

YOUR LEGACY TOO:
Celebrating the Lasting Contributions
of African American Men

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Nathaniel Banks

Nathaniel Banks is a life-long resident of Champaign, Illinois. He was educated in the Champaign schools, and graduated from what is now called Champaign Central High. He received his college education at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign campus and has a Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Science in Applied Music and Music Education respectively.

Upon leaving college, Nathaniel Banks worked as the Assistant Director of the Afro-American Cultural Program for nine years. He then left campus to become the Principal of Judah Christian High School. He returned to the U of I in 1990 to work in the Office of Minority Student Affairs, where he is currently employed. Mr. Banks has worked in several capacities in OMSA including the Director of Upward Bound, the President's Leadership Program, and his current position as Director of the African American Cultural Program. Throughout his professional career, Mr. Banks has had a love for young people and has worked on numerous committees to address their needs. His most current interest is in the establishment of a Charter school to serve at-risk children in the Champaign-Urbana community.

Nathaniel Banks is married to Lisha Banks. They have three grown sons and are part of a large extended family.



Vernon Barkstall

Vernon Barkstall was born August 23, 1929, at Cincinnati, Ohio, a son of Nelson and Naomi Barkstall, Sr. He married Carol Benton on June 9, 1957, at Columbus, Ohio, and to this union was born two sons and two daughters.

Mr. Barkstall was educated in the Columbus, Ohio public school system. After serving in the U. S. Military, he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education at the Ohio State University. He completed classes toward a doctoral degree at the University of Illinois. He was a scholar-athlete at Ohio State. He played basketball and baseball and was elected captain of the baseball team in 1958.

Vernon Barkstall was the Director of The Urban League of Champaign County for 28 years. He served on the founding committees of the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club, the Champaign County Opportunities Industrialization Center, and the Frances Nelson Health Center. He was a board member of the Concerned Citizens for a Better Commerce, charter board member of the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce, board member and a past Vice President of the Champaign-Urbana Convention and Visitors Bureau.

He was a long-time member of the NAACP and a member of the American Legion Post 559 of Champaign. Mr. Barkstall was a senior-active member of the Champaign Rotary and was a Paul Harris Fellow. He was also a member of the Illinois Community Action Association. Barkstall Elementary School was named in his honor.



James R. Burgess, Jr.

Born in 1915, James Burgess was reared on a farm in Putnam County, Tennessee. He attended Darwin High School and went to Junior College on an athletic scholarship. Mr. Burgess pitched for semi-pro baseball teams. He married Doris Murray and they had two sons.

Mr. Burgess entered the Armed Forces in 1941. A World War II veteran who was in combat with the 761st Tank Battalion, Mr. Burgess went on to serve as a special agent in the Counter-Intelligence Corps. He retired in 1962 as a major.

Mr. Burgess was a 1961 graduate of the University of Maryland with a BA degree and earned his law degree from the University of Illinois College of Law in 1965. After serving as an assistant state's attorney in Chicago and Champaign, Mr. Burgess was elected State's Attorney of Champaign County in 1972.



He was the county's first African American state's attorney and was believed to be the first African American elected to this office in Illinois. He was appointed in 1977 as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Illinois, later designated the Southern District. Based in East St. Louis, he served in that position until his retirement in 1982. Mr. Burgess was a member of the American, Chicago, Champaign Seventh Federal Circuit and Illinois State Bar Association. He was also a member of the American Trial Lawyers Association.

A member of the First United Methodist Church of Champaign, he served on the advisory board of the church and on a number of church committees. He served as a member of the MacMurray Board of Trustees and was a lay member of the Central Illinois Conference. He served for many years on the Board of Directors of Covenant Hospital, the Frances Nelson Health Center and was one of the founding members of the Prairie AIDS Foundation

Carlos Donaldson, Sr.

Carlos Donaldson was born in Spring City, Tennessee. He attended grade school and high school in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He had one brother and two sisters.

Carlos came to Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul in February 1958 as an Airman in the United States Air Force. He met and married Willeta Hassell, a Champaign native, in 1960. He has three children: Carlos, Jr., Carletta, and Dennis; a daughter-in-law, Mae, and two grandsons: Ryan and Blake.

Carlos began employment at the University of Illinois in January, 1962, as a mail carrier and retired as Supervisor II of Campus Mail after 38 years of service on December 31, 1999.



He was President of #119 Service Employees Union (SEIU) for 7 years and Vice President of Twin City Federation of Labor. He began taking courses at the University of Illinois in 1969 and received a Bachelor's degree in the College of Fine and Applied Arts, Urban and Regional Planning major in December 1979. Carlos worked full-time while attending college and completed his degree one semester short of 10 years. He attended class during lunch hours and in the evenings while working and raising his family.

Carlos was involved in many civic and community activities. He was a member of the Urbana Neighborhood Committee that was instrumental in desegregation of the Urbana Schools; he was very active in the Thomas Paine P.T.A.; and served as Co-President, with Willeta, on the University of Illinois (UNI) High School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Carlos was appointed to the Urbana School Board and then was elected to the Urbana School Board from 1981-1985.

Carlos met many special people he will not forget while working and attending school at the University of Illinois. Among these were: University of Illinois President John Corbally, President Stanley Ikenberry, Robert P. Link, Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and Robert Copeland, Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Carlos and Willeta enjoy traveling. He is an active member of the Bethel A.M.E. Church where he has served as Steward and Trustee. He is currently serving on the Stewardship and Finance and Scholarship Committee. Carlos enjoys attending University of Illinois basketball and football games. He also enjoys working outdoors in his yard.

William Dye

William Dye was born April 16, 1933 in Elberton, Georgia to the late Mr. Robert Hester and Mrs. Carolyn (Jefferson) Dye. He had two sisters. Mr. Dye received his formative education in Elberton, Georgia and Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from high school in Elberton. Among the schools where he matriculated were Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia; Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Illinois (Bachelor's Degree); Sangamon State University, Springfield, Illinois (Master's Degree); and the FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia.

Mr. Dye was united in Holy Matrimony to Ms. Azalee Juanita Biggs on December 31, 1954 and two sons were born to this union, Elliott Hoyt Dye and Robert William Dye. Mr. Dye served in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict.

He completed basic training at Fort Riley, Kansas with a tour of duty in Germany. He was a cryptologist and attained the rank of Staff Sergeant, serving from November 1952 until September 1955 when he received an Honorable Discharge.

Mr. Dye entered the Illinois State Police Academy, Champaign, Illinois in June 1957 and graduated in August. His first assignment was to District #11, East St. Louis (Edgemont), Illinois. He served 11 years with the Illinois State Police. During this time, he helped organize and became a member of the Investigative Unit. In 1968, he was employed with the Saint Clair County Crime Commission as the Assistant Director. In September 1969, Mr. Dye joined the East St. Louis Police Department as Planning and Training Director. He was appointed Chief of Police, City of East St. Louis, in September 1971 and he continued in this capacity until his resignation on May 5, 1975. Subsequently, he became Chief of Police in Champaign, Illinois, a position he held for the next seven years. During his tenure with the Champaign Police Department, Dye emphasized recruiting minorities and instituted a neighborhood watch program. Dye served as a role model for young African Americans and could often be found talking to groups at the Douglass Center. He also led the charge to build a new police building and wanted it located at First Street and University Avenue. From 1982 until 1987, Mr. Dye was the Chief of Police in Columbia Missouri. Later, he accepted the Director of Security post for Texas Southern University, Houston, Texas. Mr. Dye passed away in Texas on February 7, 1994.

Included among the numerous organizations with which Mr. Dye was affiliated were: The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; The International Association of Chiefs of Police; Illinois Law Enforcement Commission; The Southern Illinois Law Enforcement Commission. He served as President of the Board of Directors of the East St Louis Boys Club and he was a founding member of The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. During his lifetime, Mr. Dye was the recipient of numerous citations, commendations, certificates and awards.



Richard Roy Edwards, Sr.



Mr. Richard Roy Edwards, Sr. was born in Carmi, Illinois, on June 11, 1897. He was the youngest son born to Elias Lawrence Edwards and Margaret Ford Edwards.

As a young man, he moved to Champaign in the early 20s where he met and married Ora Thornhill. To this union was born a son, Richard Roy, Jr. Mr. Edwards professed Christ at an early age while still in Carmi and soon after arriving in Champaign joined the Morning Star Freewill Baptist Church. He was a staunch member serving as Deacon for many years until his failing health.

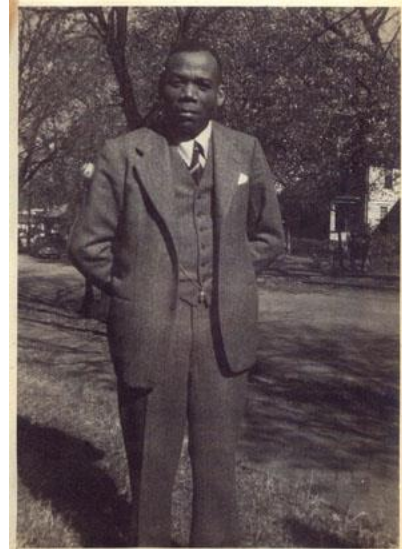
He was employed by the U. S. Postal Service and was the first African American Letter Carrier in Champaign. Upon his retirement from the Postal Service, Mr. Edwards accepted a position as County Probation Officer. He was a prominent community leader serving as a member of the Champaign School Board, Unit #4, from 1957 to 1968. He was the School Board secretary from 1964 to 1968.

Mr. Edwards was a 32nd Degree Mason and a 50-year member of the Blue Lone Star Lodge #18. He was a past Master and holder of many Grand Lodge offices. Mr. Edwards was past Exalted Ruler of the University Order of Elks Lodge #619, and held several offices at the state level. Mr. Edwards passed away on December 18, 1988.

Dr. Harry D. Ellis

Dr. Harry D. Ellis was a prominent Champaign physician with offices on North Walnut Street in Champaign. A veteran of WWI, he served in the 370th infantry regiment, the most decorated regiment of the war. He was a charter member of the William F. Earnest American Legion Post 559.

Active in community affairs, Dr. Ellis served as president of the Frederick Douglass Civic League and treasurer of the committee that raised funds for the Douglass Park Community Center. He also served on the Advisory Committee of the Center. The Dr. Ellis subdivision is named after him.



James H. Hayes, Jr.



James H. Hayes was born in Mt. Vernon, New York on October 31, 1932 and he graduated from A.B. Davis High School in 1950. He worked as a Longshoreman from 1950-1952.

Jim enlisted in the United States Air Force on June 18, 1952, and his overseas travels included Japan, Philippines, North Africa, Morocco and Vietnam. He came to Chanute Air Force Base in September 1963 and was listed in the Outstanding Young Men of America in 1966. He received the Airman of the Month award in 1964, and the Instructor of the Year award in 1968.

Mr. Hayes received a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from the University of Illinois in 1968. Jim received a Master of Arts degree in Elementary Education from the University of Illinois in 1970. He retired from the United States Air Force in April 1973.

Jim was hired by Champaign County Unit School District # 4 in 1973. He taught at Washington Elementary School from 1973 to 1977 and at Edison Middle School from 1977 to 1993. He received the Bahai Faith Race Relations award in 1990-1991. He was a member of the Champaign County Mental Health Board from 1974 to 1977 and a member of the Champaign County Sheriff's Merit Commission from 1990 to 2002.

In 2000, Mr. Hayes received the Dr. Martin Luther King Outstanding Achievement Award from the City of Urbana. Jim is currently in his third term as an Urbana City Council Alderman. He is a member of the following organizations: the Chorale, the Martin Luther King Choir, the Douglas Community Center/Senior Citizens and Bethel A.M.E. Church in Champaign, Illinois. Jim is the father of three sons, Larry, David and Derrick.

Cypress Hughes

Cyprus Hughes was born in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Otis Mae and Sam Hughes on July 9, 1951. After graduation from high school, he attended Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois, where he became a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the Black Student Association and the Gospel Choir. Mr. Hughes graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a B.S. degree in Business Administration and M.S. degree in Education. He later earned a Doctorate in Theology from Andersonville Baptist Seminary.



Mr. Hughes has worked in the arena of education for over 25 years and is currently an Admissions Advisor at Parkland College and serves as the advisor to the Black Student Association. Rev. Hughes is a licensed and ordained Baptist Minister and has been an Associate Minister at the Mt. Olive Baptist Church for over 22 years and the Pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Mattoon, Illinois.

Mr. Hughes is a seminary instructor at the American Baptist College - Champaign-Danville Extension, a member of the Dr. Martin Luther King Justice for Advocacy Committee, a member of the Ministerial Alliance of Champaign-Urbana and Vicinity, a member of the Religious Leaders for Community Care and the Institutional Review Board of the University of Illinois. He is the husband of Caretta Armstrong Hughes and has one daughter (Cynita) and one granddaughter (Chyrell).

Minor W. Jackson III

Minor W. Jackson, III holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Quincy University, formerly Quincy College. He was the first African-American admitted in Quincy College's initial MBA Program in 1984.

Minor is the former Director of the Parkland Business Development Center, a position he held at Parkland College from April 2000 to April 2005.



Currently, he is the Interim Director, Human Resources at Parkland College. Prior to joining Parkland, Mr. Jackson was employed in Human Resources for 16 years with four different Fortune 500 Corporations: General Electric, Alcoa (Aluminum Company of America), Lear Corporation and The Marmon Group, parent company of the Hyatt Regency Resorts & Hotels. He has also served as Director of Human Resources for 3 local companies, Associated Transfer & Storage, Cerion Technologies and Caradco. His HR Career has included assignments in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin. Before working in Human Resources, he was a Senior Cost Accountant for a major automotive seatbelt manufacturer in Northeast Missouri for 6 years

As a U.S. Army Veteran, Minor served for 6 years, 3 years active duty and 3 years in the Reserve. During his military career, he was an Instructor at the Quartermaster School, Ft. Lee, Virginia and overseas as a Cost Accountant in Okinawa, Japan. As a reservist, he received the "Outstanding Student Award" at Fort Sheridan, Illinois for a Stock Control & Accounting course.

Born and raised on the South Side of Chicago, he is a graduate of Hales Franciscan High School and a diehard Sox, Cubs, Bears, Bulls & Black Hawks fan. Forty years ago, he worked for all of the Chicago sports teams as an Andy Frain usher. In addition, he worked retail sales in downtown Chicago for Benson & Rixon Mens Clothing and Nunn-Bush Shoes in the mid to late 60's.

Mr. Jackson is very active in his community and is a member of the following: He serves on the Board of Directors for the Urban League of Champaign County, and the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB), plus he is active in the Talks Mentoring Program at Franklin Middle School in Champaign, IL.

More importantly, he and his wife, Louise, have been married for 35 years. They are the parents of two teenagers, Renee age 17 and Tony age 16. Minor and Louise are licensed as a relative foster home in the State of Illinois and they adopted both children in March 1995.

John Cleo Snapper Johnson, Sr.

March 26, 1916 - May 8, 1983

Born in Fernwood, Mississippi, a son of Arthur and Gladys (Tillman) Johnson, "Snapper," as he was most often called by family and friends, moved to Champaign in 1922. He attended Champaign schools and was a member of the Champaign Senior High School Letterman's "C" Club. After serving in the Navy during WWII, he attended the University of Illinois where he majored in Recreation and Physical Education.



Before becoming a Letter Carrier for the U.S. Postal Service, "Snapper" worked for many years as a laborer and helped with the building of several major construction projects in the Champaign-Urbana area, including the U of I Assembly Hall.

Over the years, he was involved in the community in many ways. "Snapper" enjoyed baseball as recreation as well as a way of life. He was involved throughout east central Illinois as a baseball player for numerous teams. After his playing days ended, he continued to stay involved in baseball and basketball as an umpire and referee. He also participated in the organization of a boxing club in Champaign and the surrounding area.

He was especially interested in youth sports and recreation. During the 1950s, he served as Assistant Director of the Frederick Douglass Recreation Center and taught Physical Education in the Champaign public schools. He was a past Commander of the American Legion Post #559 and served as Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop #11, one of the first all-Black troops in Champaign.

He served as a Little League Coach and official for over 30 years from the 50s to the 80s. His sons and grandsons often recall that he was the "toughest coach they ever played for." During his coaching and officiating days, even when players and parents did not agree with him, they frequently commented on their respect for him because of his fairness and his ability to keep "control" of the game.

He was married to Helen Elizabeth Scaggs for 39 years until her death in 1976. Together they raised six children: two sons, John Jr. (Bud) of Yuma, AZ; Kenneth of Atlanta, GA, and four daughters, Carol Lynn Nunn, Catherine Hogue and Ella (Sissy) Knox Coleman of Champaign, and Rosalind Lewis of Urbana.

"Snapper's" love for people and his unselfish giving to the community has influenced the lives of his children in many ways. His love for sports has extended over to both of his sons and has helped to shape and influence their careers.

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Norman (Norm) L. Lambert



Lt. Col. Norman L. Lambert was born on January 19, 1943 in Elkton, Maryland. He moved to Providence, Rhode Island, at the age of 9; after entering high school, he excelled in basketball and track, and was offered college cholarships for both sports. In fall 1961, he chose to attend American International College (AIC) in Springfield, Massachusetts, on a basketball scholarship. He graduated from AIC in June 1965 and entered the United States Air Force shortly thereafter and served for 26 years at various command levels in the continental United States and overseas. His last assignment prior to his retirement on August 1, 1991, was as Assistant Deputy Commander for Resource Management at Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul.

After leaving the Air Force, he was hired as Assistant Director of Student Support Services (now Student Life) at Parkland College, where he served as Counselor and Coordinator of Disability Services. He provided academic, career, and personal counseling to hundreds of students each year. His community service work included serving as a member of the Champaign Community Unit 4 School Board and he was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and The Church of The Living God, Champaign.

He and his wife Genevieve were married for 38 years and the parents of seven children. They were strong advocates for abused or neglected children, having been foster parents to 70 children over the years.

Colonel Lambert was a graduate of Air War College and had a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, a Master of Arts degree in Public Administration, and a Master of Arts degree in Counseling.

Albert R. Lee

Mr. Lee was born June 26, 1874 on a farm near Champaign, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Lee. He was graduated from Champaign High School in 1893 and besides his year of study at the University of Illinois, he also learned shorthand and studied privately for four years. Mr. Lee married Miss Maud McCurdy, November 23, 1898. They had two sons and a daughter.

Albert R. Lee was a member of the University of Illinois staff from 1895-1947. He served the U of I for 52 years through seven administrations. From a messenger boy in a university of 800 students, he advanced through the ranks of Assistant Clerk, Clerk, and retired as Chief Clerk in the office of the University president. Mr. Lee watched the U of I grow to a school serving 18,000 students.

Mr. Lee, a north Champaign resident, matched African American students up with families in north Champaign that were willing to rent out rooms. Sometimes he took students in to live with his own family. Mr. Lee was called the "unofficial Dean of Colored Students." When he retired, it was noted that he had been the first African American employee hired at the University of Illinois and the employee with the most service.

In addition to his work at the U of I, Mr. Lee was a prominent member of the African American community. He was president of the Bethel A.M.E. Choir and sang in the choir himself. He was also Sunday School District Superintendent. His fraternal affiliations included past master of Lone Star Lodge No. 18; assistant grand patron, Eureka Grand Chapter O.E. S.; past grand high priest Royal Arch Masons; and past grand commander of Prince Grand Commandery, Knights Templar. Mr. Lee was a member of the Twin City branch of the NAACP, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and the Scottish Rite and Shriner orders.



Robert Eugene Lewis

Born February 9, 1946, in Urbana, Illinois, a son of Jasper and Lottie (Miller) Lewis, Robert attended Urbana schools. He continued his formal education at the University of Illinois and later at Parkland College where he earned an Associates of Arts Degree.

While in elementary and high school, Robert was involved in the band as a percussionist. His love for music led him to volunteer as a mentor and teacher of young, aspiring drummers throughout the community. Robert's interests in science and technology coupled with his love for music has extended not only to his own children but to the lives and careers of other young people as well. Robert is very active in the Salem Baptist Church where he has served as Youth Director, Sunday School Teacher, Sunday School Superintendent and Percussionist. His Sunday School students call him "Mr. Phinney," after the teacher on the television program "Boy Meets World" who has high expectations for all of his students and a reputation for challenging and encouraging them to be the best they can be. Robert can always be counted on to lend a helping hand by creating scenery and special effects in support of church and school plays and activities.



His commitment to youth and education is evident in his service on school and community committees and organizations including the Urbana School District 116 Equity Steering Committee and Citizens Concerned with Quality Education (CCQE). His desire to give back to his community is also evident in his long-time service on the City of Urbana's Community Development Commission and his recent appointment to the City's Comprehensive Plan Update.

Robert has utilized his talents and interests in the arts and engineering to pursue several career areas including architecture and product design and development. To family and friends, Robert is known as a "jack-of-all-trades," "Mr. Fix-It," and "Mr. Wizard." In general, someone who can make, build, or fix anything and everything. He is constantly looking for new projects to build or design and takes pleasure in working on a new painting or sculpture piece, knocking down a wall to remodel his home, restoring or repairing cars.

His work led to the issuance of two U.S. patents in his name, one for a structural plastic seat design and the other for a low voltage lighting system. Robert looks forward to participating and sharing information about his engineering and design work through such activities as the annual local Black History Month program that highlights the work of Black scientists and

inventors. Robert's design and engineering background has also enabled him to work with several area churches on facility expansion, remodeling and new construction.

Despite being born with Factor IX Hemophilia, a disabling and life-threatening blood disorder, Robert has and continues to defy the predictions and astound his doctors with his physical condition. He has been a guest lecturer to medical students from the University of Illinois/Carle Clinic about his experiences and treatment as a hemophiliac. Robert truly believes that his "victories" have come as a result of his faith in God and the prayers of many people in his life. Robert is thankful for many individuals who have inspired, motivated and mentored him over the years. He is especially grateful to his mother and father for their spiritual guidance and for providing a strong family environment; to his uncle, Jeff Davis, for his father-like care and nurturing; to the Rev. W. H. Donaldson, his long-time pastor, for his spiritual guidance and encouragement; to Lorenzo Wylie, who encouraged him and gave him the opportunity to expand his mechanical aptitude; and to Robert Scaggs for sharing his knowledge as a structural engineer.

Married to the former Rosalind Johnson, Robert is the proud father of two children, Eric of Wilmington, DE and Nicole of Tallahassee, FL, who are fulfilling educational and professional goals that were encouraged and supported since their early childhood.

Bruce Nesbitt

Bruce Nesbitt was born November 14, 1932 in Champaign, a son of Herbert E. Nesbitt, Sr. and Pauline Gillespie Nesbitt. He graduated from Champaign High School in 1951. He married CharLotte Neither in 1957; to this union was born five children.

Mr. Nesbitt served in the Army then held a number of jobs until joining the Champaign Police Department. His first year on the force, he solved two murders and was named Rookie of the Year.

Mr. Nesbitt then went to work for the University of Illinois, first recruited as an official of the Housing Division and then, in 1973, as the first director of the Afro-American Cultural Programs office.

Mr. Nesbitt started a student-tutoring program at the Douglass Center and was president of the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club board. He established or helped start the Moms Day Fashion Club, the Association of Black Alumni, the Black Congratulatory Exercise and helped gain academic credit for members of the Black Chorus. He worked with Iota Phi Theta fraternity. He was a member of the St. Luke CME Church. The Bruce Nesbitt Scholarship Fund at the University of Illinois was established in his honor.



Dr. Phillip Norman

Dr. Norman was born on September 8, 1933 in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, a son of Oscar Clifton and Philippa L'Estrange Morris Norman. He married De Lois Williams and they had a son and a daughter.

Dr. Norman was a dentist and began his practice in Champaign in 1973. He graduated from Tougaloo College of Tougaloo, Mississippi in 1955 and from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee in 1959. He was a member of the National Dental Association and the American Dental Association.

Dr. Norman was a Prince Hall 32nd degree Mason and was a member of the Lone Star Masonic Lodge. He was a founding member of Sigma Xi Chapter of Omega Psi.

He was Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force. He served in Japan, New Hampshire, Texas and Washington DC. He was also a member of the Air National Guard Reserve.



Dr. William M. Patterson

Dr. William M. Patterson, married father of three is an Assistant Visiting Professor in the Afro American Studies and Research Program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Patterson's work concentrates on linking the academy (higher education institutions) with public schools, corporate America, and social service organizations such as the Urban League, YMCA'S and Boys and Girls Clubs. "My biggest concern," says Dr. Patterson, "is the disconnect of the current educational law 'No Child Left Behind' and those that it is supposed to serve and benefit."



Partnerships and collaborative relationships are not new to Dr. Patterson. From programs such as Cyber Club, Nature's Playground, B.E.S.T., and First String, Inc. Dr. Patterson has been able to demonstrate the significance of educational and social development partnerships to enhance the educational awareness and social responsibility of at-risk students.

Dr. Patterson is known on a national level for developing innovative ways to reach students both educationally and socially. He has been keynote speaker, researcher, program developer, and youth trainer for the past ten years at National Urban League, NULITES Youth Summit, Indianapolis Circle City Frontiers, Inc., and a host of public schools and youth serving organizations around the country. Dr. Patterson is a strong advocate for teaching youth how to take control of their multi-media image. By developing programs such as B.E.A.T.S. (Bridging, Education Arts, Technology, Scholastically), Rhyme Clinic, and All Girlz Radio, many youth have been empowered to get involved in the mechanics of taking control of their life information as well as their social image.

Dr. Patterson's philosophies on advocacy through education have extended well beyond the elementary and secondary level. From developing and teaching courses with progressive pedagogy such as Service Learning from a Hip Hop Perspective, Black Leadership Development, and KRS-ONE: Hip Hop Artistry and Social Activism, Dr. Patterson's methods for reclaiming today's youth are resonating well with college students who flock to his courses for dialogue and debate about how to best address social issues that are plaguing many of today's youth. Their energy and combined with the interest amongst faculty about Hip Hop culture has inspired Dr. Patterson to investigate the development of the Center for the Study of Hip Hop Culture, a research, teaching, and service learning initiative that will provide student and faculty research with a foundation of authenticity for engaging phenomenon impacting constituents born in the post civil-rights era.

Danis R. Pelmore

Danis was born and raised in Champaign; he attended Central High School and graduated in 1987. He attended Parkland College and earned a certificate in Micro Computer Programming, in 1989, before transferring to Illinois State University. He then earned an A.A., Applied Associates in Science from Heartland Community College located in Bloomington in 1994. In 1995, he earned a B.A., in Applied Social Sciences in the study of Sociology from Illinois State University in Bloomington. He has since completed additional course work in the field of real estate.



Danis Pelmore is a Realtor for RE/MAX Realty Associates, in Champaign; he is an independent agent who serves the needs of the community in the real estate market. He is also a Systems Technical Analyst, providing support for Tivoli Storage Management (TSM) backup and restore product for State Farm's nationwide computer infrastructure of 75,000+ servers and 110,000+ workstations. He has been employed with State Farm Insurance for 14 years.

Danis is currently Vice President of A & R for Double O Entertainment Midwest Region. Double O Entertainment (DOE) is a multi-faceted music/management/entertainment company based in Washington, DC. We specialize in Artist Management, Music Production, Artist Development, Production Placement, with a full Recording Facility (Fully Equipment Pro Tools Studio), and Promotions (Parties, Clubs, Special Events).

Danis is the current President of the Champaign/Urbana Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated. He has been involved in both the Bloomington/Normal and Champaign/Urbana communities, where he has assisted with a variety of programs. He currently serves on the regional board for elections and voting for his fraternity.

Danis is married to LeVette Harmon-Pelmore who teaches at Stratton Elementary School in Champaign. He is the proud father of 3 children; Adriannah Pelmore (18), Danis Pelmore Jr. (5), and Lyndon Pelmore (1 ½), and grandfather to, Eriana Williams (1).

Charles E. Phillips, Sr.

Charles E. Phillips, Sr. was born May 26, 1889 in Kansas City, Missouri. His parents were Eliza Johnson and Jack Phillips. He was a grandson of David Johnson, an ex-slave, who was one of the founders of the Second Baptist Church, now Salem Baptist.

Early in his career, Mr. Phillips organized and managed his own musical group. Later he became interested in politics and moved to Springfield where he served as State Inspector for the Department of Registration and Education. He worked with the Council of Social Agencies; assisted in the organization of the Springfield Urban League; and organized and promoted the Frederick Douglass Savings and Loan Company, along with his own mutual insurance company.



In 1939, he returned to Champaign to develop the Supreme Life Insurance Company and also became deeply involved in community activities. He was a forerunner in promoting low cost housing at Carver Park, Burch Village, Dunbar Court and Attucks Place. He was active in the Boy Scout program through Troop 11 for 25 years. He was appointed a member of the Champaign Housing Commission and served as honorary vice president of the Champaign County Urban League. He was elected to the board of the Nelson Home, later to become the Frances Nelson Health Center. He cooperated and served with the Social Agencies Council and the C-U League of Women Voters.

The city of Champaign named a street in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Subdivision in his honor.

David Session

David Henry Session, the son of Reverend William Lee and Mrs. Hallie Brown Session, was born in Hemingway, South Carolina. He was educated in the Hemingway and Florence Schools. David graduated from Allen University. Shortly after graduation, he enlisted in the United States Air Force. He rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant and earned medals for Distinguished Service and Good Conduct. David married Halestine Jackson.

A job opportunity moved them to Champaign, Illinois. David worked at Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul as an instructor. He was promoted through the ranks to Supervisor, Training Specialist and retired as a Training Manager. David continued his education by attending the University of Illinois and earned a Master's degree in Education.



David is a member of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Champaign. He is Superintendent of the Sunday School, Pastor's Steward, Bible Study Participant and a member of the Men's Chorus.

In his community activities, David is a former member of the Champaign Human Relations Commission, the Champaign School Board, and the Fair Housing Bureau Citizens Advisory Committee. David served as a Little League Baseball Coach, Director of the Boards of Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club and the Urban League of Champaign County. In addition, David served as a mentor in the Urbana Schools. He currently serves as a Director on the Board of Credit Union Plus, a member of the Fire and Police Commission and a member of the NAACP. He is a life member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

David and Halestine have two adult sons, Kendal and Darrel (deceased); and two grandchildren Miesha and Courtney.

Pastor Claude E. Shelby Sr.



The Reverend Doctor. He is a native of Brooklyn, Illinois, where he was baptized at the age of 11 at Southern Tabernacle Baptist Church under the pastorate of the Reverend M.S. Sykes.

Pastor Shelby was licensed to preach on April 13, 1958 at the same church under the pastorate the Reverend Dr. E. Stanley Howlett. He has been pastor of the following churches: Providence Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri from 1961 to 1965; Second Baptist Church, Carlyle, Illinois from 1965 to 1966; Bridgeton Baptist Church from 1966 to 1981. He has served as pastor of Salem Baptist Church, the oldest African American Baptist Church in Champaign since September of 1981.

His elementary and secondary education was received through the public Schools of Brooklyn, Illinois. He attended McKendree College of Lebanon, Illinois and received a bachelor of liberal studies from St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri. A diploma in theology was awarded through American Baptist College.

He also attended the St. Louis Theological Consortium, comprised of Eden Theological Seminary, Kenrick Seminary, and St. Louis University School of Divinity. He received a master of science in education from Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville, Illinois with majors in counseling and behavioral science. He received his doctor of divinity from New World Bible Institute, Hayti Missouri (Now Anchor Theological Seminary and Bible Institute of Edinburg, Texas).

Dr. Shelby has given extensive service to the communities wherever he has lived. He has served on the Board of Education, Brooklyn School District 188 for twenty-three and one-half years- serving twelve years as board president, several terms as secretary and two terms as treasurer. He served as chairman of the Joint Agreement Board for Special Education, Districts 188 (Brooklyn) and 189 (East St. Louis). He served on the board of directors of the St. Clair County American Cancer Society; advisory council on campus development for State Community College; member of board of advisors for Black Church Leadership Program of St. Louis University, Metropolitan College. He served two terms as president of the Ministerial Alliance of Champaign-Urbana and Vicinity. He presently serves as a member of the Planning and Implementation Committee for Champaign Unit 4 School District. He was recently appointed to the board of directors of Canaan Credit Union of Urbana, Illinois.

On February 4, 2004, Pastor Shelby was recognized with a Crown of Peace Award by the Inter-religious and International Peace Council for exemplary leadership in reconciliation and peacemaking. He was one among others honored as ambassadors for peace who have

demonstrated exceptional dedication to promoting reconciliation and unity beyond the boundaries of race, religion and culture toward a new era of peace for all humanity. The Co-Chairs for the event were: The Honorable Danny K. Davis, U. S. House of Representatives and Rev. Dr. Chung Hwan Kwak, Chairman of the Council.

The Reverend Dr. Claude E. Shelby, Sr. organized the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Advocacy for Justice Committee in 1985, and has been granted the honor of serving as this group's president since its inception. This organization sponsors the area's annual observance of the national holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They also foster the Living the Dream Scholarship Program, which usually awards up to 16 One-thousand Dollar scholarships each year for up to four years. This year 21 scholarships were awarded. These scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors of Centennial and Central High Schools of Champaign and Urbana High School of Urbana. The thousand dollars are matched for those attending the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign or Tougaloo College of Mississippi. His organization presently has over 50 students on scholarship. Since coming to Salem, Pastor Shelby has done much to build up the body of Christ and to advance His Kingdom. Further, he has led his congregation to construct a new sanctuary and educational facilities. This includes a community room where various community meetings are held.

Dr. Shelby is in his fourth year as moderator of Wood River Baptist District Association, which is comprised of fifty-four churches across Illinois. It is the oldest continuing African American association of churches in the nation. He has served Wood River District in the past as president of the Congress of Christian Education. He had previously served as dean of this educational organization. He has taught in the East St. Louis Extension of American Baptist College of Nashville, Tennessee and director of the American Baptist College Extension of Champaign/Danville, Illinois. Pastor Shelby serves as director of the Scholarship Commission of Baptist General State Convention of Illinois, which awards five one thousand dollar scholarships each year to graduating seniors of members of churches of the convention.

His lovely wife, Montrula, has been an ardent supporter of his service to humanity through his ministry. They are the parents of six children-two sons and four daughters.

Clarence Shelley

After earning his Master's Degree from Wayne State University in Detroit, Mr. Shelley taught English and Speech at Northeastern High School for several years. He subsequently developed programs to facilitate the admission and retention of minority students in colleges and universities throughout the Midwest. He has taught and counseled at the Cranbrook School in Bloomfield Hills, Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, and Wayne State University.

Mr. Shelley came to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1968 to organize one of the nation's earliest and certainly the largest minority student recruitment efforts. In 1974 he was named Dean of Students, and in 1984 he became Assistant Vice Chancellor and then Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. He presently serves as Special Assistant to the Chancellor.



He has served on several national educational committees, many of which focus on higher educational access and opportunity for low-income and minority students. Among his publications are *The Impact of Black Students on Predominantly White Campuses*, *The Once and Future Status of Black Professionals in Higher Education*, *Staff Development: A Training Module for Special Services Staff*, and "Telling Stories: Students and Administrators Talk About Retention" in *Leveling the Playing Field: Promoting Academic Success for Students of Color*. He has received numerous awards and citations for his service to higher education, with a special interest in advocacy for those groups that remain underrepresented in American colleges and universities. In 2002, he was awarded the Chancellor's Medallion for service to the Campus.

George W. Smith and Family



George W. Smith was born a slave, near Selmar, McNairy County, Tennessee, on December 3, 1836. At the early age of nine years, together with his six brothers and sisters, he was sold from his mother's side. As chattel, he brought the sum of \$501.50. It was his duty then to accompany his purchaser's children to school and to act as their playmates.

During study hours, he was allowed, with the other slave boys, to sit on a bench in the rear of the room.

Even at that age he saw that an education was something worth having and he sat there and absorbed all that he could. It was a penal offense to teach a slave to read and write and when the slave-owners discovered he was learning, he was no longer allowed to go to school with the children.

Mr. Smith was next set to work as assistant to the miller and finally became the miller. Milling was his trade until 1862. During the Civil War, Mr. Smith served as a scout in the Union army under General McClelland and as a guide for General Logan in Tennessee and Mississippi. Losing his health, he came to Springfield, Illinois, where he met and married Mrs. Mary E. Oglesby Gaines. They had five sons and two daughters.

Mr. Smith chose farming as his lifework. At first it was on a small scale as he farmed in the summer and chopped wood in the winter. In the spring of 1876, Mr. Smith moved to a tract of land in Broadlands. Paying for the first 80 acres was the most difficult task of his career, but he continued to purchase land until he had acquired 440 acres. He was among the very first to adopt tile drainage; he was remarkably successful in growing corn and in raising hogs; and his horses were known for their excellent quality.

Mr. Smith never forgot the meager educational opportunities afforded him and spent more money on educating his children than any other man in the township and he considered it well invested. Temperate in all things, he was a man of conservative judgment and served often as juror as well as arbitrator in disputed matters. He had great respect for the rights of other men. It was his opinion that every man should take an active part in politics. He always voted but he would never accept office. Mr. Smith died on December 29, 1911. His funeral was one of the largest in the history of Broadlands.

William Walter Smith

William Walter Smith, son of George and Mary Oglesby Gaines Smith was born in Broadlands. In 1900, William W. Smith became the first African American graduate of the University of Illinois. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering and was the first editor of the Illini newspaper, now The Daily Illini, during 1899 and 1900. He was a member of the football team, playing tackle.

Mr. Smith was employed by Armour & Co and was sent by them to the Argentine Republic to oversee the building of elevators, warehouses, refrigerating plants and other construction work on their vast holdings in that country. He made a 5,000-mile journey to Pennsylvania to claim his bride, Anna Allen on August 20, 1911. On January 3, 1922, Mr. Smith petitioned the Court to change his name to Walter Smith Oglesby and he is so listed in The Semi-Centennial Alumni Record of the University of Illinois.



Joe A. Stovall

Joe A. Stovall is the youngest child of four of the late Robert L. Stovall and Claudyne Stovall. He was born on the south side of Chicago at Cook County Hospital on March 9th, 1964. His family moved to Champaign when he was around 3 yrs old. Joe grew up in Champaign on the corner of 1st and Church St. He attended Booker T. Washington Elementary School and was one of the original members of the Boys Club along with his older brother, Robert Jr. He attended Edison Middle School and graduated from Central H.S. in 1982. Joe was involved in various activities in high school. He was an honor roll student and lettered his junior & senior year in basketball.



Joe attended Quincy College in the fall of 1982. He was a member of the Quincy Hawks varsity basketball team. Joe majored in Mathematics while attending Quincy. When he recognized he was vertically challenged (Too Short!) he decided to transfer to Illinois State University in Normal. Joe majored in Chemistry at ISU, and received a B.S. in 1988.

After graduation, Joe worked for Dow Chemical in Midland, MI in their Technical Services and Development Dept. Joe worked with polymer plastics for over one year. One project he worked on was lining plastic cereal bags with Saran to increase the shelf-life of cereal. This is now done by Post Cereal for their various cereals. Joe worked for Dow Chemical until 1989.

After Dow Chemical, Joe became an employee with State Farm Insurance. He has held several positions: Claim Rep., Sr. Claim Rep., Claim Spec., and Claim Support Supervisor. In 1996, Joe was recruited into the agency force. He became an agent with State Farm in 1997. He currently runs his own agency in Champaign.

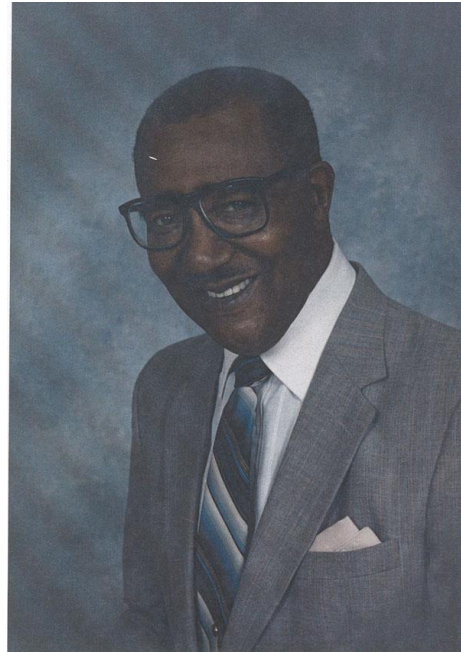
Joe is heavily involved in the community. He is the President of the Urban Business Network. He will become Board President of the Don Moyer's Boys & Girls Club in April 2004. He is an avid supporter of the Urban League of Champaign County. He is a sponsor, coach and volunteer for 1st String, Inc., Instructor for the Junior Achievement program, and Mentor's through the Talks mentoring program.

Joe is married to Elizabeth Stovall. They have two sons, Jamir-9 and Jamal-7. They currently reside in Champaign.

Kenneth O. Stratton

The youngest of seven children, Stratton received a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois in 1950 and a master's degree in 1952. During his career (33 years) with the Champaign Unit 4 School District, Kenneth Stratton served as both a teacher and an administrator. He served as president of the Champaign Education Association as well. In 1961, Stratton was elected the first African American council member in the City of Champaign.

Mr. Stratton was a member of the William F. Earnest American Legion Post 559; served on the Board of Directors of United Way and the Frances Nelson Health Center. He was a charter member of the Don Moyer Boys Club, and the Champaign County Urban League.



Mr. Stratton was active in the civil rights movement; was a member of the Black Coalition for Equal Opportunity Employment and helped organize for integration in the Champaign school system, Champaign housing, and the hiring practices in the downtown Champaign stores and at Burnham Hospital. Stratton Elementary School was named in his honor.

Willie T. Summerville

Mr. Willie T. Summerville was born in Sunshine (Ashley County), Arkansas, and finished the T. W. Daniel High School of Crossett, Arkansas. He graduated from Arkansas AM&N College (presently called the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff) with a B.S. Degree in Music Education. He is also a graduate of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Campus, where he received the M.S. Degree in Music Education. He has done further study at several other major universities.



Some of his awards include: the Outstanding Young Educator Award of Champaign-Urbana; the Illinois Citizen of the Year from the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.; Outstanding Black Educator Award from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; Honorary Citizen of Fort Worth, Texas; a Special Citation from the Governor of Illinois for his work with the youth of Illinois; Public Citizen of the Year (1994) by the National Association of Social workers; 1994 Winner of the Vocational Achievement Award by the Urbana Rotary Club; 1995 Martin Luther King Award from the Champaign Human Relations Commission; a 1995 "Golden Apple Award" from WICD Channel 15 News Station for outstanding teaching; voted Outstanding Teacher of the Month by the Urbana Middle School Student Council; and a declaration of January 12, 1995 as "W.T. Summerville Day" in Champaign. In 1998, he was named by President Clinton as one of the Hometown Heroes in Education and in 1999; he was awarded the Martin Luther King Outstanding Achievement Award for the City of Urbana. Mr. Summerville received the Martin Luther King Educator Award of 2000 from Parkland College. He was also named Teacher of the Year by the Wal-Mart Corporation of Champaign. Most recently, he was awarded the Man of the Year Award from the National Council of African American Men of Champaign County.

He has been a guest clinician/director at more than 20 school district music festivals; and fourteen universities. He recently lectured to prospective music educators on diversity and inclusion at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. He has conducted Gospel Music/Church Music Seminars at over 42 churches across the United States, and has performed similar duties as a guest of the U. S. Chief of Chaplains Office for the United States Air Force at home and abroad. He has been the clinician at 24 military bases in this country and in England and Germany.

He is presently employed as Choral Music Director of the Urbana Middle School 8th Grade Chorus; and the Director of the Urbana High School Concert Choir, which was invited to sing in the St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Italy, in 1999. In 2002, the UHS Concert Choir sang in the

Carnegie Hall. The Choir also performed at the famous Riverside Church of New York City and at Dawling College of Long Island, New York. In 2003, the Choir toured the St. Louis area and performed at local high schools and the University of Missouri.

Mr. Summerville is a member of the Canaan Baptist Church Board of Deacons and treasurer of the Canaan Foundation that supports the Canaan Academy of Urbana. He is a charter member of Canaan's SWAT Team (Soul Winning Action Team). He teaches the Adult Sunday School class, and he is active in other church and civic organizations throughout the Urbana-Champaign area. Mr. Summerville is also Minister of Music at the Canaan Baptist Church of Urbana, Illinois; Director/Organist of the St. Luke CME New Life Choir in Champaign.

Mr. Summerville has been married for 37 years to Mrs. Valerian A. Summerville and they have 3 children and two wonderful grandsons.

Reverend B. J. Tatum

Rev. B. J. Tatum is a native of Marshall, Texas. His ministry began at age five, and he was ordained as a Minister of the Gospel at age twelve. Prior to relocating to Urbana in 1971, he was employed on the managerial level at Motorola, Inc. in Chicago.

As Founding and Senior Pastor of Canaan Baptist Church in Urbana, Rev. B. J. Tatum instituted a plethora of Evangelism and Discipleship ministries that have impacted the Champaign-Urbana community. The ministries at Canaan are replete with Expository Preaching, Effective Teaching, Educational Excellence, Economic Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, and an Environment of Hope for Substance Abusers.



Rev. Tatum implemented an Evangelistic Soul Winning Action Team (SWAT) that has canvassed neighborhoods since June 8, 1980 sharing the Good News of the Gospel with lost souls. Over 35,000 homes have been visited, and more than 1,500 souls have been saved.

A Discipleship Follow-Up Ministry was launched February 15, 1988. People Available to Contact and Encourage (PACE) encourage and edify weak and backslidden Christians.

Rev. Tatum is Superintendent of Canaan Academy, a private elementary school which he envisioned over 20 years, and which became a reality September 9, 1996. Under his leadership, construction of a new building for grades Pre-Kindergarten through five was completed in 1999. Students are academic achievers, and are scoring in the 97th percentile nationwide. The school is recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education.

He is Director and CEO of Canaan Credit Union, the fulfillment of his dream for economic empowerment that offers a practical approach to solving the problem of persistent economic violence that has historically plagued the African American community. The Credit Union opened its window to the future October 12, 2001. People now "Bank at God's House." He is President and CEO of Canaan Development Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.

Canaan's Substance Abuse Ministry was the model for a separate male and female residential SAFE House (Substance Abuse Free Environment) where men and women can break free from controlling addictions and troublesome habits. SAFE House is recognized by the Champaign County Court System as an option for substance abusers.

A mentoring Ministry for men and women and boys and girls emanated from his weekly Men's Discipleship Class that is designed to empower African American men in the areas of parenting, successful relationships, self-esteem, and being role models in the community.

Rev. Tatum was an Auxiliary Chaplain at Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul and served 12 years as Pastor/Director of a Sunday Inspirational Hour. He was the first African American Chaplain to provide worship services and pastoral duties. He traveled to other Air Bases preaching the Gospel and establishing an Inspirational Hour. Rev. Tatum received international prominence when he was invited as guest evangelist to the United States Armed Forces in Crete, Greece. This Christian mission was highlighted by the baptizing of four candidates in the Aegean Sea, which was a "first" for the Island of Crete.

He and his wife, Barbara, are parents of three children: Stephanie Tatum, Ph.D., College Professor in New York; Bryant Tatum, Principal of Canaan Academy and a doctoral student at the University of Illinois; and Yolanda Tatum-Brown, a registered pharmacist in Houston, Texas. (A daughter, Pamela, is deceased. She was a Probation Officer.) They have 3 grandsons.

Larry T. Taylor

Larry T. Taylor holds a Master's of Science degree in Education from Eastern Illinois University. He attended John Marshall High School on the Westside of Chicago Illinois and graduated from Rantoul High School in the bicentennial year of 1976.

Shortly thereafter, he joined the Army and was stationed at Scholdfield Barracks in Hawaii where he served two of his three years of active duty. During that time, he received various awards to include: Trainee Leader of the cycle and Colonel's Orderly.

After Larry was honorably discharged from the military, he started here at Parkland College, majoring in business. He earned a Associates in Business Management and a Liberal Arts degree before transferring to Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois.



Mr. Taylor was selected as a PROF (Professors Of the Future) scholar in September 1999. He became a full-time Instructor, teaching Psychology at Parkland College where he now teaches part-time and has a full-time position as the Middle School Advisor for Talent Search of the TRIO program. Mr. Taylor has also taught GED and Orientation to College classes at Parkland College.

Prior to his employment at Parkland College, Mr. Taylor was employed at Prairie Center in Urbana Illinois, as an Addiction's Counselor. As a counselor, he developed therapy groups, conducted therapy group sessions and facilitated client treatment plans. He also conducted individual counseling sessions and maintained client's records.

Mr. Taylor is the father of three daughters and is married to his wife, Anita, who is also employed at Parkland. He and his wife met in High School and have been married for 20 years. Larry has various hobbies and loves to play chess.

Taylor Thomas

Taylor Thomas, the son of Woodward and Alice Thomas, was born in 1911 at Burnham Hospital. He was raised in Champaign and entered first grade as the only African American student in his school. He was educated in the Champaign schools. After graduation he entered Tennessee College where he majored in history and English. After graduation he worked from 1937-1940 for the Farm Security Administration in Indianapolis. From 1940-1944, illness kept him bedfast most of the time. Following recovery, he was employed as a supervisor of the Unit Personnel Service Records Section at Chanute Air Force Base. He served as director of Douglass Community Center from 1945-1948 and was held in such high regard that he was nominated for the Champaign City Council in 1947.



Mr. Thomas began his teaching career in 1948 in the upper grades in an all-black Danville school where he served until 1956. He was vice president of the Danville Education Association in 1954. At Danville he was also a successful coach of football, basketball and track. Mr. Thomas became the first African American teacher employed in the Urbana school system in 1956, teaching history and sociology in the junior and senior high schools and in 1958 he became a full-time teacher in the senior high school. He was appointed Assistant Principal of Urbana High School in 1968 and was promoted to Assistant Superintendent for Student Services in 1972, the post he held until his retirement in 1977.

Taylor continued his studies through the years and obtained a Master's Degree in 1951 and in 1955, an Advanced Certificate in Educational Administration from the University of Illinois. Mr. Thomas was elected President of the Urbana Teachers Association in 1959. In 1961 the students dedicated their yearbook, the Rosemary, to Taylor Thomas. In 1970 he was elected Secretary of the Illinois High School Dean of Students Association and he was given Life Membership in the Illinois PTSA. In 1977, he was made an honorary Commissioner of the Champaign Park District.

Taylor Thomas continued to be active in civic affairs after his retirement working with organizations such as: the Youth Allocation Committee of the United Fund, the Family Service Administrative Committee, the Wesley Foundation Child Development Personnel Committee, the Urban League, Don Moyers Boys' Club, and NAACP. Taylor Thomas was recognized for his outstanding citizenship and public service in 1980 as the recipient of the Urbana Exchange Club Book of Golden Deeds Award. Taylor Thomas was a member of the Bahai faith. He was chairman of the original group of seven that organized the church in Champaign in 1950.

Taylor married the former Mary Grace Jordan in 1945.

Terry Townsend

Mr. Townsend has been active in Civil Rights for more than

a decade. In 1968, shortly after Dr. Martin Luther King's death, Champaign Unit 4 schools created a scholarship in his name and Terry was a recipient of this scholarship for his work in improving race relations. He brought the Community Reinvestment Act to the attention of community leaders which resulted in banks increasing their efforts to make loans to African Americans. He is a contributor to the new book, *Black Power on Campus - The University of Illinois 1965-1975*. He served as a Housing Commissioner for 10 years.

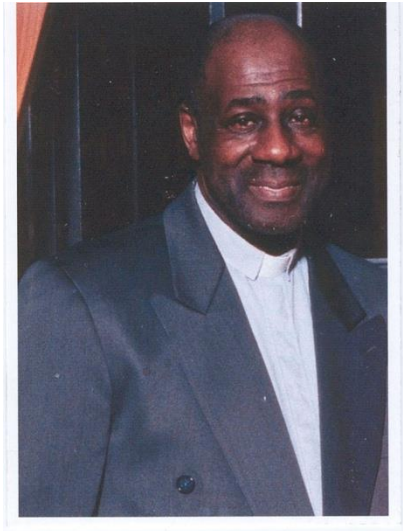


In 2002, Mr. Townsend created the African American High School Reunion - the largest event of this type in America. A native of Champaign, he is a University of Illinois Honors Graduate. Recently, he took advantage of the State of Illinois early retirement initiative.

Bishop King James Underwood

King James Underwood, Sr. was born to Sarah Parson Underwood and Judge Underwood on April 24, 1938, the 9th of 10 siblings in Pantherburn, Mississippi. King James came to live with his sister, Mrs. Rosetta Williams, her husband Ike Williams and their family in Urbana when he was about 7 years old. He worked full-time while completing high school in Urbana. Other than the time he spent in the United States Navy, he has lived in Urbana-Champaign.

Education: Certificate from Illinois Institute of Technology; B.A. in Theology; B.A. in Rehabilitation Counseling; M.A. in Religious Education; Doctor of Ministry; Doctor of Divinity (Honorary).



Employment: University of Illinois, Illini Union and Housing Division; General and Sub-Building Contractor (renovation of homes and churches - built New Free Will Baptist Church); Alloy Engineering and Casting Company.

Community and Spiritual Services: Spiritual Counselor and Advisor to Danville Correctional Center; Champaign County Jail, University of Illinois, Eastern Illinois University, and Indiana University student outreach; Boy Scouts; tutorial programs; Urban League of Champaign County; NAACP; Citizens Concerned with Quality Education; Ministerial Alliance of Champaign-Urbana and Vicinity; Rainbow Push Coalition Advisory Board of Champaign County; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Advocacy for Justice Committee; Empty Tomb; benefited the community spiritually, culturally and financially by sponsoring Free Will Baptist District, Regional and Youth Conferences; Mayoral proclamation of "Bishop King James Underwood Day" in Urbana, Illinois.

Preston Williams, Jr., Ed. D.

Dr. Preston Williams, Jr. is the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for District #116. Preston came to us from Kankakee, Illinois. He completed his undergraduate degree at Indiana State University as a double major in social science education and African American Studies with an emphasis on political science and U.S. History.

Preston developed an interest in education at an early age. He began tutoring as a junior in high school as he enjoyed helping younger children. He continued to tutor elementary school children through his high school the summer of his senior year and continued to enjoy his experiences.

His teaching experiences first began at Kankakee East Ridge High School as a permanent substitute for sixth months.

He then began teaching in the special education area at an alternative education center, while receiving his S.E.D. (Social and Emotionally Disturbed) certification in night classes through Illinois State University and the National College of Education. He then received a job offer from Champaign Centennial High School to teach U.S. History and consumer education. Then he moved onto District 116, first to teach at UHS and then as an assistant principal at UMS. The next step in his career was a move over to Central Office as the Director of Human Resources, and finally to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in 1998.

Preston and his wife, Ivy were married in 1983 and have two children, Jacquelyn and Preston III. Ivy is employed in Champaign Unit Four School District.

Preston received his Ed.D. in May 2000 and is now the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. His hobbies include: reading, chess, backgammon, walking, traveling, coaching, and spending time with his family.

Preston enjoys working for Urbana School District 116 and living in the community of Champaign-Urbana. "My favorite part of living in this community is the people because Champaign-Urbana has such a diverse population, racially and culturally. Living in a university town has many positives. My family has the opportunity to be a part of many different cultures in a small area. I think that is great!"



Willie Williams

A three-time All-American and two-time NCAA champion in the outdoor 100 meters, Williams won a gold medal as a member of the 4 x 100 relay squad at the 1955 Pan American Games in Mexico. He also was a two-time 100 meter finalist in the 1952 and 1956 Olympic trials.

Williams earned a B.S. from the University of Illinois in physical education and his M.S. from Indiana University in health education. An Indiana native, Williams taught and coached track for 11 years at West Side High School in Gary, Indiana, where his squads gathered five state titles. He is a member of the Indiana Track and Field Hall of Fame, the Gary (IN) Track and Field Hall of Fame and coached the 1988 Saudi Arabian Olympic team.



Williams resides in Urbana with his wife Barbara. He is the proud father of two daughters; Darla Williams-Tucker and Margot Williams and grandfather to two grandsons; Thomas Rasheed II and Julian Lloyd Tucker.