

The background of the cover is a photograph of a curved wall. The wall has a golden, textured surface that appears to be made of small, raised, diamond-shaped tiles. At the bottom of the wall, there is a circular emblem with the words "BLACKS IN GOVERNMENT" around the perimeter. The sky is blue with some clouds, and there are trees in the background.

BLACKS IN GOVERNMENT

2020

Memorial Wall Booklet

**Dr. Jesse Sharpe
Nat. First Vice President
Blacks In Government
(October Edition)**

Remarks by National President, Honorable Dr. Doris P. Sartor



Greetings National Blacks In Government Family

Our Memorial Wall recognition honors and recognizes our deceased members for their commitment, dedication, and service to National Blacks In Government, Inc.

Our video celebrates their lives and is a means of remembrance and reflection. As you read their profiles in the Memorial Wall booklet, you will see how they contributed to BIG's goals and objectives in their respective chapters, regions, and at the national level of our great organization. BIG's values of service, dedication, and respect are demonstrated by the personal services and sacrifices rendered by these fallen heroes and sheros. Thanks to their resolve to make a difference in the lives of others, BIG can remain steadfast and persistent in its efforts to promote equity, excellence, and opportunity for all. Time will never erase the works they accomplished and the legacies they have left behind. The spirit of unity and resolve within Blacks In Government, is demonstrated by this celebration. Our prayers continue to be with the families of our members who are no longer with us. May God wrap his loving arms around them.

Hon. Dr. Doris P. Sartor
National President
Blacks In Government, Inc. (BIG)

Message from First National President, Dr. Jesse Sharpe



Each year BIG recognizes the accomplishments of our deceased members. Usually, this is done at our National Training Institute (NTI) which occurs in August. However, as we all know, the COVID-19 Pandemic has made this a year like no other. Prior to the pandemic, the issues surrounding our Black brothers and sisters being killed by the police, the very people whose job is to protect them, had already taken center stage. Names like George Floyd and Brianna Taylor come to mind. Finally, there is the continued disrespect of Federal employees in general, and Black employees in particular by the current President, who recently ordered Office of Management and Budget to discontinue funding for Diversity and Inclusions training which he deemed to be unpatriotic. Let us remain vigilant to protect past gains, and to honor and celebrate our BIG members who through it all, have been tenacious about looking towards the future beyond current circumstances.

As is done during the BIG Memorial Wall celebration at the annual NTI, while reading the member profiles, and watching the companion video, let us recite the names of our BIG heroes and sheroes whose spirits illuminate the room with enduring light. Let us always remember them for the lessons and legacies left for us to follow. In the spirit of the African tradition, Sankofa, let us look back and “fetch it.” We are fetching those important historic and strategic lessons that have carried us since the urgent need to advocate for and protect the rights of employees in the federal, state, and local government which led to the founding of BIG in 1975.

Adversity and challenges are nothing new to BIG. The following profiles of our transitioned members bear this out. They are testaments of courage and commitment. Many were on the forefront for years. Many continued being active and supportive of BIG even after their retirement. Forty-five years later we see that many of those challenges remain virtually the same. This is the reason we celebrate the passing of our beloved members. Despite the uphill struggle to bring about positive change, they never gave up, and nor should those of us who will continue to celebrate their gifts and achievements.

Dr. Jesse Sharpe
First National Vice President
Blacks In Government, Inc. (BIG)

BIG Profiles of the Persistent

BIG Profiles of the Persistent



Eddie Lee Carter

1923 - April 6, 2020

Life member, Albany Area Chapter, Region IV

Mr. Eddie Lee Carter, Jr. was a native of Albany, GA. He was educated in the public schools of Dougherty County. While in high school, he enlisted in the Navy and retired in 1964 after serving 24 years and achieving the rank of Chief Petty Officer. In 1964, he returned to Albany and began his life as a civilian, working at Union Dry Cleaners with his brother, Andrew J. Carter; then as the Chief of Security at Albany State (GA) University, and then as Security Officer at the U.S. Marine Supply Center.

In 1968, Mr. Carter opened the first location of Carter's Grill on the corner of Gordon and Jefferson. This was followed by another location, Carter's Grill & Restaurant on South Jefferson/Coachmen Park, then to South Madison and finally to Highland Avenue. He joined the BIG, Albany Area Chapter on March 16, 1996 and allowed his restaurant to be a venue for chapter meetings and social events (Christmas Party and Retirement Meetings). He was very diligent about paying his dues and keeping us up to date on what was happening in the community. Retiring again in 2018 after 50 years as a business owner, he created a legacy for our chapter members about commitment and service.



Ruth Lanell Stennis Williams

March 9, 1936 -March 28, 2020

Columbus Ohio CACBIG, Region V

Ruth Lanell Stennis Williams was co-founder of CACBIG. She has served as President, Vice- President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Mrs. Williams was born in Columbia, Mississippi on March 9, 1936. She earned a Master of Public Administration from Central Michigan University while maintaining a job and a family. She earned a B.S. degree in Biology Education from Jackson State University during a time when very few Blacks were completing high school, much less attaining advanced degrees.

Ruth retired from the federal government after 42 years of service. She began as a computer systems trainee for the former Defense Construction Supply Center, working as a mainframe computer programmer. She finished her service as a computer specialist with Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), where she was the project manager for one of the first telecommunication networks in the agency. In addition to being co-founder of the DLA chapter, Ruth was involved in a number of civic organizations, including La Leche League, Toastmasters, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., St. Philip Episcopal Church Women, and St. Philip Episcopal Church Altar Guild.

Ruth loved all kinds of music; she and Homer had an extensive record collection covering almost all genres. She and Homer also loved to travel; in their time together, they visited Morocco and Canada. They also

drove across the U.S. to California and back on two separate occasions. Ruth was preceded in death by her parents, Rufus Benjamin Stennis and Julia Odessa Barnes, and a sister Shirley Pearl Floretta Stennis (Robert Williams).

Ruth leaves behind an extensive family including her husband Homer; sons, Harlan and Bretton (Stephannie); daughter, LaNelle (Mounir); nephews, Donovan Williams and Rodger Williams; grandchildren, Lavell, D’Mitri, Bretton, and Ramzy; four great grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends.



Leonard Thompson, Jr.

Mar 6, 1952 – May 2, 2020

Life Member, Magnolia Chapter, Region IV

Leonard Thompson, Jr. joined the United States Army in 1974 as a Recruiter. He retired from the military in 2004 after 30 years of service. Shortly after retirement from the military, Leonard began his second career with the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and retired a second time in 2014. While pursuing his second career, he also began pursuit of higher education degree at Belhaven University, where he graduated in 2009. A 33 degree Mason with the M.W. King Hiram Grand Lodge, he also served as Worshipful Master of McClendon Lodge #208 in Jackson, MS. Leonard was preceded by his father Leonard Thompson, Sr. and his sister Curley Phillips. Also left to cherish his memories are his loving and devoted wife of Thirty-seven years, Mrs. Grace Magee Thompson. four children; Reginald (Lashay) Thompson of Bowie, Maryland, Daughter Vanessa (Jacoby) Russell of Sterling, Virginia, son Joseph Thompson and Stepson Quentin Tard both of Jackson, and a host of other relatives.



Virginia Dale Williams

March 23, 1954 - August 13, 2019

Life Member, Albany Area chapter, Region IV

Virginia Dale Williams was born in Moultrie, Georgia on March 23, 1954, and raised in Doerun, Georgia. She received her formal education in the public schools of Colquitt County, and continued her education at Albany Technical College. After passing a civil service exam, Virginia began her civil service career in 1974 as a Card Punch Operator on the Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany. Her service spanned 41 years, retiring in December 2015 as Information Technology Supervisor. Virginia joined our Albany Area Chapter of Blacks In Government on June 14, 1993. Her leadership and strong commitment to service was evident in her personal life. She was an active BIG Chapter member who immediately became a Life Member. Virginia went beyond the call of duty for our students participating in the STEM and Oratorical Competitions. She stepped up to become a mother figure to many. Her dedication and commitment were exemplary. You felt honored to be in her presence.



Hon. Leonard T. Stone

October 27, 1945 - November 5, 2019

Life Member, Greater Dayton, Region V

In 2012, Mr. Leonard T. Stone was elected to BIG's Distinguished Service Hall of Fame (DSHOF), providing him with the title of "Honorable." As the highest honor awarded to any single member of BIG, DSHOF is bestowed to individuals who have distinguished themselves by making exceptional contributions at the National, Regional and Chapter levels of the organization. Hon. Stone was recognized for his outstanding dedication in the numerous positions he held while serving BIG for 37 years. His positions included: Special Advisor to the National President, National Parliamentarian, National Telecommunications Chair, National Board of

Directors Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Region V Director, and two separate four-year terms as the Greater Dayton Chapter President.

Brother Stone was a dedicated advocate within the African American community, a respected mentor to people of all ages, and subject matter expert on a myriad of issues and specialties. His life validates the foundation of excellence and opportunity for all that BIG stands. In addition, he proudly served his country with valor and distinction as a member of the United States active duty Air Force for 4 years. After 32 years as civil servant he retired from federal service at Wright-Patterson AFB as a Contract Negotiator and Procurement Analyst.

Hon. Stone was a reverent and spirit-filled man who loved the Lord. He was a devoted husband who loved his family with a gentle yet stern combination only he possessed. He was a confident counselor, a man of wisdom and grace, the loyalist of friends, and a man of God who was always available to share an encouraging word based on his wide range of expertise and life experience.

Brother Stone leaves to cherish his memories his beautiful and loving wife Diane Stone; son, Travis T. Stone; daughters, Sofia and Rosa Leblanc; granddaughters, Travasha and Travess Stone, and Tashanna Davis; grandson, Khai Hall; and great granddaughters, Ja'Veyia Weathers, Samiya and Sanaa Greer.



Fulton David Allen

March 22, 1947 - October 22, 2019

Southern Illinois Chapter, Region V

Fulton David Allen was born to the union of Samuel and Mary Lee (nee Green) Allen in West Helena, Arkansas on March 22, 1947. He was the fifth of seven children born to this union. He grew up in East St. Louis, Illinois and later returned to West Helena, Arkansas where after a romantic courtship, he married Katherine Allen

Allen worked with the Army's Department of Defense at the St. Louis Federal Center and retired from Scott Air Force Base working with Air Mobility Command. As a government employee Fulton was very active in BIG. In 1996, Fulton received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Finance from Webster University. He continued his education with graduate studies in Business. His greatest pastimes were working in the yard with his wife, Katherine or hanging out on the lake fishing for catfish, trout, and buffalo. He enjoyed traveling for his job and had the opportunity to go to Singapore; Tokyo; Dubai, United Emirates; Hawaii; and multiple European countries.



Judith (Judy) L. Hartfield

1962- July 13, 2020

Chicago Midwest, Region V

Judith Lynn Hartfield was an employee at U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Public Housing Division (PHA) in Chicago for 36 years. She was a Charter member of the BIG, Chicago Midwest Chapter, originally formed in 1994 and chartered in 1995. She served as our chapter's first Treasurer for six years, and as a Region V Council member for two years. She worked closely with the Federal Interagency Committee that coordinated the annual Martin Luther King Jr., celebration, and the Black History programs. She was one of the Vice Presidents of AFGE at HUD.



Sam Maze

December 3, 1952 - December 17, 2019

Life member, Greater Riverside STEM Chapter, Region IX

Sam Maze was past Regional Council President and Greater Riverside STEM Chapter member. He worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs and received multiple awards, including Outstanding Performance Awards, Dept. of VA EEO Manager of the Year for the Nation, Dept. of VA A level Above Award from the Office of Resolution Mgmt., VA Annual Scholarship Ball Award, Sacramento, CA (BIG), and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Share the Dream Award. His activities included mentoring youth (BIG), EEO Consultant for Blacks In Government, and CEO of Distinguished Consultant Com. Sam was very active in BIG, and his positions included Inland Empire BIG Chapter President, BIG Region IX Council 1st Vice President and President, BIG Region IX Director, BIG National Board of Director, and BIG Student Competitions Chair for Oratorical and Computer Skills



Leon Edward Armstrong

July 22, 1952 - June 30, 2020

Los Angeles/Long Beach Area, Region IX

Mr. Armstrong worked for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (US-CIS). He retired in 2009 as a Supervisor Immigration Services Officer after 34 years of Government service. Mr. Armstrong was a Life Member of the BIG, Los Angeles/Long Beach Area Chapter. He enjoyed being a basketball referee for 32 years, and served as a Deacon, Chaplain and Ordained Minister at Greater Open-Door Church of God In Christ (COGIC) in Long Beach, CA.



Kimberly Jo (Hargroves) Wiggins

March 5, 1969 - September 23, 2019

Pacific Ocean Chapter, Region IX

Kimberly Wiggins was a wife, mother, and grandmother. When she arrived on the island of Oahu, she joined BIG. Later, she became a Life Member and joined the Region IX Pacific Ocean Chapter. Kimberly was an excellent educator and mentor to our youth in the local community of Hawaii. In the Pacific Ocean Chapter, Kimberly showed her support by participating in the Chapter's monthly meetings, and as a judge in the Chapter's Annual BIG Poetry Contest for youth.

When Kimberly departed Hawaii and returned to North Carolina she continued to show her support for her local community and her Chapter in any way she could. Kimberly's dedication and love for her family, friends and BIG will be missed.



Taylene Watson

April 5, 1948 – March 28, 2020

VA Puget Sound Chapter, Region X

Taylene Watson was a beautiful, loving, and compassionate person, who was always available to help anyone in need. She was passionate about people and worked in the field of Social Work at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System for 40 years, serving as the Director of Social Work from 1985 to 2015 until retirement. She also served as the Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers, Washington Chapter, and Clinical Associate Professor, School of Social Work at the University of Washington. After her retirement, Taylene worked in the community, extending her knowledge and resources to those in need. Taylene cultivated and nurtured relationships between individuals, organizations, and agencies. She taught and mentored thousands of social workers on how to view the world through a social justice lens. Taylene was the epitome of professionalism and worked her position with ease and aplomb. Her dedication to those she served did not go unnoticed and to her credit, she received numerous awards, recognition and accolades at the VA, local universities and in the community.

Taylene was a highly respected member of the BIG VA Puget Sound Chapter (VAPSC) for over 17 years! She was always there to support chapter activities, programs and events. She was a proud contributor to our Chapter Scholarship Fund. Whenever the donations fell short, she made sure that we had enough to support our youth who were planning to attend college. She also made sure the VAPSC always had the finances needed to operate efficiently. Taylene never failed to encourage those she taught and mentored to be the best they could be. Her voice was soft and mild spoken, but her efforts to elevate individuals, both professionally and personally were insurmountable and could be compared to none. Her demeanor was sweet and unquestionable. Taylene's integrity was beyond reproach, not only in her professional life, but her personal life as well. Although Taylene never had a desire to hold an office in the BIG VAPSC, even after her retirement, she was always there to lend a helping hand.



Brenda Green

n/a - March 26, 2020

Life Member, FMS-BIG Chapter, Region XI

Ms. Brenda Green joined the FMS-BIG Chapter in April 2003 and became a Life Member in January 2019. She was employed with the Department of Treasury, Financial Management Service until her transition on March 26, 2020. Ms. Green was an active member of the Chapter, participating on all committees within the Chapter. Her expertise and knowledge were very much appreciated on the Scholarship Committee which she served for two years. Ms. Green was well accepted by her colleagues and provided assistance whenever needed.



Mrs. Gracie M. Wiley

May 14, 1947 - November 1, 2019

NOAA Chapter, Region XI

Mrs. Gracie M. Wiley's career spanned over 37 years of public service while working in a variety of federal government organizations, both CONUS and OCONUS. She often accompanied her husband while he was stationed at various camps, posts, and stations during his military career in the U. S. Army.

In 2005, Mrs. Wiley earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Management of Human Resources. The highlights of her career with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are among many. A few include serving as Recording Secretary and Vice-President from 2010 to 2012, serving on the Distinguished Service Award Program, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Christmas Toy Program, and the Clothing Drive. In 2004, she was awarded the Commander's Coin for Excellence.

Mrs. Wiley became a member of the Seas and Skies Chapter of The Federally Employed Women (FEW) Organization. She filled in as the Recording Secretary in October 2005. She received numerous certificates of appreciation as a member of FEW. Mrs. Wiley was also volunteered at Hagerstown Junior College (later renamed as Hagerstown Community College), and in 1991 graduated with an Associate Arts Degree.



Franklin A. Morris

May 28, 1948 - November 22, 2019

Life Member, FMS-BIG Chapter, Region XI

Mr. Franklin Morris was a member of the FMS-BIG Chapter since February 24, 2004. He was employed with the Department of Treasury, Financial Management Service as Director, Mainframe and Engineering. Even in retirement in January 2014. Mr. Morris continued to support the FMS BIG Chapter. He worked and assisted on all committees within the Chapter. He was an inspiration to his fellow members and a great supporter of BIG whenever needed. Mr. Morris was greatly appreciated, and he will be sorely missed.



Hazel M. Lyons

August 24, 1948 - January 28, 2020

Life Member, Department of Labor (BIG-DOL), Region XI

Hazel Marie Lyons was a dedicated member of the BIG Department of Labor Chapter (BIG-DOL) for more than thirty years. She was also a BIG Life Member. She retired from DOL in 2014, having served close to 43 years of honorable and devoted service to the nation. Ms. Lyons made a noteworthy impact on the history of BIG-DOL. Along with the late Mr. Earl Simpson, in 1984 she was one of the founders of the BIG-DOL Gospel Choir. The choir rendered service at BIG-DOL and Departmental programs, church events, and many other Federal government agencies. The choir was also the impetus for organizing the National BIG Gospel Choir, which performs at the annual BIG National Training Conference (NTC), later renamed National Training Institute (NTI). Furthermore, Ms. Lyons was one of the founders of the BIG-DOL Annual Juneteenth Celebration and Cookout, which celebrated the late notice to slaves that they were set free in Texas. She also established BIG-DOL African American Harvest Week activities that the chapter held each year in October, where the activities, which included programs and food-tastings, celebrated our heritage and the fruits of our labor. Ms. Lyons also served as an Independent Board Member of BIG-DOL.

Ms. Lyons also made long-standing contributions for the betterment of all DOL employees as a member of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)-Local 12. She served as a Steward and as the Assistant Treasurer of Local 12. Ms. Lyons was a vital and indispensable member of the leadership executive board team that performed hard-won 1980 contract negotiations with the Department of Labor. The DOL/Local 12 contract was considered the best-ever negotiated for federal employees in the United States of America. Major revolutionary gains were made for employees, which included flexible hours of work; maternity, paternity, and child-rearing leave; annual and sick leave; training and promotions; layoffs (RIFs); terminations and suspensions, and performance appraisals.

An advocate for community activism, Ms. Lyons volunteered for the NAACP, the Urban League, and other grass-roots organizations. Indeed, Ms. Lyons steadfastly and lovingly served BIG, the Department of Labor, and the African American community.



Hon. Cassandra Jones

April 2, 1958 - February 22, 2020

Founding Member, UMOJA Chapter, Region XI

Cassandra Denise Jones was born in Fitzgerald, GA on April 2, 1958 to the late Oleon Jones Sr. and Jacqueline Faye Jones. Cassandra received her education in the public schools of the District of Columbia and received two Associate Degrees in Applied Science & Computer Accounting Technology, from Strayer University. In 2004 she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from the University of District of Columbia. She worked as Finance Resource/Budget Office Manager for the Central Intelligence Agency and retired in 2013 after 37 years of federal government service. She received numerous awards of service and recognition from the Agency.

A Life member, Cassandra, joined BIG in 1991 as a founding member of Region XI, UMOJA Chapter. She was a highly esteemed member for more than 26 years for her demonstrated enduring commitment and dedication to the goals and objectives and guiding principles of the organization. Serving BIG in numerous capacities at the National, Regional, and Chapter levels, she had many accomplishments to her credit. Her involvement in BIG at the National level began in 1997, first as the NTC Pre-Registration Chairperson, and then in 1999 as the Database Oversight Monitoring Chairperson.

Cassandra was also actively involved in the community and made a huge difference in the lives of so many students in the District of Columbia. For years, students were afforded the opportunity to fulfill a portion of their community service requirements for graduation while performing various tasks on the Conference Registration Committee. Following her retirement, Cassandra continued to be actively involved in BIG. She demonstrated a lifelong commitment and worked tirelessly for BIG on a daily basis. She was a living testimony to the fact that she did more than influence change over the years, while looking ahead at emerging registration trends and the possibilities for the organization. The many awards bestowed upon her for her professional work and commitment in the leadership of BIG over the years are evidence that Cassandra was an exceptional leader, mentor, teacher, dedicated professional and truly deserving of the 2018 Distinguished Service Hall of Fame (DSHOF) Award.



Debbie Jordan

March 27, 1960 - March 3, 2020

Life Member, Department of Education Chapter, Region XI

Debbie was a long time Department of Education employee who served America's students for more than 30 years. An active and Life Member of BIG, she often showed her strength and commitment with quiet activism and support of the chapter. If there was a meeting, Debbie tried her very best to be there in person. As a member of the Office of Grants Administration's Audit Resolution team, Debbie served the program and grantees by providing critical and well valued expertise in audits and financial management support. Debbie was known as caring, quiet, and professional. Her ability to listen and understand her customers concerns earned her great respect, both within and outside of the Department.

Outside of her professional work, Debbie enjoyed participating in educational fundraising events. She once worked as a volunteer at the White House under President Obama, was a devoted member of Crusaders Baptist Church, located in Northeast Washington, DC., and sang in the choir for many years. In her spare time, Debbie enjoyed reading, movies, antique shopping, sampling restaurants, and traveling. Debbie Jordan is survived by her mother, sister, aunts, uncle, other relatives, and many friends.



Gwendolyn Washington

February 25, 1956 - March 11, 2020

Life Member, Department of Education Chapter, Region XI

Gwendolyn Washington was a long-standing, active, and Life Member of the Department of Education Chapter of BIG (BIG ED). She worked in the Department's Human Resources Department where against all odds, she helped many BIG members with EEO issues. She served over 31 years within the federal service, including 19 years at the Department of Education as Human Capital Program Manager and Supervisor, and Diversity and Program Management. She also served 12 years with the U.S. Department of Justice and 11 years with U.S. Marshals Service. If cancer finally had not taken a toll on Gwen's body, undoubtedly, she would still be making friends and challenging the Department to live up to its equal opportunity and diversity and inclusion goals. Gwen could be expected to take on challenging jobs and roles that helped other people. During her illness, she often showed up at work, putting her best foot forward to be of service to BIG and to the Department. That's simply who Gwen was. Known to ruffle feathers, she was just as quick to give you a hug and warm you with her infectious smile. She refused to allow her illness to keep her from being vibrant and motivated. She was always resourceful and brought many members into the BIG ED Chapter as well as the Department's Toastmaster's Chapter. In her honor, the Toastmasters' Chapter was renamed to the Gwendolyn Washington Toastmasters Club. A graduate of the University of Phoenix, Mrs. Washington will be lovingly missed.

