

The 2013 Trailblazer Honoree: Dr. Josie Johnson

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MUL Legacy

For over 87 years, the Minneapolis Urban League has led the charge to serve the community and all those who call it home by serving families, helping people find jobs, homes and create their own pathways to opportunity. Conversely, we've been graced by the talents and services of many from within our community who've served tirelessly as champions of change. We are pleased to honor one such individual as our 2013 Trailblazer Honoree, Dr. Josie Johnson.

Dr. Josie Johnson Educator, Administrator and Civil Rights Icon

Slender, elegant, exuding southern graciousness, Dr. Josie Johnson is Minnesota's Lady of Civil Rights...and a *force* to be reckoned with.

Born in Houston, Tx., in 1930 and one of three daughters born to Judson Johnson and Josie Robinson, Johnson was introduced to the civil rights movement at an early age, collecting signatures against the poll-tax, with her father. She went on to earn a B.A. in Sociology at Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., and an M.A. and Ed.D at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Johnson has always lobbied for change, be it for fair housing and equal-opportunity employment, to youth and family development. She served as a community organizer for the Minneapolis Urban League, eventually becoming its director in 1968. She served as a legislative liaison to the Mayor of Minneapolis during the Civil Rights upheaval in 1971. Johnson's illustrious career highlights also include serving as Chief of Staff for the Lt. Governor of Colorado and working as the Campaign Manager for the Jimmy Carter Campaign in Tennessee. She was also the first African American named to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota. She later served as the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

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and a Senior Fellow for the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs. In honor of her many years of service and commitment to civil rights, the University of Minnesota created The Josie R. Johnson Human Rights and Social Justice Award in 1997.

Johnson is the proud mother of three daughters and three granddaughters. She continues to serve tirelessly for civil rights and is passionate about educating the next generation of freedom fighters. She was recently honored by the St. Paul Foundation as a 'Facing Race' Ambassador and by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, which she helped found. The Minneapolis Urban League salutes its 2013 Trailblazer Honoree, Dr. Josie Johnson.