

SPELMAN Messenger



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Research and Resource Center

25th Anniversary of Women's Center



Spelman College
125 years

S P E L M A N
Messenger

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C R E D O

The Spelman Messenger, founded in 1885, is dedicated to participating in the ongoing education of our readers through enlightening articles designed to promote lifelong learning. The Spelman Messenger is the alumnae magazine of Spelman College and is committed to educating, serving and empowering Black women.

In Memoriam

1927

Helen Greene Holland

She touched many lives while teaching at McKinley High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana as a dietician at the Tuskegee Veterans Administration Hospital and as a partner in Holland's Radio Sales and Service. She also belonged to several community organizations, including the Tuskegee chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College. She died five days before her 99th birthday.

Died: December 2, 2004

Services: December 8, 2004 at Greenwood Missionary Baptist Church, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama

High School 1928

Hettie Mae Jackson Spottsville

After graduating from Spelman High School, Hettie Mae Jackson attended Spelman College for two years before graduating from West Virginia State College and then receiving a master's degree from the Atlanta University School of Social Work. After practicing social work in Chicago and New York City, she earned a degree in medical library science from Massachusetts General Hospital. She then worked as a medical librarian in Detroit and Kansas City, Missouri, where she settled and belonged to many civic organizations. In recent years, she taught adult education in the Kansas City school district.

Died: March 16, 2004

Services: March 20, 2004 at the Second Missionary Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri

1937

Frances Sampson Mask

After graduating from Spelman, Frances Sampson married James Washington Mask, Jr. and settled in Hamlet, North Carolina. Frances taught piano in the public schools and then raised a family of five children. Although confined to a wheelchair since 1987, due to a stroke, she maintained an independence of mind and spirit and her enormous love for people. She died on her 92nd birthday.

Died: November 12, 2004

Services: All Saints' Episcopal Church, Hamlet, North Carolina

1938

Eloise Usher Belcher

In addition to a B.A. in English (with honors) from Spelman College, Eloise Usher Belcher had two master's degrees, one in theater arts from the University of Iowa and one in English from Atlanta University. She taught a myriad of subjects in a myriad of places, including being director of the then Spelman-Atlanta University-Morehouse Players. She had numerous academic and dramatic professional affiliations and belonged to many civic and church groups. She was the widow of Dr. Algernon Belcher. She was recognized for 50 years of service at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Orangeburg, South Carolina and, on October 29, 2004, Morehouse College celebrated her as its oldest living homecoming queen (known as Miss Maroon and White). She died at the age of 86.

Died: June 22, 2005

Services: June 29, 2005, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Orangeburg, South Carolina

1942

Mary Elizabeth Gaines Parker

After graduating from Spelman College, Mary Elizabeth Gaines did graduate studies at Temple University and Penn State University and received her master's equivalency. She met Walter Parker at the Philadelphia Navy Yard; they were married in 1947 and had two sons. After teaching in Philadelphia public schools for more than 25 years, she retired. She then spent another 20 plus years at the Center in the Park, leading a support group and teaching yoga, among other activities. She was a faithful church member, and she loved to line dance and to travel.

Died: May 13, 2005

Services: May 19, 2005, at Grace Baptist Church of Germantown in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1946

Portia Annice Spencer Chandler

A few years after graduating from Spelman, Portia Annice Spencer joined the U.S. Army and traveled throughout the United States and Europe. After her tour of duty, she enrolled in Atlanta University's Graduate School of Library Science. Two years later, she married Cleveland A. Chandler, Sr., an economics professor. That union was blessed with a daughter, Lisé Colette, and later with grandchildren. Upon her return to Chester, Pennsylvania, she began her career as a librarian, serving in both public and private schools and libraries, ranging from middle school to colleges and general libraries. She attended Baptist and Christian Science churches throughout her life.

Died: June 21, 2004

Services: June 26, 2004 at Calvary Baptist Church in Chester, Pennsylvania

Anita Lewis Polk

Anita Lewis Polk had careers as a newspaper reporter and editor, social worker and business owner. She was deeply involved in the civil rights movement in the 1960s, was active in the local NAACP and worked for the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, where she founded its Street Academy for teenagers who wanted an alternative to regular schools. She hosted radio and television shows that featured Urban League activities and was the first woman to be named deputy director of the organization. She helped to found the American Sickle Cell Anemia Association and developed treatment programs for people with alcohol problems. She had a master's degree from Case Western Reserve University's School of Applied Social Science and, in addition to her social work, she also was involved in a number of businesses and received many awards from civic organizations.

Died: January 4, 2003

Services: January 11, 2003 at Mount Zion Congregational Church, Cleveland, Ohio

1948

Gertrude Davis Fuller

After graduating *summa cum laude* from Spelman College, Gertrude Davis earned a master's degree from Wayne State University in Michigan. She then taught in Griffin and Monroe, Georgia until she was called back to her dearly

beloved alma mater to serve as campus food service dietician until she married Burton Fuller. The couple moved to Detroit, where they both taught in the Detroit school system. After 36½ years of teaching, Gertrude, now a widow, retired. She was a faithful member of Bethel A.M.E. Church in Michigan, a singer in the choir and a member of various community organizations, where she served in many capacities. "Gert" was a stickler for detail, crossing every "t" and dotting every "i."

Died: August 3, 2005

Services: August 13, 2005 at Trinity Baptist Church, Tignall, Georgia

1950

Martha Stinson

Martha was a retail entrepreneur and educator. She is survived by her best friend and husband, Allen Stinson, Jr., and their four children, as well as five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Died: October 3, 2004

Services: October 14, 2004 at St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church, Columbus, Georgia

1951

Marjorie Vaughan Crawford

After graduating from Spelman College, Marjorie Vaughan Crawford became the first Black graduate from the Medical College of Virginia School of Physical Therapy in Richmond, Virginia. She received an M.S. in health care administration from the North Carolina School of Public Health at Chapel Hill. She then began her career as a physical therapist in Omaha, Nebraska, later serving in New Jersey and Tuskegee, Alabama. She retired from the Department of Health and Human Services in the District of Columbia as the coordinator for physical and occupational therapy. After her retirement, she served as a physical therapy consultant for the Prince George's County Board of Education in Maryland. She was a life member of the American Physical Therapy Association. She was also an active church member, holding several responsible positions, and active in civic groups.

Died: October 5, 2005

Services: October 13, 2005 at First Baptist Church of Highland Park, Landover, Maryland

1956

Flora Hathaway Mosley

After Spelman, she served as an educator and retired from this profession.

Services: February 22, 2005 at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Atlanta

Gwendolyn Nevelle Gilley-Conley

"Gwen" began her academic career at Spelman College at the age of 16. Her love for Spelman was displayed through the lifelong support she gave to "little Spelman sisters," which included providing financial resources and temporary housing to countless students. Gwen received a master's degree from Atlanta University and completed additional studies at Georgia State University. She began her teaching career in Newnan, Georgia, where she met and married Percy H. Conley, Jr., a music teacher. Three children were born from that union. She continued to teach

in Atlanta Public Schools, including teaching and supervising in the Program for Exceptional Children. This was the beginning of her work and her passion for students with special needs. After retiring from the public sector, Gwen began work on providing respite services for individuals with disabilities. In 1986, she, along with a group of parents, educators and business leaders, founded Metro Atlanta Respite and Developmental Services, Inc. (MARDS), where she served as Executive Director. MARDS has continued to respond to the growing need for safe and dependable services for children with special needs. In addition, she was a member of several groups and a faithful and active member of Friendship Baptist Church. She received recognition for outstanding community service from numerous organizations; among other awards, she received the Spelman College Community Service Award.

Died: February 28, 2005

Services: March 5, 2005 at Friendship Baptist Church, Atlanta

1959

Jeanelle Stovall

She served the Catherine Dunham Center for Arts & Humanities as associate program director and resided in East Saint Louis, Illinois.

Died: January 17, 2005

Services: February 26, 2005 at Flipper Temple AME Church Chapel, Atlanta

1961

Margie Durrah McIver

Even though she was afflicted with multiple sclerosis immediately upon graduating from Spelman, she taught her family and friends a great deal about faith and grace. She is survived by her husband, Jerome H. McIver (Morehouse, Class of 1961).

Died: October 28, 2003

1968

Yvonne Pinckney Aldridge

Died: July 15, 2005

Services: July 21, 2005 at New Bethel AME Church, Lithonia, Georgia

1980

Christi Len Harris

Christi received an M.A. from Atlanta University after her graduation from a very active participation in the life of Spelman as a student and Glee Club member. She continued to uphold and uplift her alma mater after graduation with her time, her talent and her treasure. She was an educator and a productive citizen, but even more, she inspired those around her to do more and to be more. She was kind and tenacious of spirit, traits learned from her dear parents, **Daisy Phinazee, C'47**, and Henry "Pete" Harris, III, who took great joy in her care when she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Mr. and Mrs. Harris and family friends have made gifts in memory of Christi, and these gifts will be used to support the Spelman College Glee Club, ensuring that Christi's legacy remains in the hearts of everyone who knew her and in the well-being of Spelman College, her beloved alma mater.

Died: April 7, 2005

Services: April 12, 2005 at Radcliffe Presbyterian Church, Atlanta



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