

*A Special Memorial Service
Commemorating the Life of
Lena Wright Myers, Ph.D.
(1935-2015)
“Class of 1958”*



*6:00 p.m.
Friday, March 11, 2016*

*Woodworth Chapel
Tougaloo College
500 W. County Line Road
Tougaloo, Mississippi*

Lena Wright Myers, Ph.D. (1935-2015)
Emeritus Professor, Ohio University

Dr. Lena Wright Myers was a native of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, the youngest of four children born to Charlie and Alberta Wright, the widow of Julius Myers, and the mother of Stanley Myers. She received the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from Tougaloo College in 1958; the Master of Arts Degree in Sociology and Cultural Anthropology in 1964; and the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Sociology from Michigan State University in 1973. Dr. Myers completed Post Doctoral work at the University of Michigan in 1982.

The career of this prominent sociologist, whose areas of specialization were social psychology, theory, and deviant behavior, spanned from Mississippi to Ohio. It included positions at Utica Junior College, Michigan State University, Washtenaw Community College, Mississippi Valley State University, Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, and retirement from Ohio University's Department of Sociology and Anthropology as Emeritus Professor of Sociology.

Research by Dr. Myers resulted in many articles published in professional journals. She was a contributing author to: *Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science*, (Doubleday); *The Black Woman*, (Sage); *Violence in the Black Family: Correlations and Consequences*, (D. C. Heath and Company). *Black Women: Do They Cope Better?* In its revised edition was released in March 1991 and her last work, *Early Socialization and Later Life Experiences of Black Men*, was also published in 1991.

Dr. Myers was an active member of a series of civic and professional organizations. Some of them included Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the American Sociological Association, the Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists, Inc. , the Association of Black Sociologists, Inc., and the Association of Black Psychologists. Not only did this professor develop some unprecedented research designs which have contributed to the body of knowledge about African Americans; but she made significant research and literary contributions to the discipline of Sociology; much of which is often cited in existing literature.

Honors and awards received by Dr. Myers included *Outstanding Young Women of America*; *Personalities of the South*; *American Men and Women of Science*; *Woman of the Year*; *Distinguished American Award*; *Personalities of America*; *Spotlight on Scholars Award*; *World Who's Who of Women Award - Sixth Edition*, 1981; the State of Mississippi House of Representatives' *Concurrent Resolution No. 70, Commendation* for her book, *Black Women: Do They Cope Better?*, March 11, 1981, (commonly referred to as the "Classics" by some critics); *Who's Who Among Black Americans*, 1985; *Outstanding Research and Scholarship Award*, Mississippi State University, 1986; *Recognition for Scholarship and Service to the Profession*, by the Association of Black Sociologists, Inc., 1990; and *Recipient of the W. E. B. DuBois Award (1991) and Trailblazer Award (2010)* from the Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists, Inc.

Selected publications of Dr. Myers included *Not Because I am Different – But Because I am Human*; *Career Goals: Persistence Leads to Success*; *Black Women Coping with Stress in Academia*; *African American Males Speak: The Lifelong Process*; *A Broken Silence: Voices of African American Women in the Academy*; *Realities of Academe for African American Women*; *The Academic Pendulum and Self-Esteem of African American Males*; and *Black Male Socialization: A Symbolic Interactionist Perspective*.

Dr. Myers is survived by her son, Stanley Myers. She will forever be remembered by caregivers: Letitia Wallace, whom she affectionately called "Baby Tish," and referred to as the "daughter" she never had and Bria' Wallace; along with friends, colleagues, and former students.

Memorial Reflections

*Dr. Edgar Smith, Presiding
Senior Advisor to the President
Tougaloo College*

Prelude

Invocation *Reverend Dr. Willie C. Jones
Pastor, Greater New Zion (Hazlehurst), Parson Hill (Liberty), Shiloh (Vicksburg) M. B. Churches*

Musical Selection *Ms. Vershaune Stamps
Tougaloo College, Class of 2017*

From Alpha to Omega

The Beginning

Tributes in Remembrance of Dr. Lena Wright Myers

Mr. William Revies, Retired Entrepreneur, Educator, and Administrator

Mrs. Fannie Holmes Taylor, Tougaloo College, Class of 1959

Dr. Delores Bolden Stamps, Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.

Soloist, Mrs. Gwendolyn Stokes Byrd, The Utica Junior College Family

Dr. Walter Davis, Professor of Sociology, Tougaloo College

*Dr. Thomas C. Calhoun, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
Jackson State University*

*Dr. Delores Aldridge, Grace Towns Hamilton Professor Emerita
Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia*

Musical Selection *Mrs. Gwendolyn Stokes Byrd*

The End

Resolutions

Association of Black Sociologists

*Dr. Josie Scales
Tennessee State University
Nashville, Tennessee*

Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists

*Dr. Doreen Hilton, President
Fayetteville State University
Fayetteville, North Carolina*

*Tougaloo College
Dr. Edgar Smith*



Benediction *Reverend Dr. Willie C. Jones*

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Dr. Beverly Hogan and the congenial and capable staff of Tougaloo College for courtesies extended in hosting this event. Tougaloo was the launching pad from which Dr. Lena Wright Myers energetically and enthusiastically began a brilliant career. In her own words, "Tougaloo was the bridge that brought me over."

Thanks to the Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists, Inc. for allowing this memorial to be coincidental to its annual meeting. More than fifty years of membership with the organization is "proof positive" of the love, loyalty and appreciation that Dr. Myers had for ASBS. In planning this Conference, the Local Arrangements Committee truly missed her input. Our ASBS friends are commended for "Going this Last Mile of the Way."

Thanks to the friends and associates who have so willingly shared their memories and expressions of love by participating in this program honoring Dr. Lena Wright Myers. Her connections were so many and so varied. It is regretful that time does not afford opportunities to share by all who would have such a desire. Your relationships with her were neither unnoticed nor unappreciated.

Thanks to all who are a part of this audience. It is an honor to have your presence and it is a blessing that you chose to attend. Lena loved life and enjoyed her professional, social and personal associates. Life has so many facets and the gratitude for your part in her journey, great or small, is sincerely appreciated.

Thanks to E.C. Foster, Velvelyn Foster and Amy Jo Robinson for the outings you so courteously provided Lena when she could no longer travel on her own. She loved visits to the Mighty Mississippi River, and it was your love and graciousness that helped to enhance the quality of her fading years.

Thanks to the entire Wallace family, especially Letitia and Brie, for extending your family to include "Mama Lena," as you so affectionately regarded her. The day-to-day care that you provided to her, the responsibility that you undertook to assure that her needs were met, and the unfailing love you bestowed upon her were unconditional and unparalleled. Benjamin and Ann Harper had to have been led by God to truly understand Lena's need and to understand that the Wallace family would fulfill those needs. God bless you for being her anchor in the storm.

Thanks to God for a friendship that endured the test of time from 1966 until her demise on August 8, 2015. It was a beautiful journey. To God be the Glory!

— Patricia Williams McGill
Tougaloo Class of 1963
ASBS Member