

Dr. Samuel Lee Woodard

May 26, 1930 - December 3, 2022

Dr. Samuel Lee Woodard was born the eighth of nine children of the late John Henry Woodard and Susie Mae Young in Fairmont, West Virginia, on May 26, 1930. His father, a coal miner, passed due to Black Lung when he was two years old. When his mother was pregnant with his younger sister, and the family's youngest child, Mamie, she moved from West Virginia to New Kensington, Pennsylvania. His older sister Naomi, who was fifteen at the time, became his legal guardian upon the death of Susie Mae when he was six years old. Three boys and young Mamie were minors and were to be awarded as orphans to the state, but for Naomi's strength and courage. Both parents' deeply religious and Christian values constituted his spiritual legacy and were carried on by his sister Naomi. Sam began schooling in New Kensington and had asthma as a child, which impacted his early school years, requiring him to repeat first grade. Later, he was promoted twice in one year, thus making up the year he was held back. The profound value of education and service was instilled in him early in life. In elementary school, his teacher asked him to help other students struggling with their work. Sam, therefore, tutored students, which helped to develop his initial interest in teaching. During junior high school, his counselor never encouraged him to pursue college. Sam, therefore, took it upon himself to double his course load and enroll in classes to prepare him for college, determined to continue his education. At New Kensington High School (now Valley High), Sam played on the basketball team and led in scoring for the team. He played forward as a freshman and

was chosen to the All-Star Team at age 14. The team won the championship, and this experience, plus the influence of his coach, who demanded excellence and discipline, shaped his perspective for the rest of his life. He was a scholar athlete and was President of the National Honor Society, scoring 170 on the reading test which was a perfect score with only three students reaching this accomplishment. He was awarded a Phoenician Trophy given to the outstanding athletic scholar of the senior class. In recent years, Sam revered the Phoenician trophy for what it represented and its symbolism as a triumph over many challenges during his formative years.

In 1948 at age 17, Sam graduated from New Kensington Highschool in the top five percent of his class of 375 students. He was awarded a full academic scholarship to Lincoln University and began his college career, majoring in history and English fall of 1948. After two years, he transferred to Mansfield State Teachers College (now the Mansfield State University of Pennsylvania) to experience co-ed rather than an all-male environment and to be closer to his older sister Corrie -his pet name for her (Corrine Stark). Sam spent his summers in Elmira with his sister Corrine beginning at age 16. During these summers, he worked with cousin Henry Ross at O'Brien's restaurants waiting tables in Waverly, New York.

Sam earned a master's at Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y., then - while teaching in Buffalo, became the first African-American to receive a doctoral degree in Educational Administration at State University of New York, Buffalo (now the University of Buffalo) in 1966. He became an assistant professor of education at Temple University. He pioneered a conference to show black youth in Philadelphia that there are alternatives to extreme reactions to combat social injustice. The conference's focus was youth leadership to facilitate positive coping and social development. He also worked part-time at the Board of Education as an Advisor to the Education Committee. He proposed to create a leadership pipeline between students at Temple and high

school youth. The conference focused on communications between black youth and adults to develop skills for bringing about social change. From Temple, Sam went to Illinois State University in Bloomington, Illinois, where he became an associate professor of educational administration and was appointed to a special study group on Organizational Management Education by the President. It was here that he presented a plaque to Duke Ellington from Alpha Phi Alpha for outstanding achievements in music in 1972.

In 1974 he joined the faculty at Howard University, where he stayed for 24 years as a "transactional analyst," working with and studying children in the Washington, D.C., area who came from similarly deprived backgrounds like him. He published and was featured in magazines and newspapers, such as the Washington Post, as an expert on invulnerable children and principles of success in life despite obstacles such as poor socioeconomic status, discrimination, and racism. Through his research, he found like-minded colleagues in the academic world. In 1977 he presented a lecture before the Afro-American Department of Harvard University on his pioneer study of high academic achievement of Washington, D.C., junior high students from low income families. In 1997, Sam was named Distinguished Educator and Role Model for American Youth. That same year he retired from teaching graduate students leadership and team building at Howard University. On October 3, 2003 he received a call indicating that the Educational Leadership Department at Howard wanted him to return to campus to be honored as co-founder of the Ph.D. Program in Educational Administration.

Upon his retirement from Howard University, Sam continued to consult and write books about achievement despite being poor and orphaned, successful journeys from poverty to prosperity, and moved from Maryland to Gloucester, Virginia, where he enjoyed overlooking the York River at "Yorwawood." He also enjoyed watching basketball, traveling, reading classical, gospel, and

soul music, and attending church.

Sam was a lifetime member of three organizations: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Association of Black School Educators, and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

His memory will forever be cherished by his devoted wife, Dr. Linda Waples of Fort Washington, MD, his daughters Dana Jones Oliver, Esq. (Bruce) of Fort Washington, MD, Mary Ellen Dickerson, M.A., (Michael) of Bowie, MD, Dr. Gail Edwards (Trevor) of Harrisburg, PA, and Dr. Charlene Le Fauve (Beau) of Rockville MD. His grandchildren who will continue his legacies are Julian (Great grandchildren, Jaida, Gia Luna, Niobe, Marcus, Bruce, Kara), Nicole, Jolie, Evan, Danielle, and Danen. Sam has many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews through his many siblings. Those who have known him have memories they will cherish for years.

We all take comfort in knowing how victorious Sam was in his life, and now he can take his rest, reunite with his family and rejoice in knowing that he stayed His course; he finished his championship and ensured a better life for his family and many other lives he has touched.

Cemetery Details

Gate of Heaven (NJ)

150 Mantua Rd
Mount Royal, NJ 08061

Previous Events

Public Viewing

DEC 16. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Alfred Street Baptist Church
301 S. Alfred Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Funeral Service

DEC 16. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Alfred Street Baptist Church
301 S. Alfred Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Tribute Wall



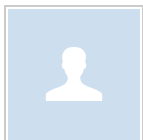
“ I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Woodard at Howard University as a grad student in 1995. In all honesty at the time it was not pleasurable!. He was stern and serious and I thought he did not like me. By the end of my studies there we had become great friends and he came to my house to visit me and my family(my husband and 3 children). I realized Dr. Woodards's serious demeanor was related to his early upbringing. he told our class as Howard alumni, NEVER let being Black, your socio-economic background be an excuse for failure. As a Black person you have to be BETTER!. I never forgot that or this great man! Terrylynn S. Doyle, Class of 1997-M.Ed. Administration and Supervision

Terrylynn Doyle - February 11, 2025 at 11:10 AM



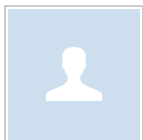
“ Dr. Samuel Lee Woodard

January 28, 2023 at 02:13 PM



“ Dr. Samuel Lee Woodard


January 28, 2023 at 10:26 AM



“ Footprints Tribute Blanket was purchased for the family of Dr. Samuel Lee Woodard.



December 13, 2022 at 11:27 AM

 Judi
Carroll-
Thompson

“ *There are so many memories with my Uncle Sam. He was a special unique person in my life. Sometimes we agreed and shared our thoughts other times we disagreed and talked it through. He encouraged and supported me and I will always appreciate your relationship. I've missed him the last few years during this illnesses. Gone physically but always in my heart. Fly on Uncle Sam. We will meet again.*

Judi Carroll-Thompson - December 08, 2022 at 03:30 PM