

Passing of Professor Emerita Agnes Jackson

Thursday, April 9, 2020

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Dear Pitzer Community,

It is with great sadness I inform you that Professor Emerita of English and Black Studies Agnes Moreland Jackson passed away peacefully yesterday morning. She was 89.

Professor Jackson taught at Pitzer from 1969 to 1997 where she was the school's first tenure-track African American professor. She was instrumental in establishing the black studies and women's studies departments at The Claremont Colleges. Professor Jackson was a visiting lecturer at the School of Theology in Claremont when she was recruited by Professor John Rodman to advance Black Studies and to show the relevance of black contributions to literature at Pitzer College.

Professor Jackson was a renowned expert in African American studies and a community activist of quality education, ethnic group empowerment and family values. She was the recipient of the National Endowment of the Humanities grant in 1980 and served on the board of directors for the Pomona Unified School District from 1981-1989; Society for Values in Higher Education from 1985-1988; and on the nominating committee and board directors for Girl Scouts of American, Pomona from 1980-1984, 1986-88. She was also a delegate of the Modern Language Association from 1993-95. Prior to joining Pitzer, she served as a professor at Spellman College, Boston University and California State University, Los Angeles, where, in 1967, she taught the university's first course in African American literature. She earned her BA from University of Redlands, MA from University of Washington and her PhD from Columbia University. In 1997 upon her retirement, the Agnes Moreland Jackson Annual Scholarship was established in her honor. In 2006, a generous gift from alumna and former trustee Quinn Delaney '76 and her husband, Wayne Jordan, allowed Pitzer College to establish the Agnes Moreland Jackson Diversity Program Fund, which provides support for programs and activities primarily directed toward first-year students but that are open to all. The theme and content of each event is meant to advance Pitzer's core values of diversity and intercultural understanding. The fund is administered by Pitzer's Campus Life Committee, which annually reviews submitted proposals and recommendations from members of the College community and determines how to best disperse the funds. Events and programs supported by the endowment include field trips, workshops, guest presentations, conferences, films, concerts and lectures.

Agnes Jackson was married to Reverend Harold Andrew Jackson, Jr. for 56 years. Harold passed away on January 27 of this year. Professor Jackson is survived by a brother, Darius Moreland; three chosen daughters Barbara Ruth Arnwine, Esq, Dr. Lucretia Peebles and Margaret Smith; chosen son Dr. Melvin Merrill; two god-daughters Ashley(Barbee) Eddington and Nancy Norman; five grandchildren, Julian Timothy Peebles, Justin Daniel Almiri Arnwine, Gabriel Oneal Smith; three great-grandchildren, Issac Rene Marquez-Peebles, Joseph Khalil Peebles and Jacob Andre Tomas Peebles; and two great-great-grandchildren, Caden James Marquez- Peebles and Braden William Marquez-Peebles; as well as a special cousin Reverend Glen L. Jones and a host of nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

Agnes and Harold graced our campus with their warm presence far beyond her retirement. To have Agnes at a Pitzer event was special. On behalf of the entire Pitzer College community, Suzanne and I extend our condolences to Professor Jackson's family and friends.

Provida Futuri,

Melvin L. Oliver

President