

Joseph L. Douglas, Jr.



Obituary

Joseph Leon Douglas Jr, 82, of Silver Spring Maryland passed away on Sunday, September 13, 2015.

Joseph was born in Washington, D.C. on December 21, 1932 to Josephine B. Douglas and Joseph Leon Douglas Sr. He graduated from Dunbar High School in 1950. He attended Minor Teacher's College from 1950 to 1953, where he majored in history. From 1953 to 1957, Joseph served in the United States Air Force as a Staff Sargent. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in History from American University in 1958 and his Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard University in 1967.

Joseph had a distinguished career in public service, starting as an analyst for the National Security Agency, rising to a manager in the Senior Executive Service by the time he retired in 1989. He was the first African American to hold the position of Chief, Agency Operations Center. He received many outstanding performance awards including the NSA Meritorious Service Award. From 1972 to 1975 Joseph was granted a leave of absence to work with the D.C. Department of Human Resources and served as the Deputy Director. To compliment a fulfilling public sector career, Joseph, along with several close friends, launched an African American owned and operated travel agency in Washington DC.

After retirement, Joseph's passion for researching the Douglas family history flourished. He spent numerous hours exploring various archives in Southern Maryland, the National Archives and the Library of Congress in search of information about Frederick Douglass and his family. His research led to the discovery that Joseph was a descendent and Mr. Douglass' nephew. A very accomplished writer, Joseph's first book about Frederick Douglass' family was recognized by the Maryland Historical Society and the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society.

Joseph married Doris Helen Franks on May 1, 1954. The births of Wanda Camille, Patricia Lynn, Susan Eileen and Joseph Douglas III soon followed.

Joseph valued community service. As a young man, he was active in Lane CME Church, serving on the Youth Choir, the Junior Usher Board and the Board of Christian education. He was active in the Boy Scouts of America, PTA, YMCA and the NAACP. He was a fraternity member of the Phi Beta Sigma, Kappa Delta Pi and Phi Alpha Theta, an honor society in the field of history. He particularly enjoyed being a member of the Sigma Pi Phi - Boule fraternity, in Montgomery County Maryland in his later years. He was an active member of Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ for well over 40 years and had a special bond with the late Reverend A. Knighton Stanley. He served as a Trustee, active member on several "circles" and was a faithful volunteer for the church food pantry.

Joseph is survived by daughters Patricia (Gregory) Jenkins of Ann Arbor, Michigan and Susan Evans (Bill) of Silver Spring, MD, son Joseph L. (Sarah) Douglas III of Greensboro, NC, granddaughters Blair and Erica

Jenkins, Amanda and Caroline Thigpen, grandsons Joseph P. and Leon Douglas, Anthony Grant and Christopher Best, Jr., brothers William, Maurice, Melvin (Gertie), Charles (Valerie), and Robert (Patricia) Douglas, an aunt Delois (James) Simpson, a devoted companion, Sondra Norrell-Thomas and a loving extended family. Interment at Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, 4001 Suitland Road, Suitland Maryland.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Doris F. Douglas Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund, c/o Bethune-Cookman University, 640 Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Boulevard, Daytona, Florida.