

John Kasich  
*Governor*

G. Michael Payton  
*Executive Director*



*Civil Rights*  
2017

*Commissioners:* Leonard Hubert, *Chair* Lori Barreras William Patmon, III Madhu Singh Juan Cespedes

NINTH ANNUAL  
HALL OF FAME

OCTOBER 5, 2017

LIEUTENANT COLONEL GILBERT H. JONES (RET.)

CHIEF LAWRENCE HARPER

MOSES FLEETWOOD WALKER

THE MARCHING MOTHERS & CHILDREN  
OF THE 1954 HILLSBORO FIGHT FOR INTEGRATION

**HONDA**

Honda of America Mfg., Inc.



WRIGHT STATE  
UNIVERSITY



**PNC**

# 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

### 2015

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

### 2016

JUDGE JEAN MURRELL CAPERS  
JULIANNA COCHRAN ROGERS  
REV. LEON TROY  
RICHARD WEILAND  
MARION MOTLEY  
WILLIAM WILLIS





NINTH ANNUAL  
**HALL OF FAME**  
2017

The Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame seeks to acknowledge the citizens who have left their mark on 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 eliminate barriers to equal opportunity in this great state as well as foster cultural awareness and understanding for a more just society.

# KNOW

you've touched  
the lives of  
many.

PNC is proud to congratulate all of the 2017 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame Inductees on an amazing achievement. You've shown us what's possible through hard work and persistence.

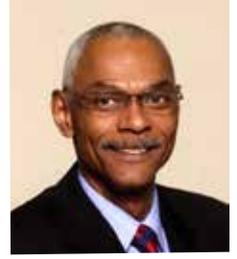
[pnc.com](http://pnc.com)



# From the Commission



Leonard Hubert, Chair



G. Michael Payton,  
Executive Director



Lori Barreras

October 5, 2017

Welcome to Ohio's Ninth Annual Civil Rights Hall of Fame ceremony. The Ohio Civil Rights Commission, PNC, 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 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,



Madhu K. Singh

Leonard Hubert  
Chair

Lori Barreras  
Commissioner

Madhu K. Singh  
Commissioner



Juan Cespedes

G. Michael Payton  
Executive Director

William Patmon, III  
Commissioner

Juan Cespedes  
Commissioner



**Honda Congratulates the 2017  
Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame Inductees:**

Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert H. Jones (Ret.)

Chief Lawrence Harper

Moses Fleetwood Walker

The Marching Mothers and Children of the  
1954 Hillsboro Fight for Integration

**HONDA**  
The Power of Dreams

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Consider a career with us at [ohio.honda.com](http://ohio.honda.com)

# *From the Governor*

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JOHN R. KASICH  
GOVERNOR

October 5, 2017

Greetings,

On behalf of the State of Ohio, I extend my congratulations to Chairman Leonard Hubert and the Ohio Civil Rights Commission as you host the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame ceremony. I commend the Ohio Civil Rights Commission for creating this wonderful forum to honor Ohioans whose actions have advanced civil rights and helped create a more just society for all.

Today's ceremony will celebrate a select group of individuals whose leadership and determination have made a lasting impact on the lives of countless others, and I am proud to join the Ohio Civil Rights Commission in recognizing the difference they have made.

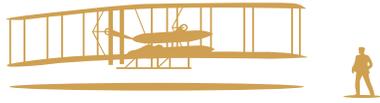
I commend all those who are involved with this year's program for your work to ensure its success, and I extend my best wishes for another memorable ceremony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John R. Kasich". The signature is stylized and cursive.

John R. Kasich  
Governor





**WRIGHT STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

Congratulations  
to the  
**2017 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.edu/culture](http://wright.edu/culture)

# *From the Sponsors*

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Dear Friends:

On behalf of The PNC Financial Services Group, I would like to congratulate the 2017 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 2017 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.

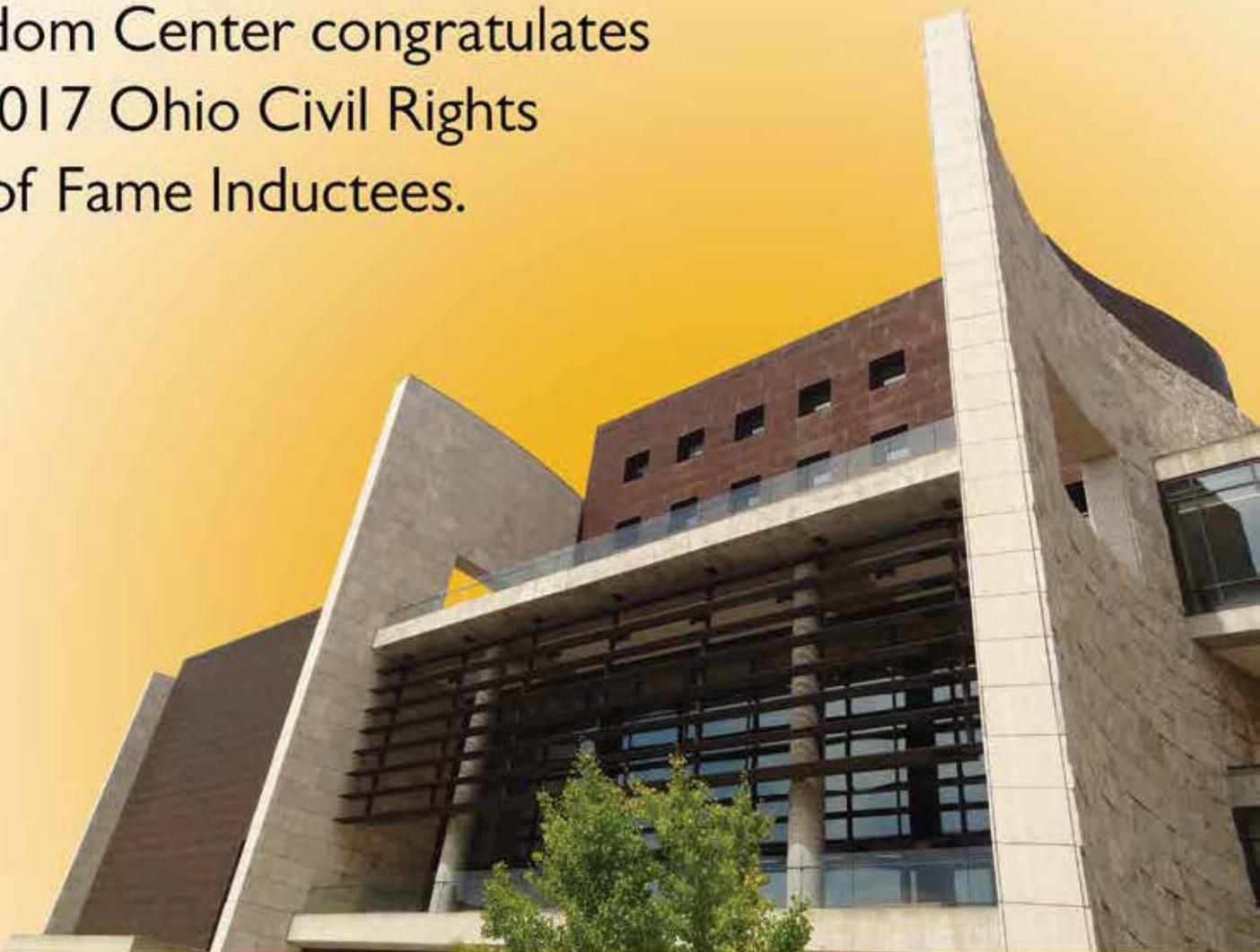
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Marsha J'.

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



The National Underground Railroad  
Freedom Center congratulates  
the 2017 Ohio Civil Rights  
Hall of Fame Inductees.



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# The Kinsey

African American Art & History

# Collection

Opening November 4, 2017

# From the Sponsors

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**HONDA**

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

October 5, 2017

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

On behalf of Honda and our associates throughout Ohio, I am pleased to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of the 2017 inductees into the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Each inductee, and those who supported their efforts, is to be commended for their commitment and the positive impact they have made upon communities in Ohio and beyond.

At Honda, we believe in The Power of Dreams and the power that each unique individual brings to a team, to a cause, and to a community. The individual dreams and unique approach that today's honorees brought to their respective efforts are truly inspiring.

Our company is proud to be a founding corporate partner of this statewide event to recognize those who make significant contributions in support of civil rights. The tireless efforts and sacrifices of today's inductees have made a lasting difference for our society.

Congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,



Toshiyuki Shimabara  
President and CEO  
Honda of America Mfg.

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME  
OCTOBER 5, 2017

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# *From the Sponsors*

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Cheryl B. Schrader, Ph.D.  
President

260A University Hall  
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.  
Dayton, Ohio 45435-0001

(937) 775-2312

[cheryl.b.schrader@wright.edu](mailto:cheryl.b.schrader@wright.edu)

Wright State University is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. These milestones offer an opportunity for reflection and for contemplating our priorities going forward.

Over those same 50 years, since its founding as the Fair Employment Practices Commission, the Ohio Civil Rights Commission has been on the watch against unlawful discrimination.

Wright State is proud to join PNC and Honda Manufacturing of America to co-sponsor the ninth Civil Rights Hall of Fame class, recognizing Ohio men and women who have made significant contributions to the civil rights movement. Those being honored have demonstrated a remarkable degree of courage and their pursuit of a more just society has given us another terrific opportunity for reflection.

It has been our great honor to participate in this event as a sponsor. We strive to demonstrate our diversity, inclusion, and commitment to accessibility every day. Wright State needs leaders to accomplish this. Ohio needs leaders in much the same way, people whose lives mirror their convictions.

Congratulations to the honorees and their families and friends. You have given our university family, and all of us, a shining example to follow.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl B. Schrader".

Cheryl B. Schrader

# *From the Exhibit Partners*



October 5, 2017

Dear friends,

Today we gather to uplift and celebrate champions of civil rights from the great state of Ohio.

On behalf of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center board of directors, staff, ambassadors and volunteers, we would like to congratulate the 2017 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame inductees and their families.

The 2017 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame inductees are heroes – heroes who used their individual voices to affect real change each in their own unique way. Their courage, cooperation and perseverance has made this state we call home a better place. While there is more work to be done, the heroes we honor today have paved the way for a new generation of change agents here in Ohio.

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center is proud to partner with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission at this ceremony today and by providing a home for the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame archives. Ohio has one of the longest histories of civil rights enforcement in the country, from the Ohio Public Accommodations Law of 1884 to the establishment of the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame in 2009. As the fight for civil rights and inclusive freedom continues in Ohio, and across our nation, we are truly humbled to provide a space honoring each Ohioan inducted into the Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert H. Jones (Ret.), Chief Lawrence Harper, Moses Fleetwood Walker, and the marching mothers and children of the 1954 Hillsboro Fight for Integration – thank you for standing up, speaking out and making change possible.

Warmest regards,

Rev. Damon Lynch, Jr.  
Chair, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Board of Directors  
Pastor, New Jerusalem Baptist Church

Thomas Crain  
Vice Chair, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Board of Directors  
Retired Managing Director, Scudder Stevens & Clark

# Master of Ceremonies

## Mike Jackson



**Mike Jackson** is co-anchor of NBC4 at 6pm and 11pm. He has worked at NBC4 since 1994. He has more than 40 years of broadcast experience, with his first job coming in his hometown of Charleston, West Virginia at radio station WCHS-AM.

Mike's first television position was at WOAY-TV in Oak Hill, WV, where he anchored the late evening news. He was also a sports reporter at WCHS-TV in Charleston before working in Columbus, the first time with the local ABC affiliate. Mike also served as operations manager and announcer for WBES-FM in Charleston, West Virginia, News Director at WOAY-TV in Oak Hill, West Virginia, and served as evening anchor at NewsChannel 8 in Washington, DC before he returned to Columbus.

Mike is a graduate of West Virginia State University with an Associate Arts degree in Mass Communication. Mike proudly received a first-place award for reporting by the National Association of Black Journalists in 1993 in Washington, D.C. Other honors include four local Emmy nominations for reporting and two-second place awards for reporting by the Society of Professional Journalists. Mike says it would be too hard to pick his most memorable story.

"I have covered every presidential race since I've been old enough to vote," he said. "I enjoy covering what will soon become American history. I would like to think that after more than 40 years of broadcasting, the most memorable story is still waiting to be covered." Mike said his first job was digging sewer lines and learning how raw sewage was treated in the summer during his high school years. "It was interesting, but it encouraged me to study a little harder in school," Mike said.

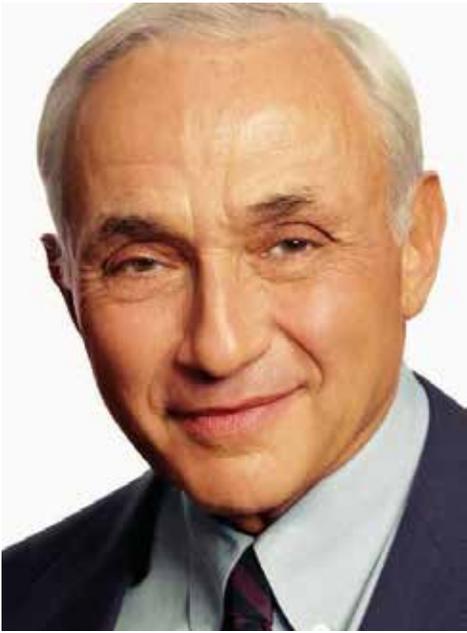
If he wasn't working in the television industry, Mike said he would be searching for the perfect hiking trails in North America.

Mike works with the Better Business Bureau, with the Integrity Selection Committee and many fund raisers for the UNFC College Fund. He's also a member of the Columbus Association of Black Journalists. He is also a board member of the King Arts Complex.



# *Keynote Speaker*

## *Leslie H. Wexner*



**Leslie H. Wexner**, founder of L Brands, started the company in Columbus, Ohio, in 1963 with one store and first-year sales of \$160,000. Today, total sales for L Brands businesses exceed \$12 billion.

Mr. Wexner serves as Chairman and CEO of L Brands, a global leader in lingerie, fragrance and beauty, which includes Victoria's Secret, PINK, Bath & Body Works, White Barn Candle Co., La Senza and Henri Bendel. The company's products are available in more than 3,800 stores around the world.

Mr. Wexner has a profound interest in the development of tomorrow's leaders through the works of Harvard University's Center for Public Leadership; the Wexner Foundation; and The Ohio State University. His areas of community interest include The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center; the Columbus Partnership;

Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University; Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus; and the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, Columbus.

Mr. Wexner has received the Alexis de Tocqueville Society Award of the United Way of America, Woodrow Wilson Award for Citizenship, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, Knight of the Italian Republic and the American Jewish Committee Herbert H. Lehman Centennial Leadership Award. In 2015 he was named to Harvard Business Review's Top 100 Best Performing CEOs; he was ranked at #11.

Mr. Wexner is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; chairman of The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center Board; chairman of the advisory council for the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard University; member of the Royal Shakespeare Company International Council; and chairman of the Columbus Partnership. He is also a founding member and the first chair of The Ohio State University Foundation.

Mr. Wexner holds a B.S. degree in Business Administration from The Ohio State University and honorary degrees from Brandeis University; Hebrew Union College; Hofstra University; Marietta College; the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; University of Tel Aviv; and Yeshiva University. Mr. Wexner was inaugurated by Harvard University into the Society of John Harvard Fellows, and serves as a visiting lecturer at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Mr. Wexner and his wife, Abigail, are the parents of four children.

**MEET THE 2017  
OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS  
HALL OF FAME  
INDUCTEES**

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL GILBERT H. JONES (RET.)**

**CHIEF LAWRENCE HARPER**

**MOSES FLEETWOOD WALKER**

**THE MARCHING MOTHERS & CHILDREN  
OF THE 1954 HILLSBORO FIGHT FOR INTEGRATION**

# LT. COL. GILBERT H. JONES (RET.)



Born in Columbus, **Gilbert H. Jones** began his life of service at a young age, enlisting in the United State Air Force after his graduation from Columbus Central High School in 1961. Jones served as an air policeman and left the Air Force as an Airman Second Class. The young Jones wanted to continue his service and looked to the Ohio State Highway Patrol. After completing the rigorous Highway Patrol Academy training, Jones graduated as a member of the 69th academy class in February 1966.

Indeed, in the early 1960's, the State Highway Patrol was not the most welcoming place for an African American. Jones was only the second African American officer to graduate from the Academy, more than ten years after the first black patrolman (Louis D. Sharp) broke the color barrier in 1955. When he became an officer, Jones was the only minority out of all 850 patrolmen.

In spite of the challenges of being a minority officer in that era, Jones became Sergeant of the London, OH post in 1973, becoming the first minority Ohio State Highway Patrol officer to be promoted to a supervisory position. His leadership style earned him the respect of his peers and those

under his command. He continued trailblazing through the ranks, eventually becoming the first minority to be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel (Lt. Col.), as second in command of one of the most elite police organizations in the country.

During his time with the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lt. Col. Jones actively mentored numerous officers, regardless of race or gender, providing them with the guidance and direction needed to be successful. He was also a staunch advocate of ensuring fairness and correctness. One of his more notable accomplishments was as a Captain when he was assigned to lead the newly formed Recruitment and Minority Relations Section. Through his diligent efforts, the Ohio State Highway Patrol's percentage minority representation eventually exceeded that of the state of Ohio, including one year in which 40% of graduates represented minority groups. The recruitment plan that Lt. Col. Jones developed is still in use today.

As Major, Jones was assigned as Academy Commandant. In that role, he was responsible for the training and development of six classes of new Highway Patrol recruits. Jones was also instrumental in establishing the Ohio chapter of the National Central State Troopers Coalition, a minority police organization created to support minorities in law enforcement. His active leadership inspired the membership to rename the Ohio chapter, the Gilbert H. Jones Chapter.

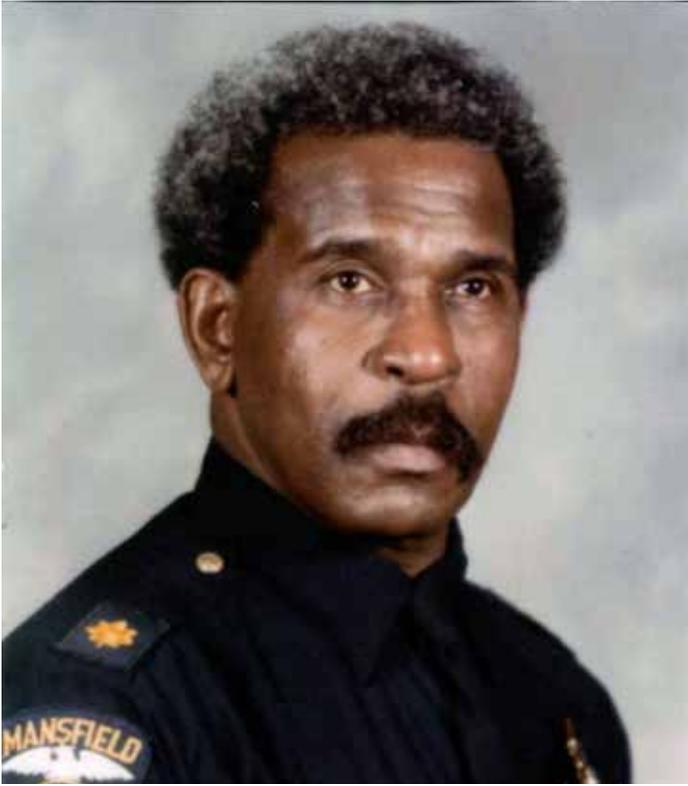
Lt. Col. Jones also recognized the importance of serving the community and volunteered countless hours promoting safety. He played an important role in the success of "Project Lighthouse." This program was designed to reduce violence against children and families in central Ohio by providing youth activities, tutoring, counseling and education programs relating to gangs and crime. He was actively involved with the Diversified Community Services Inc., a non-profit organization that provided residential and human services for individuals and families with physical and mental disabilities. He has also served as a Trustee and member of the Board of Directors for Syntaxis residential care for troubled youths.

On August 30, 1997, Lt. Col. Gilbert H. Jones retired from the Ohio State Patrol after 31 years of service. He held the distinction of being one of only two African American highway patrol/state police officers in the nation holding the rank of Lieutenant Colonel at that time.

However, Lt. Col. Jones was still not done serving his community. In 1998, the late Franklin County Sheriff Jim Kames recruited Lt. Col. Jones to be his Chief Deputy. In that role, he was the first and only African American to serve as Chief of the patrol division of the Franklin County Sheriff's office. Lt. Col. Jones quickly garnered respect across the ranks of the Sheriff's Office and after 15 more years of dedicated service he retired in February 2014.

Gilbert H. Jones' love of humanity fueled his desire to serve. He championed civil rights in the Ohio State Highway Patrol in an era of non-inclusiveness, ensuring equal opportunity for all. Lt. Col. Jones went beyond breaking the color barrier, and carved a pathway for the future advancement of minority officers. Even in retirement, he still actively mentors and supports officers to help them reach their own great potential.

# CHIEF LAWRENCE HARPER



**Lawrence Harper** was born in 1926 in Mansfield, OH and would remain there for most of his long and trailblazing career. Nicknamed “Bunker,” Harper left Mansfield Senior High School at age 18 to join the marines on D-Day, making him one of the first black men to enter the Marine Corps in World War II. Harper would finish high school in 1947, after serving in the 12th Ammunition Company of the 6th Marine Division for two years. As a Marine, Harper served in the South Pacific and in China, and took part in the invasion of Okinawa. He earned several medals in his relatively short time in military service, including the Combat Action Ribbon, a Presidential Unit Citation, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, the WWII Victory Medal and a China Cruise Medal.

Shortly after returning to Mansfield and graduating from high school, Lawrence Harper joined the then 36-officer police department as Mansfield’s first black police officer. “I saw that there were no blacks on the (police) force, and I thought, “That job is waiting for me,” Harper said, according to a 2001 Mansfield News Journal article.

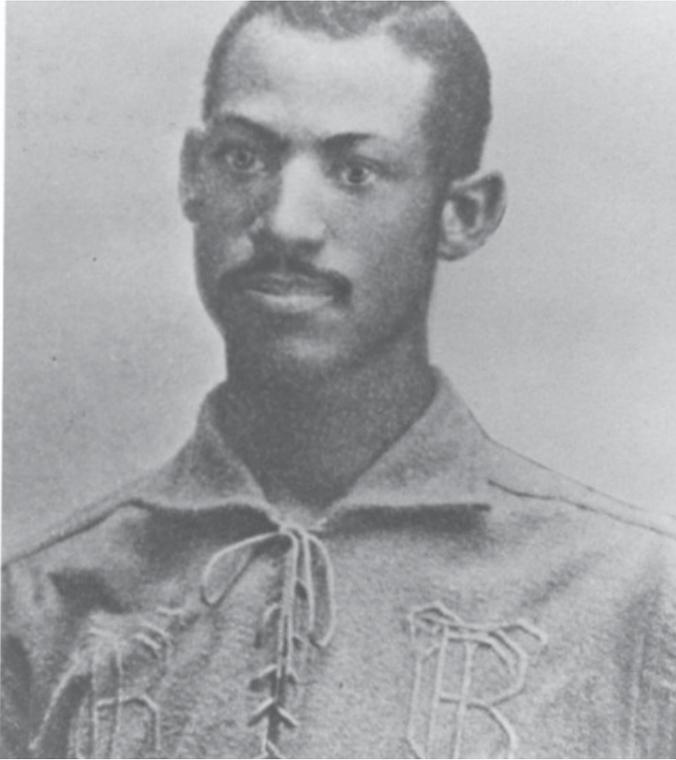
As an officer in the early 1950s, Harper made the city’s first drug arrest, stopping a man who was carrying a bag of marijuana. He advanced through the police ranks over the next twenty years, promoted to Sergeant in 1966, to Lieutenant in 1967, to Captain in 1973 and to Major in 1978, serving as second in command to the Chief at the time. After 41 years in the Mansfield Police Department, Harper was appointed as the first black police chief in Mansfield at the age of 63 and would retire as the department’s longest-serving police officer and longest-serving police chief. After retiring from the Mansfield Police Department in 2002, Harper continued serving the community as bailiff in the Richland County Probate Court and Juvenile Court.

Harper’s advancement was not without challenges and discrimination. Harper’s promotion to Major followed a lawsuit against the city, contesting the rating he was given on a promotion exam. The court finally found that the city bypassed its own evaluation system in deciding who to promote. As Major, Harper had to sue again, this time for pay discrimination. As second in command he was still receiving lower pay than Captains subordinate to him. Harper won his initial claim and just three weeks before his swearing-in as Chief, Mansfield City Council approved a settlement in late 1980 allowing a \$19,000 payment and higher annual salary.

In spite of his need to fight civil rights battles in court, Harper had no ill will with other members of the police force. He was known as a great communicator and was highly respected. In September 1999, Harper was inducted into the National Criminal Justice Honor Society at Ashland University, where he earned a degree in criminal justice with a sociology minor in May 2000. He also earned an associate’s degree in law enforcement from North Central Technical College in 1985. Ocie Hill Neighborhood Center’s gymnasium was renamed the L.E. Harper Gymnasium in his honor in August 1998.

Lawrence Harper died at age 90 in December 2016. City Councilman Butch Jefferson said of Harper, “To me, he was an icon. He broke down barriers and he did an excellent job once he got in. He carried himself well once he was in a position of authority, and he handled those who were below him well. He never carried himself like he was above anybody. He was a good man.”

# MOSES FLEETWOOD WALKER



**Moses Fleetwood Walker** was born in 1857 - six years before the Emancipation Proclamation took effect - in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio at a station along the Underground Railroad. Both his mother and father were biracial and were dedicated to the abolitionist movement. Walker's father, a physician and minister, instilled in his children the belief that they could achieve great things.

Moses Fleetwood Walker began his prominence in Baseball as a player when he was a student at Oberlin College. Indeed, Walker and his brother, Weldy Wilberforce Walker, were so impressive they were offered a transfer to play for the University of Michigan. The brothers took the offer and moved to Michigan, where Moses Fleetwood Walker would study law and continue his early baseball career.

Walker left the University of Michigan before earning his law degree to play professional baseball for Toledo's first professional team, the Toledo Blue Stockings, in 1883. However, while he was welcomed to Toledo by that team's leadership, other teams were not as willing to include a black man. An Illinois team

proposed a motion that only white men could play in the league. Debate followed, and Walker's reputation as an intelligent and respected man was ultimately the reason why a race rule was not instituted at that time. As a result, Moses Fleetwood Walker became the first African American man to play professional baseball, and his brother Weldy became the second.

Being officially permitted to play professional baseball in the 1880's did not make it any easier to endure the racism of that time, however. Throughout his career, Walker faced open prejudice and bigotry. Before he moved to Michigan, Walker was refused a spot on his team's lineup in a Louisville game because the Kentucky team objected to playing with a black man. In his professional career, Walker faced jeers and racist sentiments from opposing teams, fans, and even his own teammates. Before one game in Cincinnati, team leaders were warned that a mob of as many as 75 men would attack Walker if he was placed on the lineup. In spite of these threats and insults and troublesome injuries, Walker continued to play baseball professionally until 1888. He was the last African American player to play professionally in an integrated league until Jackie Robinson played in the 1940's.

After his baseball career ended, Moses Fleetwood Walker continued to use his other talents, completing his law degree and becoming an inventor, journalist, author, hotelier, and entrepreneur. He continued to face challenges and his later life included violence and crime. Walker died in 1924, at age 66, however his trailblazing spirit and ability to face adversity makes him an important part of history.



# THE MARCHING MOTHERS & CHILDREN OF THE 1954 HILLSBORO FIGHT FOR INTEGRATION

Della Blakey	Doris Cumberland	Marva Curtis Hurston	Jeannie Speech Williams	Carolyn Steward Goins	Mary Williams Steward
David Butch Johnson	John Cumberland, Jr.	Glen Dent	Alberta Jewett	Virginia Steward Harewood	Peggy Williams Hudson
Glea Clemons	Zella Cumberland	Lynn Dent	Charles Johnson	Elsie Steward Young	Sallie Williams
Roxie Clemons	Zora Cumberland	William Dent	Annabell Johnson Smith	Delbert Thomas	Diane Zimmerman
Sarah Alice Clemons	Myra Cumberland Phillips	Selicka Dent	Rosa Kilgore	Harold Joe Thomas	Joanne Zimmerman
Rosemary Clemons Cumberland	Francis Curtis	Glenna Dent Hennison	Debbie Rollins	Maxine Thomas	Nellie Zimmerman
Gertrude Clemons Hudson	John Curtis	Alberta Goins	Norma Rollins	Brenda Thomas Coleman	
Dorothy Clemons Ford	Imogene Curtis	Lewis Goins	Minnie Speech	Winnie Thomas Cumberland	
Joyce Clemons Kittrell	Lawrence Curtis	Patricia Goins Williams	Ralph Steward	Howard Williams	
Dellia Cumberland	Lee Curtis	Rev. Michael Hudson	Evelyn Steward Bostie	Teresa Williams	



In 1954, despite the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Hillsboro, Ohio had segregated elementary schools. The city had two all-white elementary schools, Webster and Washington, and one all-black elementary school, Lincoln. Lincoln had been built in 1870 and was in poor condition while the other schools buildings were newer and in better shape.

A group of African American mothers tried to enroll their children into the all-white elementary school but were denied due to “overcrowding,” forcing them to remain at the dilapidated Lincoln School.

In an act of frustration and attempt to force the hand of the school district, a respected white county engineer named Phillip Partridge set fire to the Lincoln school on Independence Day. Officials arrested a young black boy for the arson, but Partridge confessed and would serve nine months in prison. In spite of the arson, rather than close the school, the

district made \$4,000 in repairs and ordered the black children to remain there.

The city’s reaction to the arson provided evidence for a legal case and attracted the attention of Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP who sent Constance Baker Motley to Hillsboro to help the mothers and their children with their legal battle.

Under the leadership of activist Imogene Curtis, this group of mothers began a daily “march” with their children to the Webster School, only to be turned away at the door. This went on every weekday for two years. Dozens of black families pulled their children out of Lincoln School and relied on Quaker women from neighboring communities to come and homeschool the children.

Crosses were burned, mothers who worked in white homes had their jobs threatened, yet the mothers and their children persevered. Eventually the legal battle ended in the Supreme Court with a victory for the “marching mothers” and school integration. In the fall of 1956, Hillsboro elementary schools opened for the first time as integrated schools.

This case was the first northern challenge of the *Brown* decision and the first to reach the Supreme Court. The mothers’ victory not only ended segregation in Hillsboro, but this case was used to end segregation in many other US cities, including Cleveland and Boston.

“[T]he strength, determination and endurance of the families of Hillsboro in the mid-1950s to stand up for their rights and for better futures for their children is remarkable and inspiring. The determined, but peaceful, non-violent action sustained over a two-year period is an early example of the best of the Civil Rights Movement,” said Daniel Hurley, President of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

# 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:

Shannon Morgan and Mike Gonsiorowski, PNC Bank

Wendy Pellingier and Anita Sipes, Honda of America Mfg., Inc.

Dr. Michael Bernstein and Matthew Boaz, Wright State University

The Ohio State Highway Patrol Honor Guard

The Scholars from Columbus Gifted Academy

The Fort Hayes Metropolitan Singers

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

United Way of Central Ohio





**“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.”**

**- Eleanor Roosevelt**



# The Ohio Civil Rights Commission



*Commissioners:* Leonard Hubert, *Chair* Lori Barreras William Patmon, III Madhu Singh Juan P. Cespedes



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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## **Columbus Regional Office**

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## **Cincinnati- Satellite Office**

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## **Dayton Regional Office**

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## **Cleveland Regional Office**

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## **Toledo Regional Office**

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