizens, in local state and national global communities.”

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mrs. Joyce Ann Henderson *“Innate Ability to Educate”*

Mrs. Joyce Ann Henderson, a career retired Oklahoma City Teacher and Administrator, was born on January 12, 1947 in Oklahoma City to Eddie Lee and Fannie Johnson. She and her three sisters, Etta, Barbara, and LaVerne, were reared in Spencer, Oklahoma. She is a proud (1964) graduate of Dunjee High School. She matriculated to Langston University and earned a B. S. degree in Education. Then, she received an M.E. degree from the University of Central Oklahoma in Ed-

mond and a Secondary School Administration Certification from Oklahoma University.

Mrs. Henderson’s career in education began in 1968 as social studies teacher at Dunjee High School. She later moved on to the Oklahoma City Public Schools Teacher Corps Program. After two years, she was an administrator at Guthrie Job Corps in the education department.

For the next 20 years, Mrs. Henderson served as a principal at five different high schools in Oklahoma City; Emerson, (original) Classen, Northeast, Star Spencer, and the Classen School of Advanced Studies. During her final 10 years, she was the Executive Director of School and Community Services on the OKC Public Schools Superintendent’s Cabinet.

Some of her honors include: named to the Wall of Fame by the Foundation of Oklahoma City Public Schools, Women of Color Expo Educator of the Year, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Black History Award, 2018 Roscoe Dungee Classic Award, Fairview Missionary Baptist Church Black History Department’s 2018 Spirit of the Community Award, and St. John CME Church’s Black History Outstanding Black Woman award. Also, the John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Administrator National Award. Governor Brad Henry appointed her to serve on the Health Disparities Task Force. In addition, Marcus Garvey Charter School named their tutorial program in her honor.

Mrs. Henderson has served on multiple boards including Youth Services of Oklahoma County, YWCA, Sunbeam Services, OKC Public Schools Foundation, OKC Leadership Alumni Association, and Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame, Inc. She currently serves as co-chair of the OKC Council’s Youth Leadership Group (XYL).

She is a golden soror (50-year member) and lifetime member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Beta Sigma Omega chapter) where she has held offices and worked on committees at the local, regional, and national levels. She was recently honored with the Outstand Senior Soror Award. She is also a 30-year member of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Gamma Epsilon chapter. Also, NAACP life member, Langston University Alumni Association, and the University of Central Oklahoma Alumni Association. She is Minister of Music Emeritus and pianist at St. John CME Church.

Mrs. Henderson is one of the featured speakers for the Respect Diversity Foundation. In 2015, the Children of the Civil Rights Documentary featured her interview in its film.

As a teenager in 1963, she was a member of the NAACP Youth Council that traveled to Washington D.C. with her teacher, the late Clara Luper. In 2017 and 2018, she had the opportunity to share her education and civil rights experiences with students at Hillcrest Middle School in Wilmette Public Schools in Chicago, Illinois.

Though retired in 2016, she came out of retirement briefly from October 2012 to January 2013 to assist Douglass High School through a transition phase. After confidently believing that Douglass was on the right path, she returned to retired life.

Mrs. Henderson and Wm. Gerald Henderson have been married for 50 years. They are the proud parents of two sons, Kevin and Kelly; daughter-in-law, Tasha; and grandchildren, Corie, Taletha, Maddisen, Kalehia, and Peerliss.

Mrs. Joyce Ann Henderson’s name will be included in the history of Oklahoma education. Her quest for knowledge began as a youngster in Spencer, Oklahoma and has continued throughout her life. During her journey, she had the innate ability to impart knowledge on the multitude of students whom she taught.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mr. Benjamin Hill

(Posthumously)

“Progressive Thinker”

Mr. Benjamin Harrison Hill was born November 1, 1903 to Joseph and Ann Hill in Sydney, Nova Scotia. His father, Joseph Hill was born in 1868 in Georgia and Ann Hill in 1882 in Mississippi. In 1903 when Benjamin was born, they had moved to Sydney. By 1910, Joseph Hill had moved his family to Pueblo, Colorado where Benjamin spent his early years. He earned a graduate degree at Wilberforce University in Ohio and studied law at the University of Nebraska. While teaching at Campbell College in Jackson, Mississippi, Hill met his wife, Fannie Ezelle Johnson. They were married for 39 years and had one son, George Forris.

Following a teaching assignment at Campbell College, Mr. Hill and his family settled in at Claremore, Oklahoma and later moved to Okfuskee County where he began his career as a teacher and high school principal. He was applauded for the many creative teaching methods he used to enrich the lives of young students with “diverse learning styles” in educational programs then classified as “special education for slow learners.” His progressive thinking on educational instruction, along with his compassion and humility, extended into his ministry and led to innumerable contribution to the A. M. E. Church unit on education. He served as the Director of Christian Education, chairman of the Commission on Educational Institutions, and more notably, as the editor of the *A.M.E. Church Review*.

From 1951, Mr. Hill served as an editorial editor and columnist for the *Oklahoma Eagle*. He was active throughout Tulsa and the state of Oklahoma in community-oriented organizations including the Tulsa Urban League, the Tulsa Council of Churches, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Ministerial Alliance, the Boy Scouts of American and the Council of Churches and Community Chest. Mr. Hill also served as director of the Tulsa Economic Task Force and president of the Tulsa Branch of the NAACP. For his notable achievements in the community, The Park and Recreation Department named him Tulsa’s outstanding citizen. The *Ben Hill Recreation Center*; a park and recreation center, was named in his honor.

Mr. Clarence Boyd, Sr. wrote that “Benjamin Hill, aka ‘Daddy Ben’ to all who knew and loved him, was an educator, teacher, administrator, and encourager.” He was able to bring out the best qualities of his students by instilling in them a sense of worth and dignity. He was a community activist and encouraged not only to members of his church; but also, the North Tulsa community to be an “active force for good.”

In addition, Mr. Hill was described as having a compassion for teaching and a uniqueness for communication which was exceedingly useful and necessary in all aspects of his job. He emphasized the importance of empathy, equal treatment, and inclusion towards all mankind.

Mr. Hill served his state and community as the first elected Black representative to the State Legislature for District 73, Tulsa, Oklahoma. As a member of the House, he served two consecutive terms. While in the Legislature, he worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents in the district and the people of Tulsa. Representative Hill won the admiration and respect of all who knew him.

At the time of his death in 1971, he had served his community for 31 years of service as an educator and prominent Tulsa leader. He gained recognition as a progressive thinker and a creative legislator who sought practical solutions.

Mr. Benjamin Harrison Hill was a wise educator and faithful servant who influenced a vast number of students, parents, community members. He always had an encouraging message and provided a sense of worth to individuals on every socio-economic level and was considered by many to be a giant among men.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mrs. Judith Ann Carter Horton

(Posthumously)

“Uplifter of People”

Mrs. Judith Ann Carter, former Guthrie educator, was born in Wright City, Missouri on May 17, 1866. Her mother died shortly after her birth. Her father, Joseph Carter, was very strict and raised her and her older sister to work diligently and precisely to his specifications in his rural home.

Mr. Carter allowed her to attend school when she was ten, but for only three months during the year, he considered education, “A foolish and unnecessary activity.” At the age of thirteen, she left home and hired herself out as a family servant for the privilege of walking six miles under extreme conditions to secure an education. She knew that education was something that increased one’s happiness and usefulness.

By 1884, Judith Ann Carter had earned enough money and respect from her employers and teachers that she was conditionally accepted into the hallowed halls of Oberlin Academy College. While there, she chose to major in the Classics. While there, she continued her work enduring many hardships to pay for her room and board. During her seven years at Oberlin, Judith was introduced to the ladies’ literary clubs which consisted of women with culture and social standing who went on to accomplish much to uplift their communities. Seeing this, Judith was inspired to make a personal oath to God, stating that “someday she would accomplish what no other Negro had ever attempted.” On June 3, 1891, she delivered her graduation oration and received a degree in Classical Studies.

Ms. Carter’s first job was that of principal of a ‘colored school’ that proved to be a difficult feat. She had to overcome much prejudice and harsh treatment, both physically and verbally from parents. She remained in the position for one year and then accepted a position as a principal in the territory of Oklahoma.

In 1892, Ms. Carter was hired as the principal of the ‘colored schools’ in Guthrie, Oklahoma where she thrived and is credited with naming the newly built school, Lincoln. In 1894, Ms. Carter married Daniel Horton, a graduate of Berea College in Kentucky; he was also a school administrator. In 1907, after Oklahoma became a state the leaders immediately adopted the legislation of “separate but equal” in all facilities. In 1907, Principal Daniel Horton, applied but was denied membership to the local iconic Carnegie Library. With this denial of membership, he knew the time had come for Judith Ann to carry out her personal oath “to accomplish what no other Negro woman had ever attempted.” Judith immediately went to work to establish a library for African Americans in Oklahoma. With the assistance of the Excelsior Women’s Club and Judge Perkins, the Excelsior Library; the first library for African Americans was opened in Guthrie, Oklahoma. Mrs. Judith Ann Carter Horton served as librarian for the next eleven years.

During Ms. Horton’s years in Oklahoma, she also founded the Women’s Excelsior Club, founded the Westside Warner Congregator Church, and assisted in the establishment of the State Training School for Boys in Boley, Oklahoma. She also taught Latin and English courses at Faver High School, where her husband was principal, and helped establish a home for delinquent girls in Taft Oklahoma. In 1923, Mrs. Carter Horton was appointed to serve on the board of Regents for African American Orphans in Taft, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Judith Ann Carter Horton stated, “I can conceive of no better or surer way to hasten the education and uplift of our people than the establishment of reading rooms, and libraries in every community. When we become a reading people, we will be a thinking people.”

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Dr. Delois Ann McGee

“Reach One, Teach One”

Doctor Delois Ann McGee, a retired Checotah educator, was born on February 19, 1941 to Henry and Mary Louis McGee in Richardsville, Oklahoma, the oldest of nine children. She graduated as Co-Valedictorian from Pierce High School in Pierce, Oklahoma in 1960.

She enrolled at Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton, Oklahoma where she earned an Associate Degree in 1962. In 1964, she received a B.S. degree in Elementary Education from Northeastern Oklahoma State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma followed by an M.S. degree in reading education from the same university. On October 1, 1999, she was awarded an honorary Doctorate degree from Liberty College in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Dr. McGee began her teaching career at Pierce Elementary in Pierce, Oklahoma in 1964. She relocated to Checotah Public Schools in 1965 where she continued to teach at the elementary and middle school levels for 34 years. She retired in 1998; having devoted 35 years to her profession.

Education was a way of life for Dr. McGee. Whether in the classroom, a family gathering, or wherever the opportunity presented itself; she always made the effort to incorporate “teachable moments” into the situation. She was instrumental in bridging the gap for disadvantaged learners in classrooms and adults who needed special instruction to accomplish their goals.

Dr. McGee continues to play an integral role in her community. After her retirement, she accepted a position of Literacy Coordinator for the Jim Lucas Checotah Public Library. For 17 years, she has tutoring in basic reading, math, writing, and social skills. She also teaches English as a Second Language, citizenship, and survival skills. In 2000, she organized the library as the designated GED site in the community.

Some of her honors include: Inducted into the Muskogee Hall of Fame (1967), McIntosh County Teacher of the Year (1982), Regional Director of the Year (1985), Oklahoma Federation of Colored Women (OFCW) Woman of the Year (1988 and 1995), and OFCW 50-year Living Legend Award (2018).

Dr. McGee is actively involved in her community. She is a member of McIntosh County Retired Educators Association, Oklahoma Retired Educators Association, Checotah Chamber of Commerce, Executive Board of the Friends of Honey Springs Battlefield, Inc., Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Checotah Foundation of Excellence, Southwest Creek Seminole District Association, and National Publishing Board member of the Review Board for Sunday School and BTU Literature.

Mr. Logan Sharpe recalls spending time with Dr. McGee on the Checotah School Board for many years. At meetings, he would receive reports of her student’s achievements due to her tutoring and reading programs. Her tireless dedication to her students was inspiring. Mr. Sharpe also had the opportunity to serve with Dr. McGee on the board of The Friends of Honey Springs Battlefield, Inc. which is a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation of the battlefield and the education of the public as to the importance of the Civil War battle in Rentiesville. She served as an officer for many of the twenty-five years she has worked in this group. Delois has proven to be a very dedicated and well developed educator for the good of the community.

Dr. Delois Ann McGee, throughout her life and career, has adhered to the African American proverb, “Reach one, teach one.” She has taught, mentored, and built relationships with students and families from all walks of life and continues to empower others along her journey. Her work is not finished, proven by the continued volunteer work within the community.

Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame Inductee



Mr. James A. Senter

“Mindset Changer”

Mr. James A. Senter is the oldest of six children born to James and Opal Senter in Tulsa, Oklahoma. After graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in 1962, and with the help of a devoted counselor, he enrolled at Langston University where he majored in Industrial Arts. After two years, he was drafted to the United States Air Force where he served for four years. During that time, he was deployed for a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam. In 1968, he returned to Oklahoma and completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in Industrial Arts from Central State University (University of Central Oklahoma) in Edmond. Later, he earned his master’s degree in counseling.

In 1971, Mr. Senter was hired as the Industrial Arts Teacher at Star Spencer High School. That was the start of a 32-year career in education. In 1978, he was employed as the counselor at Washington Alternative School in Oklahoma City. He spent the next several years climbing the ranks until 1983, when he was selected as principal at Taft Middle School in Oklahoma City. During the span of years from 1983-2000, he also served as principal at Harding Middle Schools, Northwest Classen High School, and again at Harding Middle School. He retired from teaching in 2000.

While serving as a counselor at Washington Alternative School, Mr. Senter was a role model for students and teachers alike. The school was designed for boys, grades six through eleven who demonstrated a need outside of the traditionally structured school. He was influential in changing the mindset of the young students and instilling in them a desire to learn. That desire allowed them to experience success in school; some for the first time.

As an administrator, Mr. Senter believed it important to maintain visibility outside out his office. Students often saw him in the hallways, on the playground, or at their sporting events. He held high standards for his students and they did not want to disappoint Mr. Senter, so they put forth their best effort. A teacher, Anna E. Heidebrecht. Wrote, “He was transparent in showing us the techniques he used to get the best from the students....he gave us tools that we could use when he was not in the classroom.....he was able to instill in them methods for changing their behaviors that allowed them to experience success....”

Mr. Senter was very concerned about the rate of retention of students at Harding Middle School. He successfully implemented a revised retention policy for the students. That policy was also used at all elementary and middle schools in the district.

In 1986, Mr. Senter was selected as Administrator of the Year by the Oklahoma Association of School librarians. He was instrumental in improving the writing scores at Harding; the result was that the school was removed from the “at-risk” list. Then Superintendent of Oklahoma City schools, Dr. Arthur Steller, acknowledged his efforts with a Letter of Recognition.

Mr. Senter is involved in multiple ministries at Greater Mount Olive Baptist Church. He serves as co-chair of Adopt-a-School and co-chair of Christian education. He also continues to serve as a mentor and coach in his community.

Mr. Senter and his wife Margaret have one daughter and son-in-law, four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. They reside in Oklahoma City.

Mr. James A. Senter faced personal and professional challenges with integrity and courage. On his office door was a poster that read, “When life hands you lemons, make lemonade.” His former students will attest to the fact that he did just that!



OAAE Hall of Fame, Inc.

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



Board of Directors & Committee

Pictured left to right back: Hazley, Booker, Johnson, Hicks, Nero, Aldridge, Arnold, White, Johnson, O'Dell. Front: Fisher, Edison, Johnson, and Nero

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

Mail your check or money order to:

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Download form at oaaehof.org



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

***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 Nero donated the initial amount to the fund. The OHS will continue to fundraise to increase the endowment, including 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 four different teachers of the year honors. In 1994 the Sapulpa School Board presented her the Distinguished Service Award. She sits on several boards, including the Oklahoma Historical Society 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 money every year for research, programming, exhibits, and/or events related to the Historically Thirteen Original All-Black Towns of Oklahoma. One of Shirley's passions is Oklahoma history and especially the state's unique story of these black towns. No other state had as many all-black communities 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.

Because of you and your generous support, many superior programs will be offered, one-of-a-kind artifacts will be preserved and unique and interesting exhibits will be created. Your special gift will help the OHS take a major leap forward with collecting, preserving and sharing 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. In addition, you will be recognized as a member of the Oklahoma History Legacy Circle which was created to recognize donors, both living and deceased, who 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 also is 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. We appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donnie L. and Shirley A. Nero Sr.

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



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 or Donnie Nero, dr.donnielee@aol.com.

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 _____

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- \$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
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In Memory

Inductees Who Have Passed Since Inducted



Mr. Curtis Brackeen
Muskogee, Oklahoma



Mrs. Willie Mae Etheridge
Checotah/Warrior Community



Dr. Henry Kirkland Jr.
Atoka, Oklahoma

Inductee Class of 2011



Inductee Class of 2012

Mr. Harold C. Aldridge Sr.
Taft, Oklahoma



Dr. Charles E. Butler
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Inductee Class of 2014



Mr. Millard L. House
Tulsa, Oklahoma



Mrs. Juanita Lewis-Hopkins
Tulsa, Oklahoma



Mrs. Lola Parker Dean
Porter, Oklahoma



Mr. Jesse (J.D.) Johnson
Altus, Oklahoma

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)

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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Oklahoma State University
Division of Institutional Diversity
Jason F. Kirksey, Ph. D.
Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer
408 Whitehurst
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
405 744-9154
Jason.kirksey@okstate.edu

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President Dr. Donnie L. Nero Sr.

110126 N3830 Road

Clearview, Oklahoma 74880

918 260-5130 dr.donnielee@aol.com oaaehof.org





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