African American Contributions to Tempe History
Did you know?

“Firsts”

- Benton James was the first African American graduate of ASU (1924).

- Love Hatton Jordan was the first African American female graduate of ASU (1928).

- The Dunbar Social & Literary Society, the first African American student social organization, was formed in 1935.

- Emerson Harvey was the first African American football player at ASU. He started playing in 1937.

- Jesse Wilmer Jones was the first African American PhD recipient at ASU (1963).

- Warren and Carol Livingston were the first African Americans to buy property in Tempe (1965).

- Joshua Bursh and Charles Murray were the first African Americans to graduate from Arizona State University Law School (1970).
• Cloves Campbell was the first African American elected to the Arizona State Senate (1972).

• Ed “Butch” Cowings was the first African American officer on the Tempe Police force. He joined the force in 1974.

• Dr. Betty Greathouse was the first African American to serve on the Women’s Intercollegiate Athletic Board at Arizona State University (1973) and the first African American female member of Arizona State University’s Athletic Board (1976). She also was the first African American Tempe All American Woman Educator, selected by the Arizona Women’s Partnership and then-Mayor Harry Mitchell (1985).

• Cecil Patterson earned his law degree at Arizona State University and became the first African American Superior Court Judge (1980), later serving on the Appellate Court.

• Gladys Styles Johnston, Dean of Education, became the first African American Dean at ASU (1986).

• Corey Woods was elected to the Tempe City Council in 2008, making him the first African American to serve on the council.
Did you know?

“Other Facts”


• Eugene Grigsby and Roosevelt Woods were two African American art professors at Arizona State University who became nationally acclaimed artists.

• Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at Arizona State University in 1964.

• In 1964, Joe Caldwell finished his basketball career at Arizona State University as an All-American. Later that summer he made the twelve-man United States Olympic team. He went on to play professional basketball with the Detroit Pistons, St. Louis Hawks and Carolina Cougars.
African American Contributions to Tempe History
The tale of Tempe’s African American community is one of exclusion, overcome through education. Little is known about Tempe’s first African American citizens. Early twentieth century photographs reveal that they were present in Tempe. Unfortunately, the photographs tell us nothing about who the individuals were, where they resided or what their roles were in the community.

One thing is clear; African Americans in Tempe experienced racism. They were denied the freedom to settle and buy or rent property after arriving in the Salt River Valley to sharecrop and work the cotton, grain, and hay fields during the 1920s. Racism persisted over the next several decades leaving African Americans in Tempe excluded from social and civic involvement and employment opportunities. African Americans were also banned from the public pool at Tempe Beach Park.

This text is an excerpt from a brochure created by the African American Advisory Committee.
In the 1920s, the first African Americans attended the Tempe Normal School of Arizona, which later went through several name changes before eventually becoming Arizona State University (ASU). Despite being admitted to the school, African Americans were not allowed in the dining halls, dormitories, or restrooms until well after World War II. The school often omitted them from the official records and yearbooks. But, members of Tempe’s African American community persevered and slowly overcame exclusion through education – as pupils in many fields of study, and as teachers and administrators.

Several of the early African American students at ASU pursued careers in education after graduating. Education was one of the few fields African Americans were allowed to work in at that time. As educators they dedicated their lives to improving the status of African Americans in the Valley of the Sun.

In 1935, 15 students founded the Dunbar Club. The group sought to promote friendship among its members and other students on the campus. The Dunbar Club was the first recognized African American social group at the Arizona State Teachers College (ASTC).

Many African American students contributed to the school through its athletic programs. In 1937, Emerson Harvey became the first African American football player for ASTC. Baseball player Joe Island remembered some supportive white peers; the baseball team once walked out of a café when Island was refused service.

Continued on next page
In the 1940s, Morrison Warren and George Diggs were valuable members of the football team. Warren enjoyed a brief stint in professional football after graduating with academic honors in 1948. ASTC vowed only to play in games where all players would be welcome. Later, Dr. Warren became the first African American to be elected to the Phoenix City Council, before eventually becoming the Vice Mayor of Phoenix. He served concurrently as a professor at ASU and as a principal at South Mountain High School. Warren also achieved more African American “firsts,” as president of the Fiesta Bowl in 1981-82 and as a member of the Board of Directors of Arizona Public Service.

African American faculty encountered the same racism as the student body. Dr. John L. Edwards recalls students walking out of his class on the first day because he was black. Two later returned and apologized because the students who remained were impressed by Edwards’ knowledge and experience. Dr. Jefferson Eugene Grigsby, Jr. has fonder memories; he and fellow art professor Roosevelt “Rip” Woods achieved international renown for their artwork.

There are other African American ASU graduates that have gone on to great achievement, such as the first Ph.D. recipient (Chemistry, 1963) Jesse Wilmer Jones and educators, like Dr. Herma H. Hightower, who served as the Associate Superintendent of the Arizona State Department of Education. Cecil B. Patterson, Jr. (JD 1971) became the first African American Superior Court Judge from Arizona (1980) and later served on the Appellate Court.

Other prominent graduates include Cloves Campbell, Sr. who served as a state legislator and later became the first black state senator in Arizona. Cloves owned the weekly newspaper the Arizona Informant with his brother Dr.
Charles Campbell who also graduated from ASU. A third brother, Dr. Donald Campbell is chairman of the Maricopa Community Colleges governing board. Dr. Matthew C. Whitaker, Associate Professor of History at ASU, author of Race Work: The Rise of Civil Rights in the Urban West, and president of the board of directors at the George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center, is an ASU graduate and native Phoenician.

Dr. Betty Greathouse was the first African American female to serve ASU in many capacities, including program coordinator, Assistant Chair of the Department of Elementary Education, Assistant Dean of Minority Affairs and Admissions in the Graduate College and director of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction. In recognition of her contributions to ASU and the community she was inducted into the Phoenix College (2003) and the College of Education Hall of Fame (2008).

Many of the late 20th century African American accomplishments were made possible by the countless obstacles overcome by African American university graduates of earlier generations. These individuals paved the way for today’s African Americans to attend ASU with the same rights and privileges as students of other races and cultures.

**Living in Tempe**

Early African Americans were denied access to home ownership in the City of Tempe regardless of their achievements and contributions to ASU. They were not allowed to live in the city and were largely restricted to enclaves in South Phoenix.

After the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Bill, several African American families made Tempe their home. In 1965, after a successful career with the Dallas Cowboys, Arizona native Warren Livingston became one of the first African Americans to reside in Tempe, where he raised his family with his wife Carol. Many others followed including Mary and Arblee Bishop, Arthur and Ernie Reeves, Robert and Vera Brooks, and Judge Cecil and Dr. Wilma Patterson. These individuals, along with many others, helped to better the community of Tempe over the years.
Biographies

Arthur Dee Greathouse

Art Greathouse moved to Tempe with his parents, George and Betty Greathouse Sr. in 1976. He attended Ward Elementary, Connolly Junior High and McClintock High Schools. During his schooling he excelled academically and athletically. His honors included: recognition in the academic areas of mathematics, science, reading, and overall academic performance, by the Interscholastic National Athletic Association. He earned athletic letters in track, wrestling and football. He was the invited athletic guest of Tempe Mayor Harry Mitchell and City Council (1986).

Due to his academic and athletic accomplishments, he was recruited and offered many scholarships. Recruiting Universities included: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, three Military Academies, Berkeley, Stanford, Notre Dame, Nebraska, Purdue, Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. Art, a very family oriented young man, chose the University of Arizona.

Art was a starting running back his freshmen year (1986). He received the Harold “Porque” Pattern Outstanding Freshmen Athlete Award. After graduating in 3 ½ years, he played for the Arizona Rattlers. In a few years, he opted to go into business. He was successful Regional Director of Sales for the Rainbow Vacuuming Company and he built homes-selling them before they were built. Presently, he and his wife Cynthia and children Art III and Jasmine are owners of a Native New Yorker in Laveen, Arizona.
Arthur Reeves

Arthur Reeves was born in Flagstaff, Arizona in 1938. He attended Dunbar Elementary School and Flagstaff High School. His parents came to Arizona in 1928. His father worked in a lumber mill as a laborer in construction. He served in the Marines in the 1950s and attended Northern Arizona University, where in 1966 he received his BS Degree in Accounting. He was recruited as an accountant to the Phoenix area by Motorola in 1966; he received his MBA from Arizona State University in 1983.

Under a grant by The Ford Foundation and the Wharton Business School, he trained in Economic Development in Philadelphia. Upon returning to Phoenix, he spearheaded the development of a black-owned shopping center in Arizona. He worked at different professional positions in the Phoenix area, with titles that include: CEO, CFO, Financial Consultant, Financial Analyst, Controller, Director and Administrator. Organizations included The Greater Phoenix Urban League, Opportunities Industrialization Center, Maricopa County Medical Center, and the State of Arizona.

Arthur and Ernie (his wife) raised their children in Tempe, both graduating from Marcos de Niza High School, as Homecoming Queen and King in their respective senior year. Arthur belonged to many Phoenix-based Boards and Committees including: Health Care Financial Management Association, Health Care Agency for Privatization Committee, National Association of Accountants, Medical Center Contracts Committee, City of Phoenix Bond Committee, and Healthy Arizona 2010.
Betty Greathouse

Betty Greathouse was born to Mae L. and Oliver Harris in Mesa, Arizona in 1939. Her family moved to Phoenix in 1943. She was raised in Phoenix and attended Dunbar and Mary Bethune Elementary Schools, which were segregated. Betty completed three years at Phoenix Union High School and graduated from Tempe High School. Due to the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education Decision, both high schools were integrated.

Betty earned a BA, MEd and PhD from Arizona State University (ASU). She joined the ASU faculty in 1972. Her leadership positions included Program Coordinator, Assistant Chairperson, Assistant Dean of Minority Affairs and Admissions in the Graduate College and Director of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction. Betty served on numerous student and faculty boards and organizations, including the Black Student Union, the Women’s Athletic Board, the Intercollegiate Athletic Board and Faculty Senate. She was Dean of the School of Education at California State University, Bakersfield from 1990-1997. Betty returned to ASU in 1997 and retired at the rank of full professor in 2000.

Her significant professional and civic contributions garnered many awards, including induction into the Phoenix College (2003) and the ASU, Mary Lou Fulton College of Education Halls of Fame (2008).
Carol Livingston

Carol Livingston was born in Lot, Texas. She moved to Arizona with her family. Her father was in the Armed Forces and decided to settle here after World War II. He brought the family out in 1946. They settled in south Phoenix. Carol attended the Fortieth Street School in grades one through four, Percy L. Julian School in grades five through eight, and South Mountain High School in grades nine through 12. She graduated in 1958.

Carol attended Arizona State University for a while majoring in elementary education but did not graduate because she met Warren and they married in 1963. Carol participated in a rally when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. came to speak at Arizona State University. She also participated in several equal rights marches at the state capitol.

Carol worked for the University of Arizona Extension Service teaching nutrition to limited income families for 18 years. She also worked at Motorola for 15 years as a manufacturing specialist. She retired in 1999.

Carol and Warren have two children, Carla Yvette Livingston and Karen Livingston. Both of the Livingstons are very active in Union Institutional Baptist Church in Phoenix. Carol is very involved in the choir, and served as youth coordinator and as a member of the education board.
Cecil Patterson was born in May 1941, in Hampton, Virginia where he attended segregated schools. Cecil then attended Hampton University in Virginia, a traditionally all-black college, earning degrees in history and philosophy. He lived in the dormitories all four years at Hampton, and was very involved in student activities, his fraternity and various part time jobs.

Cecil joined the Air Force after college in 1963. After his discharge at Luke Air Force Base, he applied to law school at Arizona State University and was admitted. He settled in Tempe in November 1968. Hallcraft Homes was the only company that would build homes and sell to African Americans at the time which is the company from which his family purchased its first home in Tempe.

Cecil graduated from Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in 1971. He began his career as a legal clerk with the Maricopa County Legal Aid Society, practiced law privately, and then worked as a civil rights lawyer with the Phoenix Urban League. He practiced criminal defense law in the public defender’s office before becoming a Judge on the Superior Court in 1980. He was the first African American to sit on the bench in Arizona. Cecil also worked for the Attorney General’s Office in the Human Services Division where he ran the Civil Rights and Community Relations Divisions. He served eight years on the Court of Appeals as a Judge. Cecil served on the Valley of the Sun United Way Board of Directors, and still serves as the Chair of the Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission, on the Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board, and on the Tempe Community Council.
Charles Ray Cobbs, Jr.

Charles Cobbs, Jr. was born on November 7, 1959 in Florence, Arizona. He was raised by his mother and stepfather along with seven other siblings. Charles attended Florence Elementary, Junior High and High Schools. After graduation, he attended and played football for Northern Arizona University for a short time. In 1979, he married Vicki Lynette Giddens from Dekalb, Texas.

Charles joined the Arizona National Guard and, shortly after, the Arizona Department of Corrections where he served as a Corrections Officer for 14 years. Beginning in 1997, Charles served as a Liaison/Special Agent/ Trainer in the Arizona Department of Gaming for 12 years before taking on the newly created position of Community Affairs Specialist for the Tempe Police Department.

Charles has continued his education at Phoenix and Rio Salado Community Colleges. Currently he is working towards a Human Services degree at Ottawa University.

Charles was the first Florence High School athlete to be on the All State Football team three consecutive years as a wide receiver, the first African American Vice President on the County and State Executive Boards of the National Latino Peace Officers Association, and served on the committee that developed the first Tribal Gaming Regulatory Academy in Arizona. Additionally, Charles had the rare opportunity to work with basketball great Shaquille O’Neal.
Corey Woods was born in Atlanta, Georgia on December 7, 1978. He was raised in New Rochelle, New York and attended New Rochelle High School. During his undergraduate years at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Woods was active in student government. He graduated in April 2000 with a B.A. in Political Science, and a minor in African-American Studies. After graduating from college, Woods joined the Handleman Company, which specialized in music distribution, where he served first as a Management Associate and later as a Market Research Coordinator.

Woods served as the Director of Government Relations for the American Lung Association of Arizona. Woods currently serves as the Director of College and Career Articulation for the Phoenix Union High School District. Woods is in the College of Education at Arizona State University, working on a Master of Arts in Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education. He was also a teaching assistant at ASU for three years, where he taught a class entitled “Culture and Schooling” for students preparing to be educators.

Woods was elected to the Tempe City Council in May 2008. He has devoted much of his life to public service. Woods is chair of the Housing Committee and the Code Sustainability Sub-Committee, and serves on the Technology, Economic and Community Development Committee, Community Sustainability Committee, and the Mill and Lake District Committee. In addition to his work, Woods is also an active community volunteer. He served as a member of the City of Tempe’s Transportation Commission and currently serves on the Boards of Directors for the Boys and Girls Clubs (Ladmo Branch), Communities in Schools, Kiwanis Club of Tempe, Tempe Community Action Agency and Tempe Schools Credit Union.
Earl Oats

Earl was born in Phoenix in 1938. His parents moved to the Valley from Louisiana. His father was a construction worker and his mother was a domestic worker.

Earl went to Booker T. Washington School and attended Tempe High School in 1953. Earl trained for the military in California and was later stationed in Germany. He worked as an infantryman, a driver, and was then discharged in 1957. He enrolled at Phoenix College after the service. Earl transferred to Arizona State University and ran track, but returned to work without a degree.

Earl then became a night supervisor for Bell Telephone Company. He worked various odd jobs such as janitor, construction worker, and manager for Walgreens. He was one of the first three African Americans to work in management. Eventually, Earl worked for the County Attorney’s office as a criminal investigator, and then went back to Walgreens. He opened his own store in Fiesta Mall in the 1980s, but went out of business a few years later.

Earl and his wife Phyllis moved to Tempe in 1970, which is where they still reside today. They were able to purchase their home due to the nondiscriminatory Hallcraft Home Company.
Edward Smith

Edward Smith was born October 11, 1939 in Phoenix, Arizona. Edward’s father was a cotton farmer and plumber, and his mother was a housewife. He grew up in an adobe house which had no electricity or running water just north of the Salt River.

Edward went to Dunbar, an all-black elementary school and then attended Mary Bethun Middle School, which was also segregated. He enrolled at Phoenix Union High School in 1953, the first year it was integrated. Edward then went to Phoenix College on a track scholarship and traveled around the Southwest to compete against other teams. He attended Arizona State University, but had to leave because he had to take care of his family.

Edward later became interested in psychiatry and education, and worked as a psychiatric aid as well as a teacher in the Mental Health Hospital. He also worked to ensure employee diversity for the City of Phoenix, including firefighters and police officers. Edward also became the Deputy Director of the Greater Phoenix Urban League, and later founded an Urban League in Southern Illinois. After living in Illinois for a number of years, Edward moved back to Tempe in 2000.
Frederick H. Warren

Frederick H. Warren, the eldest of six children, was born in Phoenix, Arizona on February 8, 1936. His father’s family arrived in the Valley in 1925 from Texas, while his mother’s family came to Phoenix in 1907. His father owned and operated various businesses and his mother was a homemaker.

Frederick graduated from Booker T. Washington Elementary and Carver High Schools in Phoenix. After high school, Frederick went to Phoenix College and later transferred to Arizona State University, only to drop out of his first semester to work. However, he returned and graduated in 1958, and began a career teaching elementary school.

Frederick taught at Longfellow Elementary School, became a principal at a school for special needs children, worked for the City of Phoenix as an education specialist for adult Head Start programs, and then served Phoenix Union High School District as associate principal before attending law school. He also served as adjunct faculty in the College of Education at Arizona State University from 1970 to 1980. He worked with the National Labor Relations Board, became Superintendent of the Roosevelt School District (1999-2003) and received a Master of Law from Pepperdine University.

Frederick also had a long career with the City of Phoenix where he retired in 1996. Returning to education, he retired from the Roosevelt School District in 2003. Frederick now serves as an independent mediator.
Joe Caldwell played his way out of the tough Watts ghetto in Los Angeles, California into the world of professional sports. He did not pick up a basketball until he was in junior high school. In 1964, Joe finished a standout basketball career at Arizona State University as an All-American, and later that summer made the twelve-man United States Olympic team. At six-foot-five inches, he could jump like a kangaroo and was nicknamed “Pogo Joe.”

Joe was the first player selected for the United States Olympic basketball team out of 100 invited hopefuls who tried out in Lexington, Kentucky. At the Olympics, Joe scored 17 and 14 points during the games, respectively. The Americans defeated the Russians with a score of 83 to 59 points and captured the gold medal.

After Joe returned from the Olympics, the Detroit Pistons chose him as their number one draft pick. He made the All-Rookie and All-Defense teams during his first year of professional play. In 1966, the Pistons traded Joe to the St. Louis Hawks. The Hawks were one of the top teams during the 1967-1968 season. They finished the season poised to go to the playoffs. Unfortunately, Joe was ordered not to play and the San Francisco Warriors won the best of seven games.

During the 1969-1970 season, Joe made the All-Star team again. He averaged 21 points a game and became a superstar at the age of 26. During the 1970-1971 season, Joe was voted the fans’ favorite Hawk for the second year in a row. Due to a contract dispute, Joe took a brief hiatus from basketball. He was recruited to play for the American Basketball Association (ABA) Carolina Cougars, the first time a player jumped from the National Basketball Association (NBA) to the ABA without sitting out a full season.

In 1972, the Cougars won the Eastern Division. They went on to beat the New York Nets in the semi-finals. The Cougars seemed destined to beat the Kentucky Colonels and win the ABA championship. However, Joe was forced to leave professional basketball behind due to continuing contract disputes and legal issues with his jump to the ABA.
Kim Dartez was born in Gary, Indiana in 1963. Her family moved to Arizona in 1970. She graduated from Maryvale High School and Glendale Community College.

Kim Dartez is the Director of Family Tree Healthcare. Family Tree Healthcare offers a broad range of health and social services:
- Nurses' Registry
- Home Healthcare Providers
- Job Training (DES Contracted)
- Parenting Classes (state certified parent-aides)
- Domestic Violence advocacy
- Teen intimate partner violence (IPV)
- Community information and resource assistance
- PEDS Screenings (Parents’ Evaluation of Developmental Status)

Other projects they are a part of are the I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program) in Tempe. They work with the Brighter Day Ministry to provide shelter, blankets, pillows and food every Monday night to the Tempe homeless population. They are also a part of the Tempe Project Homeless Connect, a one-day quarterly event to match the homeless community with needed services. Some of the providers include: Tempe Community Action Agency, Tumbleweed Tempe Youth Resource Center, City of Tempe Housing Services Division, Tempe Salvation Army, U.S. Vets-Phoenix, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Arizona Motor Vehicle Department, Social Security Administration, Veteran’s Administration, Paz de Cristo, St. Vincent de Paul, Community Bridges, TERROS, Magellan, East Valley Men’s Center, CASS, Save the Family, Tempe Courts, Carsten salon and Changing Hands. They volunteer and help the guests through the maze of determining which services they need and helping them to apply.
Mary Cunningham Bishop

Mary Bishop was born in Yuma. Her father drove a school bus and worked on an ostrich farm. Her mother did domestic work. Mary attended kindergarten through second grade at Second Avenue School, and third and fourth grade at Mary Elizabeth Post School, both in Yuma. Her family moved to Phoenix in 1941 where Mary attended 5th grade at Booker T. Washington. She went on to graduate from Carver High School.

Mary Bishop earned her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Arizona State Teachers College (now Arizona State University) in 1953. She completed 29 years of teaching in the Phoenix Elementary School District #1 and served one year as an exchange teacher in the Department of Elementary Education at Arizona State University (ASU), teaching Social Studies. Mary retired in 1983 after 30 years of teaching.

Mary moved to Tempe in September of 1967. She married Arblee Bishop, also an ASU graduate, in 1968. When they bought their house, they became one of the earliest African American homeowners in Tempe.

Since her retirement, Mary has been actively involved in the National Education Association (NEA). She served as a member of the Board of Directors representing retired NEA members from 1990 to 1996. Mary also served on the Credential Committee, which certifies delegates to the National Annual Representative Assembly, from 1996 to 2000. From 2002 to 2007, she was a member of the Human and Civil Rights Committee which gives several awards and sponsors the annual awards banquet.

Mary also is a 50 year member of the Le Dames Charments Social Club. She co-chairs the African American Advisory Committee for the Tempe History Museum.
Pastor Anita D. Bullock

Pastor Anita D. Bullock was born in Shreveport, Louisiana but was raised and educated in Detroit, Michigan. She attended Murray-Wright High School and went on to graduate from Lawton Business School. While in school, she participated in many clubs and excelled as a member of the swim team, which assisted in molding and valuing the power of teamwork in her life.

Upon moving to Tempe, Arizona in July of 2003 to establish Brighter Day Worldwide Deliverance Ministries with her husband of 19 years, Sr. Pastor Kenneth D. Bullock, she managed both working in the ministry and a career at Wells Fargo Bank from 2005 to 2007.

She is an Ordained Pastor with many accomplishments. She is a teacher, revivalist, motivator and conference speaker. Pastor Anita is a keen believer that growth of any kind or magnitude should be nurtured through positive relationships formed by both family and community. Her ongoing efforts to encourage partnership building within our communities were rewarded when she was designated to be a Host Committee Member for the City of Tempe, serving as a Christian Emergency Network Chapter. She is also facilitator for the organization Holistic Urgent Recovery Teams and works in partnership with I-HELP, which stands for Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program.

Pastor Anita D. Bullock continues to reside in Tempe and is a proud parent of eight children. Three of her children currently attend Tempe schools and one is a graduate.
Pastor Brenda Valdez was born in the Everglades, Florida. Her family moved to Harlem in New York City when she was a year old. She gave her life to Jesus Christ when she was 13 years old.

Pastor Brenda arrived in Phoenix in 1982 and served in various capacities at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Mesa. In 1995, she began conducting Bible studies at Back to Life (a substance abuse recovery program for men) in Phoenix. In 1996, she founded the City of Refuge Ministry, Inc.

After being ordained as Pastor in 1998, Pastor Brenda returned to New York City to serve the men at the Parole Transitional Program for Project Return. Pastor Brenda also conducted in-house worship services and Bible studies while working as a Substance Abuse Counselor and Case Manager. She made numerous visits to the Rikers Island Jail to minister to the men there.

In 2000, Pastor Brenda returned to Arizona. She continued to bring the spiritual side of recovery to men at several recovery programs in the Valley, visited and corresponded with men that were incarcerated, and conducted a weekly Bible study. Today she has an emergency food pantry and distributes to over 2,000 people monthly.

Pastor Brenda is the proud mother of four sons, Charles, Brian Wesley, Kyle Jamal, Sean Joel and a daughter, Allyse Josetté, who passed away in 1983. She has 16 grandchildren, a host of spiritual children and grandchildren throughout the country, and Honi, her yellow lab mix.
Phyllis Oats

Phyllis Oats was born and raised in Phoenix. She lived in “East Side,” 16 or 17 blocks east of Central and 2 blocks south of Washington. Phyllis attended Booker T. Washington Elementary School in grades one through eight. She attended Phoenix Union High School from grades nine to 11 (1953-1956) but had to drop out because of a family emergency. Phyllis was in the first integrated class at Phoenix Union High.

Phyllis then went to work for Goldwaters Department Store where she stayed until going to college in 1977. She attended Mesa Community College from 1977-1980 and received an A.A. in business focusing on Middle Management. She then worked for Mesa Community College for 4 years as an Admissions and Records Tech. She then worked for South Mountain Community College for 2-3 years in the same position.

From 1987-2001 she worked full-time for Chandler-Gilbert Community College as Office Manager for Admissions and Records. Subsequently, she worked for the college part-time from 2002-2006 in the Dean of Students’ Office with disabled students.

Phyllis and her husband Earl have two children. Michelle was the first black cheerleader at McClintock High School. Michelle went to McClintock for a year and then attended Marcos de Niza High School after it opened, graduating in 1974. She attended Mesa Community College and then graduated from Northern Arizona University. Jeffrey went to Marcos de Niza High School, graduating in 1984. He then went to Mesa Community College and finally Arizona State University.
Robert Lee Brooks was born in Casa Grande, Arizona as the second eldest child to Mattie Mai and Willie Brooks, Senior. His family relocated to Phoenix when he was very young. Robert excelled in both baseball and football while attending South Mountain High School.

Robert relocated his family from Scottsdale to Tempe in October 1971. Robert and his wife Vera have three daughters: Michelle, Janetta, and Yolanda, as well as grand children and great grand children. All three daughters graduated from Marcos De Niza High School. Robert was a volunteer girls’ softball coach for more than ten years for the Tempe Parks and Recreation Department. He has also served in various capacities in the First Baptist Church of Tempe where he has been a member since 1973.

Robert was employed by the City of Scottsdale for thirty years and retired in 1995 as a Parks Manager. One of his prime duties was providing maintenance for the San Francisco Giants Baseball Team during Spring Training at Indian School Park and Scottsdale Stadium. In 1990, he served as part of the Earth Alert committee for the City of Scottsdale. Robert was active with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Arizona Park and Recreation Association. Robert was a Charter Member of the National Management Association for the Scottsdale Chapter. He received many awards while working at Scottsdale including an Award for Patriotic Service by the United States Department of the Treasury, and Recognition for Superior Service from the City of Scottsdale. Robert also served as a City of Scottsdale Volunteer Firefighter.

After retiring, Robert has given back to the community through his volunteer work with the Wood-Getz PTSA, the Scottsdale Public Library, the Retired Senior Volunteer program of Maricopa County, and as the current President of All God’s Children Collector’s Club of Arizona.
Fentress “Trux” Truxon

Trux Truxon was born in Milford, Delaware, graduating from Milford Senior High School. He has an M.A. in Public Administration from Columbia Pacific University and a B.A. in Sociology from Wilberforce University. He earned a Multicultural Meetings Professional Credential from Arizona State University (ASU) and is pursuing a Ph.D. in Leadership from Grand Canyon University.

Trux was an ROTC scholarship recipient and a graduate of the U.S. Army Officer Ordinance School, ranked in the top 2% of his class. He served honorably as a Captain in the U.S. Army 8th Infantry Mechanized Division.

Trux retired from Maricopa County, serving as the Director of Equipment Services before being promoted to Diversity Manager for the Regional Development Services Agency. He is a recipient of the 2007 SHRM Workplace Diversity Award and the 2007 National League of Cities Excellence in Diversity Award. Trux was appointed to the Governor’s Minority Advisory Council and the Governor’s African American Advisory Council.

Trux served on the Tempe Human Relations Commission, the Asian Pacific Community Committee, and was the Co-Chair on the Board of the Arizona Women’s Health Coalition. He served on the Diversity Leadership Alliance, the Healing Racism Committee (Phoenix, ASU, Maricopa Community College District, Phoenix College and Maricopa County) and was Chair-Elect of the Grand Canyon Minority Supplier Development Council.

Trux also has held several upper management positions for Roadway Express Inc, Excel Corporation, Gray Line Atlantic City, Coach USA, Fontaine Modification/Components Company, McGraw Hill, Ames Engineering, and the University of Delaware.
Warren Livingston was born in Eufaula, Oklahoma. He first came to Arizona on a cotton truck from Oklahoma at the age of 9. His family made Arizona home in 1948, when Warren was 10. First they lived in Casa Grande, then Coolidge, then Queen Creek and finally Mesa. As a result, he went to about 5 elementary schools. His family moved to Mesa in 1952 when Warren was 14. He attended Mesa Junior High and then Mesa High School and graduated in 1957.

Warren then attended the University of Arizona on a football scholarship. He also participated in track. Warren received a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Arizona in 1961, after which he went to play for the Dallas Cowboys as a defensive cornerback. He played for six seasons.

Wilma Patterson

Wilma Patterson was born in Fayette County, Tennessee in 1944. Her father was principal of the elementary school and also a farmer. After attending a segregated high school in Tennessee, Patterson enrolled at Hampton University, a traditionally black university in Virginia, before coming to Arizona State University to finish her Bachelor’s degree and receive her Master’s in Zoology.

Wilma married Cecil Patterson and moved to Iowa, then to Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, and eventually to Tempe in 1968. When it came time to buy a house, the egalitarian Hallcraft Homes sold them a home.

In 1978, Wilma became adjunct biology professor at Mesa Community College and then worked at South Mountain Community College from 1981 to 2007 as a professor and chairperson of the math, science, and engineering division. Although she is semi-retired, Patterson still teaches some classes and is heavily involved with a church in South Phoenix, where she and her husband, Cecil, reach out to ex-convicts, tutor children, feed the poor, and promote adult education.
African American Contributions to Tempe History