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Governor

G. Michael Payton
Executive Director



Commissioners: Leonard Hubert, *Chair* Lori Barreras William Patmon, III Tom Roberts Madhu Singh

SEVENTH ANNUAL
HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015

NIMROD B. ALLEN
NIRMAL K. SINHA
MERRI GAITHER SMITH
SCHUYLER SMITH
LOUIS STOKES



Sustaining Sponsor:



Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame

Inductees



2009

WILLIAM F. BOWEN
JOAN B. CAMPBELL
ROBERT M. DUNCAN
RUTH GONZALEZ DE GARCIA
BRUCE KLUNDER
C.J. MCLIN, JR.
TONI MORRISON
FRED SHUTTLESWORTH
CARL B. STOKES
GEORGE WASHINGTON WILLIAMS

2010

AVERY FRIEDMAN
DR. FRANK W. HALE, JR.
DR. KARLA IRVINE
WILLIAM MCCULLOCH
ERIC PARKS
SALVADOR RAMOS
RHONDA RIVERA
DR. RATANJIT SONDHE
DR. MARIAN SPENCER
BALDEMAR VELASQUEZ

2011

ROGER ABRAMSON
THEODORE M. BERRY
KEN CAMPBELL
NATHANIEL R. JONES
AMOS LYNCH
LOUIS D. SHARP
V. ANTHONY SIMMS-HOWELL

2012

JAMES G. JACKSON
REV. DAMON LYNCH, JR.
WILLIAM L. MALLORY
RICHARD MAXWELL
REV. DR. OTIS MOSS, JR.
JESSE OWENS
OHIO TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

2013

ANISON JAMES COLBERT
LAWRENCE EUGENE "LARRY" DOBY
SARA J. HARPER
PASTOR ROBERT LEE HARRIS
MARJORIE B. PARHAM
CHARLES O. ROSS, JR.
ALEXANDER M. "SANDY" SPATER

2014

JESSIE O. GOODING
REV. MOTHER LOUISE SHROPSHIRE
JOAN EVELYN SOUTHGATE
EMILY T. SPICER
JUDGE S. ARTHUR & LOUISE SPIEGEL
GLORIA STEINEM
JOHN B. WILLIAMS
OHIO FREEDOM RIDERS:
BETTY DANIELS ROSEMOND
DAVID FANKHAUSER, PH.D
FRANCES L. WILSON CANTY



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015





SEVENTH ANNUAL
HALL OF FAME
2015

The Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame seeks to acknowledge the citizens who have left their mark in the State of Ohio through their tireless efforts in furthering civil and human rights in their communities. These distinguished individuals have served as beacons making significant strides in support of civil and human rights. Through their exemplary leadership they have helped to eliminate barriers to equal opportunity in this great state as well as foster cultural awareness and understanding for a more just society.

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



**Honda Congratulates the 2015
Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame Inductees:**

Nimrod B. Allen
Nirmal K. Sinha
Merri Gaither Smith
Schuyler Smith
Louis Stokes

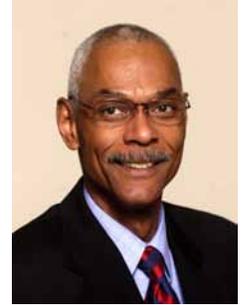
HONDA
The Power of Dreams

 Follow us on Twitter: [@HondaMfgOhio](https://twitter.com/HondaMfgOhio)
Consider a career with us at ohio.honda.com

From the Commission



Leonard Hubert, Chair



G. Michael Payton, Director



Lori Barreras

October 15, 2015

Welcome to Ohio's Seventh Annual Civil Rights Hall of Fame ceremony. The Ohio Civil Rights Commission, sustaining partner PNC Bank, and co-sponsors Honda of America Manufacturing, Inc., and Wright State University are very proud to host this annual event. We are committed to preserving the rich civil rights heritage in our state while also promoting equal opportunity and goodwill.



William Patmon, III

On behalf of Ohio's citizens, we extend our appreciation and admiration to the nominees who have been selected for induction into the Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Each inductee has an exceptional story of outstanding service to our state. Today's celebration of their service and accomplishments will hopefully inspire future generations to follow in their footsteps.

Thank you for supporting this extraordinary event and Ohio's strong public policy against discrimination.

Sincerely,



Tom Roberts

Leonard Hubert
Chair

Lori Barreras
Commissioner

Tom Roberts
Commissioner



Madhu Singh

G. Michael Payton
Executive Director

William Patmon, III
Commissioner

Madhu Singh
Commissioner

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



KNOW

that good causes
are worth
fighting for.



PNC supports those who serve the common good of their community. That's why we're proud to congratulate the Ohio Civil Rights 2015 Hall of Fame Inductees on this amazing achievement.

pnc.com

 **PNC**
for the achiever in you[®]

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From the Governor



JOHN R. KASICH
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

October 15, 2015

Greetings,

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Chairman Leonard Hubert and the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) as you host the 7th Annual Civil Rights Hall of Fame induction ceremony. The OCRC has created a wonderful forum to honor Ohioans who have left a legacy in the area of civil rights.

Today's ceremony will celebrate a select group of Ohioans who have worked hard to make a difference in our state and nation. Their leadership and determination in the pursuit of civil rights have made a lasting impact in the lives of many.

Thanks to today's sponsors- Wright State University, Honda of America, Inc., and PNC Bank. Your support is critical to the continued success of the Civil Rights Hall of Fame. I extend a special hello to Dr. Sean Decatur, today's keynote speaker, and Kristyn Hartman, today's Mistress of Ceremonies. Thank you for support.

On behalf of all Ohioans, best wishes for another successful induction ceremony!

Sincerely,

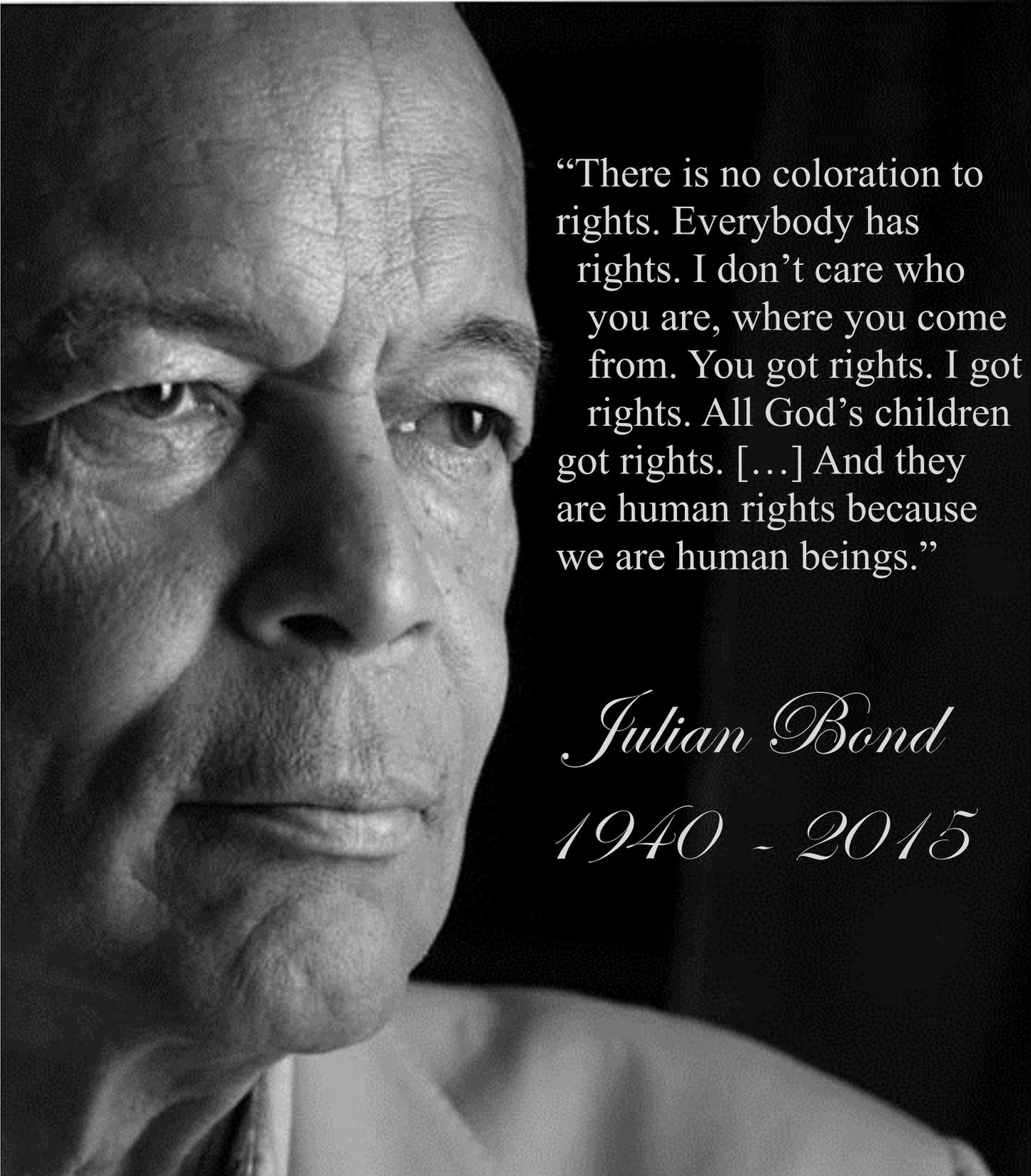
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John R. Kasich".

John R. Kasich
Governor

77 SOUTH HIGH STREET • 30TH FLOOR • COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215-6117 • 614.466.3555

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



A black and white close-up portrait of Julian Bond, an older man with a serious expression, looking slightly to the right. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of his skin and the contours of his face.

“There is no coloration to rights. Everybody has rights. I don’t care who you are, where you come from. You got rights. I got rights. All God’s children got rights. [...] And they are human rights because we are human beings.”

Julian Bond
1940 - 2015



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



From the Sustaining Partner



Dear Friends:

On behalf of The PNC Financial Services Group, I would like to congratulate the 2015 Ohio Civil Rights Commission Hall of Fame inductees and their families. Today's ceremony reminds us that when people with diverse points of view, backgrounds, and experiences come together and work hard, great things happen. The inductees' commitment to advancing positive change throughout Ohio is to be commended.

Like the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, at PNC, we recognize that our people represent our strongest competitive advantage and our greatest sustainable resource. The more successful we are at fully engaging and educating our people, the more successful we will be in meeting the needs of our customers and communities.

As we pause to honor the 2015 inductees, it is important to reflect on the significance of fostering diversity in this region. Today's inductees have worked hard to not only promote this significance, but to positively impact Ohio, making it a better place to live and work as a result.

Once again, we applaud these efforts and look forward to the continued partnership and dedication to advancing equality in the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Marsha Jones', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Marsha Jones
Chief Diversity Officer
The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015





Congratulations to the **2015 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame Inductees**

Wright State University is a founding sponsor of the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Our university is proud to support the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and honor those who seek to create a more just society for everyone.

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
**MULTICULTURAL
AFFAIRS & COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



From the Sponsors



WRIGHT STATE
UNIVERSITY

David R. Hopkins, President

Office of the President
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.
Dayton, OH 45435-0001
(937) 775-2312
FAX (937) 775-2421

For more than half a century, Ohio's Civil Rights Commission has protected the rights of Ohio citizens. Originally called the Fair Employment Practices Commission, it began as the watchdog for unlawful discrimination. Today's commission works to "eliminate prejudice, its harmful effects and its incompatibility with American principles of equality and fair play."

Wright State University is proud to partner with PNC and Honda Manufacturing of America to co-sponsor the seventh Civil Rights Hall of Fame in the State of Ohio. The Hall of Fame will honor men and women in Ohio who have made significant contributions to the progress of the civil rights movement throughout their careers and in their community leadership. The individuals recognized here today have, through their actions – their advocacy for civil rights, the appreciation of cultural differences and similarities – built a more just society.

Wright State University is well known for its commitment to accessibility, diversity and inclusion. It has been our great honor to participate in the founding of Ohio's Civil Rights Hall of Fame and to honor this year's inductees, who through their exemplary leadership inspire the next generation of leaders.

No person does this alone. So, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the family and friends of each honoree who have played a major role in their success. Congratulations Class of 2015.

Sincerely,

David R. Hopkins

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



Amos "the Godfather" Lynch
1925 - 2015

2011 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame Inductee

"I learned early in my life that the written word is the best tool for acquiring equal civil rights for all."



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



From the Sponsors

HONDA

Honda of America Mfg., Inc.
24000 Honda Parkway
Marysville, OH 43040-9251

October 15, 2015

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Honda and our associates throughout Ohio, I would like to congratulate the 2015 inductees of the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Honda is proud of each and every inductee and their families for the personal contributions each has made toward the uplifting of our local communities right here in Ohio, and communities around the entire world.

Honda believes in five important Core Values that we feel not only helps make Honda a world class leader in the manufacturing industry, but also helps make the world a better place to live and work. These Honda Core Values are *Respect, Joy, Challenging Spirit, Passion and Dreams*.

I imagine that, through the lives of each of our inductees, they have been a shining example of at least one of Honda's Core Values at one point in their lives. Through their life's work to advance Civil Rights, they have helped make dreams come true, spread joy, demonstrated their passion for justice, fought for equal respect and challenged the status quo on behalf of citizens around the world.

In today's society, we could use more people like our inductees who will sacrifice their comfort, convenience and in some cases, risk their lives for the uplifting of others who are less fortunate and whose voices cannot be heard.

Honda is very proud to be a founding sponsor of this event, and to help present this opportunity for all to see what is possible when people do what is right in order to help others. It is also an opportunity to recognize today's inductees and their families for their years of sacrifice toward making this world a better place.

To the inductees and families, I again offer my congratulations and my personal thanks. You are to be commended for your dedication to advancing civil rights, and to equality and justice for all.

Sincerely,



Tomomi Kosaka
President and CEO
Honda of America, Mfg.

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
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Mistress of Ceremonies

Tracy Townsend

Tracy Townsend co-anchors the 5:30 p.m. edition of 10TV News with Scott Light. She also anchors 10TV's noon newscasts.

Tracy grew up in Cincinnati and is a graduate of The Ohio State University. Before joining WBNS-TV, Tracy worked at WBBM-TV in Chicago, KCTV in Kansas City and WKRC-TV in Cincinnati.

Politics are a passion of Tracy's and as anchor, Tracy led 10TV's coverage of Campaign 2012: Race for the White House. She has scored interviews with President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

Tracy is an active graduate member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ). She is also active in the Columbus chapter of The Links, Inc., a national women's service organization.

Tracy reports on health issues affecting families including breakthroughs and helpful tips for families. In addition, she works with 10TV Productions on "Toward A Cancer Free World" which is a weekly segment featuring the world-renowned experts at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute.

Tracy is from Cincinnati originally but she, her husband, Murvin Enders, and their son, Ian, are proud to call Columbus their "adopted" hometown. When at home, Tracy loves reading, cooking, and sports, especially the OSU Buckeyes, the Cincinnati Bengals, and the Indianapolis Colts.



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
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Keynote Speaker

Dr. Sean Decatur



Sean M. Decatur became the 19th president of Kenyon College on July 1, 2013. He arrived at Kenyon after serving since July 2008 as the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Oberlin College. He was also a professor of chemistry and biochemistry at Oberlin.

Decatur was born September 4, 1968, in Cleveland, Ohio, where his mother, Doris Decatur, was a career teacher of mathematics and science in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. He attended Cleveland public schools and the private Hawken School in suburban Cleveland.

He earned a bachelor's degree at Swarthmore College and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1990. Decatur earned a doctorate in biophysical chemistry at Stanford University in 1995; his dissertation was titled "Novel Approaches to Probing Structure-Function Relationships in Myoglobin."

Decatur was a professor of chemistry and later associate dean of faculty at Mount Holyoke College. At Mount Holyoke, Decatur helped establish a top research program in biophysical chemistry and developed unique courses, including a race-and-science lecture series; and a course exploring ethical, social, and political questions related to scientific topics. Decatur was a visiting scientist at the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology in 2004-05. Decatur also held the position of dean at Oberlin College, where he helped strengthen the Oberlin faculty and establish the Center for Languages and International Cultures.

Decatur has won research grants from the federal National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health and from private foundations including the Alzheimer's Association, Dreyfus Foundation, and Research Corporation for Science Advancement. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles and has received a number of national awards for his scholarship, including a National Science Foundation CAREER award in 1999 and a Henry Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award in 2003. He was named an Emerging Scholar of 2007 by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* magazine.

He has contributed to the *New York Times* Room for Debate commentary forum. Decatur also wrote an essay called "When the Number 9 Bus Was Like Home, and Downtown Was My Playground," which was included in the 2012 book *Rust Belt Chic: The Cleveland Anthology*.

He is married to Renee Romano, associate professor of history and African American Studies at Oberlin. Romano is a specialist in 20th century American history, with research interests in African American history, civil rights, and historical memory. They have two children, Sabine and Owen.

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



MEET THE 2015 OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

NIMROD B. ALLEN
NIRMAL K. SINHA
MERRI GAITHER SMITH
SCHUYLER SMITH
LOUIS STOKES



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
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Nimrod B. Allen

(1886 - 1977)



The son of a Methodist minister, **Nimrod B. Allen** was born to a family of 12 children in Girard, Alabama. After coming north to pursue a degree from Wilberforce University, Allen moved to Columbus in 1915. Just two years later, he founded the Columbus Urban League, which he would lead for 33 years.

Allen's work with the Urban League made him a founding father of Central Ohio's civil rights movement, inspiring positive relationships among all Columbus citizens. He established the Urban League to serve black migrants from the rural South that came North and were met by racism, cultural differences, and few job opportunities when they arrived in Ohio.

His "Columbus Plan" for better interracial relations through a collaboration of people from all races, churches, schools, and other social agencies was initially met with skepticism. However, through Allen's leadership, the Urban League established a diverse membership and succeeded in improving race relations, leading Columbus to be named as one of the top 10 cities in the nation for positive interracial relations.

Allen was early to recognize the importance of positive relationships between minority communities and law enforcement. He helped to create the Friendly Service Bureau to combat crime and improve relations between citizens and police. The Friendly Service Bureau was successful in Columbus and was studied and adopted by more than 90 cities across the country. He was also the first in Columbus to coordinate media to promote interracial harmony, including collaborations among the press, television, radio, police, and responsible citizens to discuss issues of race and community.

In 1936, Allen founded Frontiers of America, a national club which at the time was the only organization working to encourage African American leadership and community service. Frontiers of America was formally recognized by Presidents Truman and Eisenhower for its positive impact on fostering leadership in the African American community. Thanks to this prolific work, in 1953 Allen was selected to meet with President Eisenhower in Washington D.C. to discuss the burgeoning civil rights movement.

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Nirmal K. Sinha

Nominator: Harasiddhiprasad G. Bhatt



As a representative for the Asian Indian community, **Nirmal K. Sinha** has held many important positions and received national recognition for his civil rights contributions. Serving as President and Trustee of the Federation of Asian Indian Association (FIA) of Central Ohio, President of the Asian Indian American Business Group (AIABG) and a member of the Asian Indian Alliance of Ohio, Sinha has helped Ohio grow in its diversity and acceptance of the Asian Indian community.

Sinha's commitment to improving relationships among all races and nationalities is also evidenced in his work with the Muslim and Sikh communities following the attacks of September 11, 2001. He was invaluable in alleviating the fears and improving relations during that time of uncertainty and unrest.

Sinha's work has extended beyond Ohio to the national and international stage. In order to promote trade and

Ohio's international relations, Sinha regularly hosts business leaders and diplomatic delegates visiting from various countries, such as Russia, China, South Africa, and India. He accompanied Governor Voivovich and President Bill Clinton during visits to India for promotion of international trade and cultural relations.

As Commissioner of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission from 1991-2006, Sinha developed programs to welcome new immigrants to the United States and created outreach programs for various ethnic groups, including the Asian and Hispanic Communities.

In 2003, Mr. Sinha received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, which recognizes American citizens preserve and celebrate the history, traditions and values of their ancestry while exemplifying the values of the American way of life and exemplify a life dedicated to community service.

Nirmal K. Sinha's visionary dedication to human and civil rights shapes his character as well as his actions. As one supporter said, "Mr. Sinha approaches every challenge with empathy, reason, passion and dignity."



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Merri Gaither Smith & Schuyler Smith

Nominator: Donna Jones Baker



Schuyler Smith founded Acme Wrecking Co. in 1955 and ran it for more than 50 years, making it the largest minority-owned wrecking company in the Midwest. Through his business, Mr. Smith trained dozens of African Americans how to operate heavy machinery and provided employment to hundreds more over time.

Mr. Smith grew his business at a time when he could not get financing from a bank because he was African American. He operated his business at the highest ethical and production standards, earning the respect of customers in the white community who otherwise would not have worked with him.

Merri Gaither Smith spent 31 years as an educator in the Cincinnati Public School system, but she also impacted many young people outside of the classroom. She cofounded Women's Alliance in 1966 and Advocates for Youth Education in 1988, both of which provide cultural enrichment and education opportunities to young Ohioans. In its first 19 years, Advocates for Youth Education provided \$350,000 in

scholarship money for college-bound youths.

Schuyler and Merri Gaither Smith were trailblazers as African Americans in a time when Jim Crow still thwarted the way for many. In the 1950's, Schuyler was asked to join in picketing to integrate Coney Island Amusement Park in Cincinnati. His involvement was instrumental in opening Coney Island to all citizens. During the riots and unrest of 1960's Cincinnati, Merri Gaither Smith was actively involved as a catalyst for peace and to improve the lives of disadvantaged youth in the Cincinnati community by founding organizations to improve the lives of disadvantaged youth.

Their success as individuals and as a couple has allowed them to share their financial blessings to the benefit of many people in Greater Cincinnati. Together, Schuyler and Merri Gaither Smith have raised money or contributed directly to many Greater Cincinnati organizations, including the Girls Scouts, Cincinnati Speech and Hearing Center, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, the Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio, Institute of Fine Arts, May Festival, and Dress for Success.

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Rep. Louis Stokes

(1925 - 2015)



Louis Stokes rose from an impoverished life in the Cleveland Outhwaite Homes projects to become one of the most influential and respected members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Stokes' mother, Louise, raised him and younger brother Carl Stokes (2009 Civil Rights Hall of Fame inductee) after their father, Charles, died when the boys were young.

Stokes served in a segregated unit in the Army during World War II and said that it was there that he first experienced racism. After leaving the Army, Stokes used the G.I. Bill to attend college and law school to become a civil-rights attorney. He argued two major civil rights cases, including the famous "stop and frisk" case before the United States Supreme Court and the lawsuit that forced congressional redistricting and resulted in Ohio's first majority-African American district.

Eventually Stokes ran for Congress, becoming the first African American elected to Congress from Ohio in 1968. His congressional career saw him lead a select committee that investigated the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. He sharply questioned Lt. Col. Oliver North during a congressional hearing on the Iran-Contra scandal.

His role as head of the Congressional Black Caucus helped secure him a position as the first African American on the House Appropriations Committee, a powerful committee that gave Stokes a voice to support federal funding for Ohio employers and projects. Stokes was dedicated to using these congressional roles to help put money into programs that would improve the quality of life for African Americans and the poor.

In total, Stokes served 15 terms as a Democratic Congressman. When he retired from Congress in 1990, he resumed his career as a lawyer and began a career as a college professor.

An important leader until the very end, in the months preceding his death, Stokes served on a panel commissioned by Ohio Gov. John Kasich to explore problems in the relationship between police and citizens.



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OCTOBER 15, 2015



Thank You

The Ohio Civil Rights Commission wishes to extend our sincere appreciation for the tremendous support from each of our sponsors. This program would not be possible without the generosity and creativity provided through these partnerships.

A special thank you to:

Dr. Kimberly A. Barrett, Wright State University
Stephen Francis, Honda of America Mfg., Inc.
Shannon Morgan, PNC Bank
United Way of Central Ohio
Ohio State Highway Patrol Color Guard
Ohio School for the Blind Choir

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

- Helen Keller



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 15, 2015



The Ohio Civil Rights Commission

G. Michael Payton, *Executive Director*



Commissioners: Leonard Hubert, Chair Lori Barreras William Patmon, III Tom Roberts Madhu Singh



The Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) was established July 29, 1959 by the Ohio Legislature. The powers, duties, jurisdiction, practices and procedures of the Commission are specified in the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 4112. The primary function of The Ohio Civil Rights Commission is to enforce state laws against discrimination.

OCRC receives and investigates charges of discrimination in employment, places of public accommodation, housing, credit, and disability in higher education on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, ancestry, military status or familial status.

Akron Regional Office

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