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G. Michael Payton  
*Executive Director*



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Lori  
Barreras  
*Chair*

Juan P.  
Cespedes

William  
Patmon, III

Dr. Carolyn  
Peters

Madhu K.  
Singh



# OHIO *Civil Rights* HALL OF FAME

**DR. ERROL D. ALEXANDER**  
**DR. JOSEPH CARTER CORBIN**  
**JO ANN DAVIDSON**  
**JAMES OBERGEFELL**  
**RENEE POWELL**  
**WILLIAM POWELL**

and the  
**OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD**

presented to  
**DONNA AND LARRY JAMES**

OCTOBER 4, 2018  
10:00 A.M.

OHIO STATEHOUSE ATRIUM  
COLUMBUS, OHIO

**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, SR.\*  
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 & MERRI GAITHER SMITH  
LOUIS STOKES\*

### 2016

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

### 2017

CHIEF LAWRENCE HARPER\*  
LT. COL. GILBERT H. JONES (RET.)  
MOSES FLEETWOOD WALKER\*  
THE MARCHING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN  
OF THE 1954 HILLSBORO FIGHT FOR INTEGRATION

\* asterisk denotes inductees who are deceased



TENTH ANNUAL  
**HALL OF FAME**  
2018

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 eliminate barriers to equal opportunity in this great state as well as foster cultural awareness and understanding for a more just society.

# KNOW

you're making our  
community a better  
place.



Congratulations to the 2018 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame inductees on receiving this great award. PNC is proud to honor you for all you've achieved.

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



# From the Commission



Lori Barreras, Chair



G. Michael Payton,  
Executive Director



Juan P. Cespedes

October 4, 2018

Welcome to Ohio's Tenth Annual Civil Rights Hall of Fame ceremony. The Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC), PNC, Honda of America Manufacturing, and Wright State University are very proud and honored to host this extraordinary event. We are committed to preserving the rich civil rights heritage in our state while also promoting equal opportunity and goodwill by holding an event that commemorates outstanding accomplishments of citizens.

This year's ceremony marks our tenth hall of fame. As we look back, we are privileged for having the opportunity to recognize and celebrate the productive lives of so many great persons, some of whom are no longer with us. The Hall of Fame ceremony has become one of the OCRC's premier annual events, but the events would not be possible without the strong and sustained support of our sponsors.



William Patmon, III

This year's ceremony also includes the inaugural presentation of the OCRC's Community Spirit Award which will be awarded to Ohioans who embody leadership, achievement, and citizenship in advancing civil rights, equality, and diversity in Ohio. We congratulate our 2018 award winners for their exemplary effort in making our community a better place to live.

On behalf of Ohio's citizens, we extend our appreciation and admiration to the nominees who have been selected for induction into the Ohio 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 special event and Ohio's strong public policy against discrimination.

Sincerely,



Dr. Carolyn Peters

Lori Barreras  
Chair

Juan P. Cespedes  
Commissioner

William Patmon, III  
Commissioner



Madhu K. Singh

G. Michael Payton  
Executive Director

Dr. Carolyn Peters  
Commissioner

Madhu K. Singh  
Commissioner

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME  
OCTOBER 4, 2018



**Honda Congratulates the 2018  
Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame Inductees:**

Dr. Errol Alexander

Dr. Joseph Carter Corbin

Speaker Jo Ann Davidson

James Obergefell

Renee Powell

William Powell

**HONDA**  
The Power of Dreams

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

# *From the Governor*

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**JOHN R. KASICH  
GOVERNOR**

October 4, 2018

Greetings,

On behalf of the State of Ohio, I extend my congratulations to Chair Lori Barreras and the Ohio Civil Rights Commission as you host the 10<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".

John R. Kasich  
Governor





# Congratulations to the **Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame 2018 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.



# *From the Sponsors*

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Dear Friends:

On behalf of The PNC Financial Services Group, I would like to congratulate the 2018 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 2018 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 2018 Ohio Civil Rights  
Hall of Fame Inductees.



# MANDELA

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SEPTEMBER 1, 2018 - JANUARY 1, 2019

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FRANCIE PEPPER



THE JOHN A. SCHROTH  
FAMILY CHARITABLE TRUST,  
PNC BANK, TRUSTEE

# *From the Sponsors*

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**HONDA**

**Honda of America Mfg., Inc.**  
Honda Operations Office  
24000 Honda Parkway  
Marysville, OH 43040

October 4, 2018

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

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.

On behalf of Honda and our 15,000 associates throughout Ohio, I am pleased to acknowledge and celebrate the inspiring achievements of the 2018 inductees to the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Each honoree, through their passion and commitment, has made a lasting, positive impact upon communities in Ohio and beyond.

Honda 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,



Thomas E. Shoupe  
Executive Vice President  
Honda of America Mfg., Inc.



# From the Sponsors

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**Cheryl B. Schrader, Ph.D.**  
President  
260 University Hall  
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.  
Dayton, Ohio 45435-0001

(937) 775-2312  
cheryl.b.schrader@wright.edu

Wright State University often refers to its students as Pioneers of Potential. They are people who can accomplish truly great things, given a fair opportunity. We welcome the challenge of helping them reach that potential.

This year's Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame class personifies that same pioneering spirit. These six people, through their advocacy and quest for equality, paved the way for a better life for future generations.

Wright State is proud to join PNC and Honda Manufacturing of America to co-sponsor the 10<sup>th</sup> Civil Rights Hall of Fame class, recognizing Ohio men and women who have made significant contributions to the civil rights movement.

It is a great honor for our university to be associated with the Civil Rights Hall of Fame and those recognized by it. We hope to prove deserving of that association by continuing to demonstrate every day our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Congratulations to the inductees and their families and friends.

Warmest regards,

*Cheryl B. Schrader*

Cheryl B. Schrader, Ph.D.



OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME  
OCTOBER 4, 2018

# From the Exhibit Partners



October 4, 2018

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 2018 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame inductees and their families.

The 2018 Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame inductees are heroes – heroes who used their voices to affect real change – each in their own unique way. Their courage, cooperation, and perseverance have 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 in Ohio.

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center is proud to partner with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. 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.

We are thankful today and honor the struggle, determination, and heroism of Dr. Errol Alexander, Dr. Joseph Carter Corbin, Speaker Jo Ann Davidson, James Obergefell, Renee Powell, and William Powell. Thank you for standing up, speaking out, and making change possible.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dion Brown'.

Dion Brown  
President & COO, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rev. Damon Lynch, Jr.'.

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

# *Mistress of Ceremonies*

## *Angela Pace*



**Angela Pace** cares about the community. As a TV journalist, she used her visibility for the benefit of many important causes. As a resident, she has an extensive record of volunteerism and community involvement.

Angela is the Director of Community Affairs for WBNS-10TV, serving as a liaison between WBNS and the Central Ohio community. She was raised and schooled in Columbus (Capital University and Columbus Public Schools). She has worked in central Ohio all her life. These kinds of roots give rise to her unflagging devotion to the area in which she grew up.

She previously worked at WCMH-TV for 13 years. For five of those years she anchored the weekday 6PM, 7PM and 11PM newscasts. During her career at WCMH-TV, she worked first as a floor director (while still in college), and later as a reporter. Angela also worked at WCLT Radio in Newark, where she was a news director as well as a reporter.

Her list of accomplishments and honors reflect her tireless commitment to the community. She currently serves on the board of directors for the Lincoln Theater Association, the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council. Her past board involvement includes: Capital University trustees; Capital University Alumni Association; Mid-Ohio Food Bank and more. Her work with the United Negro College Fund included hosting their annual telethon from 1987 to 1991 and serving as grand marshal for their walk-a-thon for four years.

Angela has myriad awards and honors, including the 1994 Women of Achievement Award from the YWCA of Central Ohio, the 1992 Governor's Award for Journalism and Community Service, the Columbus Education Association's Martin Luther King Junior Humanitarian Award, any numerous others. In 2011, the Angela was inducted into the NATAS Ohio Valley Silver Circle for broadcasters with more than 25 years in the industry. Angela has won five Emmys and a regional Telly award. In January 2012, she was named one of the Top 50 Icons in Columbus by the Columbus Bicentennial Guide.



# *Keynote Speaker*

## *Judge Algenon L. Marbley*



The Honorable **Judge Algenon L. Marbley** is U.S. District Court judge for the Southern District of Ohio. He was appointed in 1997 after being recommended to President Clinton by U.S. Senator John Glenn. Prior to his judicial appointment, he partnered with the Columbus law firm of Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease where he specialized in civil and business litigation, giving him seventeen years of litigation experience. Before his partnership with Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease, Judge Marbley worked for the Chicago law firm of Montgomery & Holland, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as an Assistant General Counsel.

Judge Marbley graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1976 and earned a law degree from Northwestern University in 1979. He also holds an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Capital University.

Marbley currently serves as a trial advocacy instructor at both Harvard University and The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. He previously taught at Capital University and Northeastern Illinois University.

In addition to his educational and professional accomplishments, Judge Marbley has acquired many professional affiliations. These include the Columbus Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the American Bar Association, and the John Mercer Langston Law Club.

Judge Marbley is not only a distinguished jurist, but also a dedicated civil servant. He has served on many community Boards, including the Nationwide Children's Hospital Board of Trustees, The Ohio State University Board of Trustees, the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Association of Franklin County Board, The African-American Leadership Academy Board of Directors, and many more.



# Performers

## Harmony Project

**Harmony Project** was founded in 2009 by David Brown. It began with 93 members who, within roughly two months of its creation, sold out Columbus' Lincoln theatre, collected 1,500 toys for needy kids and raised \$45,000 for the After School All Stars program. A combination of people from various backgrounds who had never sung publicly, and professionally-trained vocalists joined together to create what Brown describes as “the sound of the community, if we all started singing together.”



Harmony Project sings with all members of the community and all walks of life: wealthy businessmen and women, students, adults with disabilities, veterans, men and women who have overcome homelessness and more. Community service is an integral part of the group and since 2009, thousands of people have participated through singing, community garden restoration, neighborhood cleanups, tree planting, public art mural installations, playground builds, or serving meals. As a collective, they show individual community members a world beyond the one they know, through multiple social investment opportunities.

Harmony Project Choir is now 200 voices strong, sells out the 2,779-seat Ohio Theatre and has opened for Whoopi Goldberg and Natalie Cole. In January 2016, the Ohio Arts Council announced that Harmony Project was one of nine recipients statewide of the Governor's Award for the Arts in Ohio - two months after receiving a \$25,000 Columbus Performing Arts Prize from the Columbus Foundation's Arts Innovation Fund. Even with huge growth and recognition, Harmony Project stays true to its mission of artistic passion and social purpose with the vision of many people serving as one community.

In Harmony Project's weekly **Inside/Out Choir** program, they work with the Ohio Reformatory for Women Tapestry Program to help carry voices across the world so that the inmates can serve a purpose while serving a sentence. The Tapestry Program, established in 1991, is a Therapeutic Community (TC) located in Marysville, Ohio. The mission is to assist alcohol and drug dependent women with their recovery, and to reinforce positive behavioral and social change. In addition to performances and appearances in Columbus, the Inside/Out Choir participants Skype with terminally ill children at Sunflower House—a hospice for children in Bloemfontein, South Africa. As women succeed in the program, recidivism declines and the community at large become safer and stronger.

**MEET THE 2018  
OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS  
HALL OF FAME  
INDUCTEES**

**DR. ERROL D. ALEXANDER**

**DR. JOSEPH CARTER CORBIN**

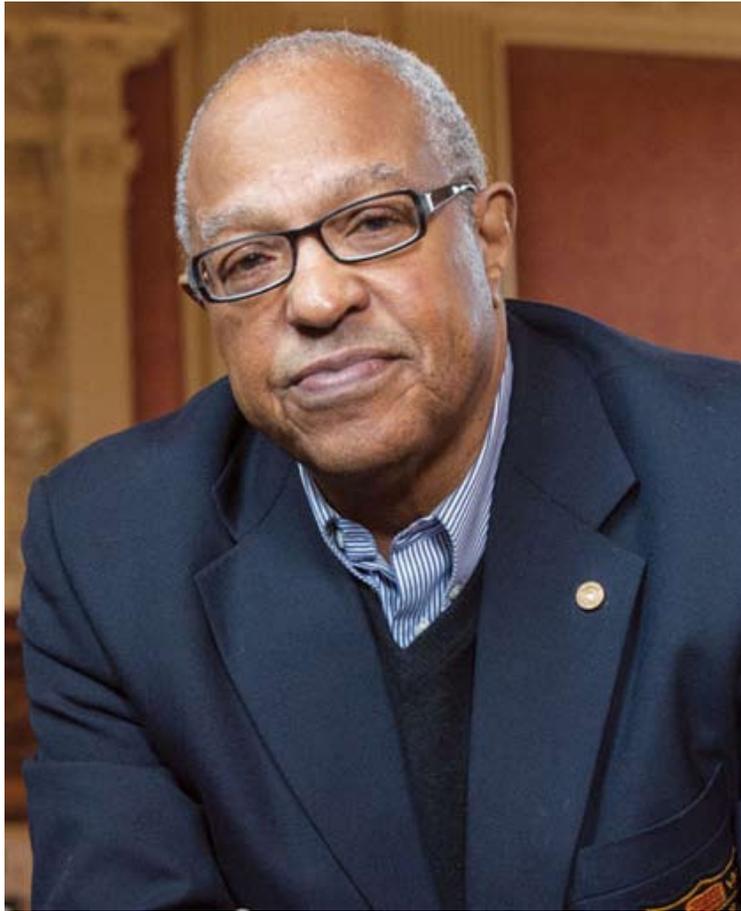
**JO ANN DAVIDSON**

**JAMES OBERGEFELL**

**RENEE POWELL**

**WILLIAM POWELL**

# DR. ERROL D. ALEXANDER



**Dr. Errol D. Alexander** was born in 1941 in Sandusky, Ohio and committed his life and career to serving and empowering individuals, as well as fighting for civil rights. As a young man, Dr. Alexander became active in civil rights at age 14, writing letters to his local newspaper expressing rage about discrimination that resulted in the murder of Emmet Till and segregation that led to the Brown vs. Board of Education decision.

In his early career, Dr. Alexander served as a local NAACP president and used his position as a union representative to advocate for greater diversity and inclusion at local Sandusky workplaces. He pushed for local companies to hire and treat all employees and customers fairly, regardless of race, and his efforts led to the desegregation of employees' shower and lunch areas at several major companies. As local NAACP president, Dr. Alexander was chosen to be the regional coordinator for the 1963 March on Washington. In that role, he helped bring

Ohioans to see Dr. Martin Luther King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech.

Dr. Alexander's work in Ohio factories also led him to work as a technician for Bendix Aerospace System as the only African American on a team working on the NASA "Moon Shot" program. Later in life, Dr. Alexander discovered a passion for business and operations. He travelled to Scotland to attend the University of Strathclyde for his Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree and eventually completed a Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Glasgow in 1990. Shortly after, he became Dean of the MBA program at the prestigious University of Stirling. As a professor, he inspired and encouraged many young individuals to fight for the betterment of others and due to his accomplishments in the United Kingdom, Dr. Alexander was elected a member of the renowned Royal Society for the Arts.

Throughout his life and extraordinary achievements, Dr. Alexander remained focused on the African American community. He has devoted his time to supporting, counseling, and mentoring young African American men and has engaged in civic and philanthropic work, serving on boards for organizations like United Way, Rotary International, Hospice, and others. In his more recent pursuits, Dr. Alexander has concentrated on painting and writing, including four books.



# DR. JOSEPH CARTER CORBIN



**Dr. Joseph Carter Corbin** (1833-1911) was born March 26, 1833 in Chillicothe, Ohio and was the son of former slaves, William and Susan Corbin, from Virginia. In 1850, he entered Ohio University at Athens as a sophomore and graduated in 1853, the third African American to attend Ohio University and the second to complete a bachelor's degree. He would use his college degree to empower and establish a pathway for other African Americans to achieve higher education.

In the years following his graduation from Ohio University, he served two terms as an elected trustee of the Cincinnati Colored School Board. Dr. Corbin was editor and co-publisher of the Colored Citizen Newspaper of Cincinnati from 1863-1869, when exercise of free speech by African Americans was difficult and dangerous.

During Reconstruction of the South following the Civil War, Dr. Corbin migrated to Little Rock, Arkansas to make his mark and spread higher education. Shortly after arriving in Arkansas, he was elected State

Superintendent of Public Education. As Superintendent, he served as President of the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas Industrial University (now the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville). In this role, he helped lay the foundation for a branch of the University at Pine Bluff for the education of African American teachers.

Dr. Corbin opened Branch Normal College (now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff) in 1875 and served the next 27 years as its President. Under Dr. Corbin's leadership, the college graduated the first college educated African American in Arkansas. The school has operated for more than 140 years and is a land grant Historically Black College/University. Dr. Corbin died January 9, 1911 in Pine Bluff and was buried in Forest Park, Illinois.

Joseph Carter Corbin is known as the "father of higher education for African Americans in Arkansas," but his work had national impact. During the 2013 dedication of the Corbin Memorial Headstone, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown said of Dr. Corbin, "[a]s the founder and president of the first African American institution of higher education in Arkansas, Dr. Corbin broke barriers and laid the foundation for future educational and racial reforms." His advancement of education as a civil right for freed slaves and their descendants was not without personal sacrifice, political opposition, discrimination, and racism.

Dr. Corbin has been honored in his native Ohio with a historical marker at Ohio University - Chillicothe. Nominator Dr. Gladys Turner Finney said, "Professor Corbin used his education to change the world by making higher education available to former slaves and their descendants. His unselfish devotion to educating others still remains, is immortal, and magnifies his birthplace, native state and alma mater."

# JO ANN DAVIDSON



**Jo Ann Davidson** was born in Findlay, Ohio in 1927 and later moved to Reynoldsburg where she would start her political career. Her first foray into politics was a run for the office of Reynoldsburg City Council in 1965, before any woman had been elected to that position. Although she did not win her initial race, she ran again in the next election cycle and was successful. Davidson went on to serve 10 years as a member of the city council and served as Chair of its finance committee.

In 1980, Davidson was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives, and in 1995 she was elected by her peers to serve as the first (and, to date, only) female Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives. During her time as Speaker from 1995-2000, Davidson guided many legislative initiatives through the Ohio General Assembly and was known for bridging the gaps between the majority and minority parties. Inclusiveness was a priority for Speaker Davidson and her nominator, U.S. Representative Joyce Beatty, wrote “she was a wonderful example of bridge building and overcoming partisanship in

favor of progress.” Her leadership resulted in changes to legislative rules to improve fairness, guarantee more minority party participation, allow both parties the right to offer amendments on the House floor for debate and a vote, and make it easier to report a bill out of committee.

Throughout her life, Speaker Davidson has been a tireless advocate for the advancement of gender equality in leadership. In 2000, at the end of her tenure as Speaker, Davidson committed to reaching back to other women by establishing The Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute. The Institute’s goal is to prepare more women to assume prominent roles in policy making professions and elected or appointed positions. To date, 336 women have graduated from the Institute and learned leadership skills and how to have the greatest impact in business, government and politics.

Speaker Davidson continues her work as a public servant even today. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the University of Findlay and Franklin University and is a member of The Ohio State University Board of Trustees. She served as Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee from 2005-2009 and is currently Vice-Chair for the Ohio Casino Control Commission. She also founded JAD and Associates, a consulting firm.



# JAMES OBERGEFELL



Born in Sandusky, **James (Jim) Obergefell** did not plan to become a well-known gay activist, but when it came to the right to marry the love of his life, John Arthur, he did everything he could for their love to be legally recognized. Arthur and Obergefell lived a successful life together in Cincinnati and surrounded themselves with supportive family and friends.

After 20 years as a couple, their lives changed when John Arthur was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Obergefell took on the role of caregiver for Arthur and during this time the couple decided to do everything they could to be legally married. With the help of friends and family, the couple raised a total of \$13,000 to hire a medical plane to transport them to the tarmac of the Baltimore-Washington airport. On that tarmac on July 11, 2015, John Arthur and Jim Obergefell legally married under Maryland law.

Shortly after their marriage ceremony, Obergefell and Arthur discovered that their marriage would not be recognized on John's death certificate. Before John Arthur's death, they sued the State of Ohio for not recognizing their Maryland marriage. Obergefell's personal resolve was undeterred as the case wound its way through the federal court system up to the U.S. Supreme Court. Though his focus was keeping his husband comfortable in the last months of his life, after John Arthur's death Obergefell's energy shifted to supporting the legacy of their marriage and that of other marriages like theirs. On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States made a decision in the Obergefell v. Hodges case, which changed the legal recognition of same sex marriage and the lives of millions of LGBTQ Americans.

Obergefell's work is not done, however. Since the decision, he has volunteered his time to bring awareness to the plethora of issues that challenge LGBTQ people in the wake of achieving marriage equality, both in Ohio and across the nation. He inspires audiences, authors articles, advocates at the Statehouse in Ohio and elsewhere, meets with legislators in Congress, and uses his voice to shine a spotlight on the patchwork of incomplete protections that LGBTQ people have under the law. He advocates and volunteers with LGBTQ rights groups like Equality Ohio, the Human Rights Campaign, SAGE (an organization focused on the rights of LGBTQ elders), GLSEN (an organization focused on improving the lives of LGBTQ youth in schools) and others.



# RENEE POWELL



In 1946, **Renee Powell** was born in East Canton, Ohio. Renee was raised with golf as a way of life, spending her youth around Clearview Golf Club, the first African American owned golf club in the United States. Despite coming of age in the 1950s and 1960s and experiencing segregation and unequal treatment, Powell persisted in her love and passion for golf.

In 1967, Powell became the second African American women to compete on the LPGA Tour, helping to pave the way for future African American golfers. During her early touring years, she was denied hotel rooms, forced to park in separate parking lots, excluded from events, forced to some enter restaurants through the kitchen, and denied service at other restaurants, all because of her race. Despite these indignities and injustices, Powell persevered and competed in over 250 tournaments and won the 1973 Kelly Springfield Open in Brisbane, Australia. She also helped break new ground by becoming one of the first female golfers to design her own clothing line.

Not satisfied to merely help break the color barrier in women's golf, Powell committed to reaching back. Renee has said of herself that her legacy and purpose, "is to break down barriers and open doors wide enough for others to walk through." She has turned her negative experiences from professional life into a positive conversation about civil rights, diversity, and equality. Her post-competitive career has been dedicated to diversifying and expanding golf through many programs and public speaking events.

While African Americans face far fewer barriers than they did early in her career, Powell recognizes that other groups still don't have equal access to golf. To remedy this, she expanded golfing programs at Clearview to bring golf to those underserved communities. She continues to spend time giving personal lessons to adult women with dementia and female military veterans.

Today, Renee Powell continues the legacy of her late and legendary father, William Powell, by owning and operating Clearview Golf Club. Powell also is a member on multiple boards including Northern Ohio PGA, Pro Football Hall of Fame, Rotary International, and Pathway Caring for Children.



# WILLIAM POWELL



**William Powell** (1916–2009) was born in 1916 in Greenville, Alabama. During his youth, Powell's family moved to Minerva, Ohio where he played golf and football during high school. Later, Powell attended the historical Wilberforce University where he continued playing golf. Throughout his life, he believed that golf was the best way to bridge the hatred between racial classes. To this end, his personal mission became improving equality through his love of golf.

In 1946, after serving in the United States Army Air Forces in England, Powell returned home to Ohio. Powell wanted to continue his love for golf, but due to segregationist policies in most golf clubs he was denied entry because of his race. Since there were no clubs for African Americans, Powell decided take matter into his own hands and create his own. With the help of his brother and two African American doctors, he bought a 78-acre dairy farm in East Canton, Ohio. Powell and his wife Marcella did most of the landscaping by hand and without traditional maintenance equipment in order to craft his ideal golf course.

After two years of hard work, Clearview Golf Club opened in 1948. Clearview became the first golf course in America to be integrated and African American owned. Soon, Clearview Golf Club became a symbol of racial equality. It stood as an example to Ohio and the United States that equal and integrated social and public life was possible, even within the historically elite and segregated world of golf.

In 2001, Clearview Golf Club earned a National Historic Site designation from the U.S. Department of the Interior. Before his death, Powell received the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) Distinguished Service Award, the association's highest annual honor. He was also inducted into the Northern Ohio PGA Hall of Fame, was named Person of the Year by the Ohio Golf Course Owners Association, and the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce presented the Powell family with its Community Salute Award. Even now, Clearview continues to be one of only a handful of courses in the United States that are owned and operated by African American individuals.

At 93, William Powell died, leaving a legacy of perseverance for civil rights through his response to the unjust policies of racial segregation in sports and his devotion to Clearview Golf Club. The Powell family continues William Powell's legacy by helping others through the William J. Powell Scholarship and the Clearview Legacy Foundation for Education, Preservation and Research.

# OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

## COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD

In 2018, the Commissioners of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission created a new honor for Ohioans who embody leadership, achievement, and citizenship, demonstrating these characteristics through work to advance civil rights, equality, and diversity in Ohio. Award recipients must demonstrate efforts that are above and beyond routine efforts to advance civil rights through contributions that benefit the community and include a partnership of organizations or community groups, fostering cooperation and collaboration between different entities to reach a single goal. The inaugural recipients of the Community Spirit Award are Larry and Donna James.

# DONNA & LARRY JAMES



As the managing director of Lardon & Associates and member of many boards of directors, **Donna James** is a trusted resource and advisor to leaders in the public and private sector. She has founded and led several nonprofit and community organizations, including the Center for Healthy Families and the African American Leadership Academy. Among many other awards and leadership positions, she was appointed by President Obama as chair of the National Women's Business Council and named by Black Enterprise Magazine as one of the Top 75 in Corporate America.

**Larry James** has been at the heart of the Columbus business, legal, civic, and political scene for the last thirty years. He is a respected litigator, as well as an advisor to local

and national leaders. Mr. James is a life member of the Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference, and he has served as General Counsel of the National Fraternal Order of Police since 2001. He is also co-founder of the African American Leadership Academy, a member of the Board of Trustees of Kenyon College, the founding, current president of the Lincoln Theatre, and has served sixteen years as the president of the King Arts Complex.

## I, Too, Sing America

With a mission to create a catalyst to unite, collaborate, and celebrate the Columbus black arts community through education, exposure, and expression, the **I, Too, Sing America** project is a year-long, citywide initiative to spread the riches of the Harlem Renaissance of 1918 New York City to modern day Columbus. Through this project, Columbus hosts a thrilling and accessible opportunity to appreciate the past and understand what the Harlem Renaissance can teach us about our nation today. Columbus arts organizations in cooperation with author and scholar Wil Haygood and with the support of Larry and Donna James and more than a dozen other local businesses and organizations, have committed to this opportunity to make a statement that will be heard far and wide. As described on the project's website, "just as the Harlem Renaissance was ignited in a crucible stirred by outsiders, cabaret performers, self-taught students of jazz, as well as academics, scholars and classically trained artists, I, Too, Sing America will draw from and resurrect our city's diverse community of creators, makers, artists, educators and organizations."



# Thank You

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

A special thank you to:

Ohio State Highway Patrol Honor Guard

Assistant Principal Karen E. Granger, teachers, and students of  
South Middle School

David Brown and Harmony Project

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Shannon Morgan, PNC Bank

Bobbie Trittschuh and O'Neal Saunders, Honda of America Mfg., Inc.

Matthew Boaz, Wright State University

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

United Way of Central Ohio



# The Ohio Civil Rights Commission



*Commissioners:* Lori Barreras, *Chair* Juan P. Cespedes William Patmon, III Dr. Carolyn Peters 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.

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**OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS HALL OF FAME**  
**OCTOBER 4, 2018**