



Lucille D. Gibbs

August 8, 1926 - October 16, 2011

Springfield-Lucille M. (Deans) Gibbs died on October 16, 2011 at Heritage Hall West in Agawam, Mass. She was 85 years old. Born in Boston, Mass. on August 8, 1926, Lucille was the daughter of Elijah Deans and Thelma (Holton) Deans Campbell. She attended Boston public schools and graduated from Westfield State Teachers College in 1948. She was, at the time, the only African-American student enrolled at the College. Lucille earned both a Masters degree (1960) and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (1978) from Springfield College.

Lucille began her distinguished career in education with the Boston public school system and moved to Springfield in 1951, teaching at several local elementary schools including William N. De Berry and Alice B. Beal. In 1969 she temporarily left the classroom to serve as interim administrator of a federal program that encouraged local elementary children to discuss racial, ethnic, and social differences and introduced them to ways of resolving conflicts. Lucille returned to teaching elementary school until 1983 when she was appointed, with tenure, to Springfield Technical Community College as an Academic Guidance Counselor. Lucille retired in 1991.

As passionate as she was about education, Lucille felt just as strongly about community service. She held many leadership positions within a wide variety of public and private organizations including Baystate Medical Center, Dunbar

Community Center, Urban League Guild, League of Women Voters, Springfield Planning Board, Springfield Education Association, Westfield State College Board of Trustees, Westfield State College Alumni Association, Westfield State Foundation, Friends of the University of Massachusetts Fine Arts Center, and Stage West. Lucille served as a mentor to many local young people through her work with the STCC Afro-American Cultural Club, YMCA, YWCA, Springfield Girls' Club Family Center, and the Girls Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts. She was also a member of Alden Baptist Church, Springfield Library and Museums Association, College Club, Springfield Garden Club and was an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

The community that Lucille loved and served for many years honored her leadership and achievements on numerous occasions. She received the James F. Hennessey Award from the Springfield branch of NAACP (2001), the Pioneer Valley Women of Distinction from the Pioneer Valley Girl Scout Council (2001), the Door Openers Award from the Black Leadership Alliance (2008), and the Living Legends Community Service Award from Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (2009).

As a two-time breast cancer survivor, Lucille volunteered her time at Baystate Medical Center's annual Ray of Hope Cancer Walkathon Survivor's booth, as well as the American Cancer Society's Reach to Recovery program.

Lucille was an enthusiastic gardener, a prolific knitter, and a competitive tennis and bridge player throughout her life.

Lucille was preceded in death by her brothers, Leroy Deans and Earl Campbell. She is survived by her husband of 59 years, Chester, and a daughter, Stephanie. She leaves beloved family in Boston, Long Island and California.

A memorial service will be held at Alden Baptist Church, 649 State Street, Springfield, on Saturday, October 29, 2011 at 11:00 am, followed by a reception at the church for family and friends. Memorial donations may be made to the Lucille Deans Gibbs Scholarship Fund, Westfield State Foundation, 333 Western Avenue, Westfield, Mass., 01086.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the staff of Heritage Hall West and Baystate Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice for the care and support received during Lucille's illness. New England Funeral and Cremation Center, LLC 25 Mill Street Springfield, MA 01108 has been entrusted with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

JC

“ I’m 64 now and Lucille was my fourth grade teacher at Tiffany’s school, which is now Alice B Beal I will never ever forget her and being one of the most kindest teachers I ever had in my life and today I decided to look and see if she was still living and saw that she had passed as students we loved you Mrs. Gibbs

James D. Caldeira - December 25, 2024 at 06:28 AM

MW

“ So sorry to hear of Mrs. Gibbs’ passing. What a testimony her life was to so many people. May she rest in peace.

Michael Wiersma - February 14, 2023 at 10:32 AM

PW

“ Sending my deepest sympathies to Mr. Gibbs and Stephanie - Lucille was a wonderful woman and a fabulous Soror. She will be greatly missed.

Pamela Westmoreland - February 14, 2023 at 10:32 AM

NL

“ With sincere sympathy to the Gibbs family at this difficult time.\r\nThe Staff at New England Funeral & Cremation Center, LCC

New England Funeral & Cremation Center, LLC - February 14, 2023 at 10:32 AM

DL

“ Dear Mr. Gibbs and Stephanie,\n\nMy mother Helen Kelly and Mrs. Gibbs were colleagues and friends during the time they both worked in the Springfield Public Schools. Stephanie and I were classmates at MacDuffie and I remember all three of you well. May your memories of your wife/mother's spirit and civic commitment to change sustain you in this time of loss. She left a wonderful legacy.\n\nTake care,\n\nDunreith

Dunreith Kelly Lowenstein - February 14, 2023 at 10:32 AM