

Our Authors Study Club of Los Angeles, Inc. Senior Legacy Recognition Program

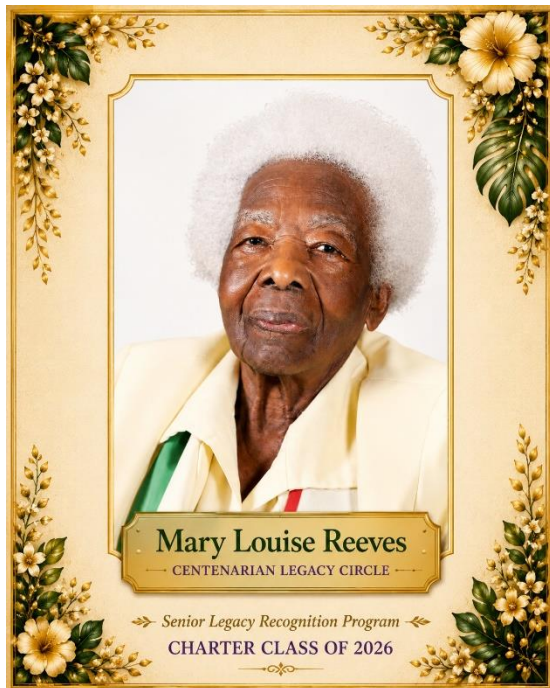
Name: Mary Louise Reeves

Recognition Category: Centenarian Legacy Circle

Recognition Class: Charter Class of 2026

Inducted: August 1, 2026

Recognized By: Our Authors Study Club of Los Angeles, Inc.



For more than a century, Mary Louise Reeves has exemplified the enduring values of education, civic leadership, faith, and service. Her remarkable life reflects the experiences of a generation of African American women who transformed their communities not through public acclaim, but through decades of unwavering dedication to teaching, mentoring, volunteering, and preserving history. Her story is one of quiet excellence—a life devoted to lifting others and strengthening the institutions that shape future generations.

Our Authors Study Club proudly recognizes Mrs. Reeves as a distinguished member of the Centenarian Legacy Circle, honoring a woman whose extraordinary century of life has

enriched countless students, strengthened civic life in Los Angeles, and preserved the history and accomplishments of African Americans.

Growing up in East Texas during an era of segregation, Mrs. Reeves embraced education as both a calling and a pathway to opportunity. Her academic ability and determination led her to Bishop College, one of Texas' historic Black colleges, where

she graduated at just nineteen years of age. At an age when many young adults were only beginning their college studies, she had already completed her education and answered the call to become a teacher.

Mrs. Reeves began her career teaching in the segregated schools of rural Texas, where she quickly learned that education extended far beyond textbooks and classroom instruction. Teachers served as mentors, role models, and trusted leaders within their communities, helping young people develop confidence, character, and hope for the future. That philosophy would remain the foundation of her work throughout her distinguished career.

At the age of twenty, Mrs. Reeves relocated to Los Angeles during the Great Migration, joining thousands of African American families seeking expanded educational and professional opportunities in California. She became a dedicated educator with the Los Angeles Unified School District, where she devoted more than three decades to preparing students for success while earning a reputation for professionalism, compassion, and unwavering commitment to academic excellence.

Her leadership extended beyond the classroom. During the formative years of teacher advocacy in Los Angeles, Mrs. Reeves became involved in the movement that would eventually evolve into United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA). Long before the organization became one of the nation's largest teachers' unions, she stood alongside fellow educators advocating for professional respect, equitable treatment, and improved learning environments.

Her contributions remind us that lasting educational progress is achieved by teachers who are willing not only to educate students, but also to strengthen the profession itself.

Retirement marked the beginning of another chapter of public service. Following the election of Mayor Tom Bradley, Los Angeles' first African American mayor, Mrs. Reeves became one of the City's respected "Yellow Jackets," serving as a City Hall Ambassador for more than four decades. With warmth, professionalism, and an extensive knowledge of Los Angeles, she welcomed visitors from around the world, assisted residents, and represented the City with distinction through multiple mayoral administrations. Her service reflected the belief that meaningful leadership is found in everyday acts of kindness, hospitality, and civic responsibility.

Mrs. Reeves has also devoted decades to preserving African American history through her membership in Our Authors Study Club, one of Southern California's oldest organizations dedicated to the study and preservation of African American history and literature. Through educational programs, historical research, scholarship initiatives, and community engagement, she has helped continue the vision established by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Her commitment reflects an understanding that history must be preserved intentionally if

future generations are to appreciate the sacrifices and achievements of those who came before them.

Throughout every season of her life, Mrs. Reeves has remained grounded in faith and sustained by family. As a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, she has passed forward the same values of education, perseverance, compassion, and service that have guided her own remarkable journey for more than a century.

Few individuals have personally witnessed the profound transformation of American society across an entire century while continuing to contribute so meaningfully to their communities. Mrs. Reeves has experienced periods of tremendous challenge and extraordinary progress, yet throughout every chapter of her life she has remained steadfast in her commitment to educating others, serving her community, and preserving history.

As Our Authors Study Club welcomes Mary Louise Reeves into its Charter Class of the Centenarian Legacy Circle, we celebrate not simply a remarkable milestone of longevity, but a lifetime of extraordinary purpose. Through education, civic leadership, volunteerism, and historical preservation, she has touched countless lives while helping strengthen the institutions that continue to serve our communities today.

Mrs. Reeves' legacy reminds us that history is not shaped only by those whose names appear in textbooks. It is also written by dedicated educators who inspire generations of students, by volunteers who quietly strengthen their communities, and by individuals who devote their lives to preserving the stories of those who came before them. Her century of service stands as an enduring gift to Los Angeles, to Our Authors Study Club, and to all who will benefit from the path she helped create.