



## THE INFORMANT

THE VOICE OF THE HISTORIC FREDERICK DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.

February 2025

www.hfdhsaainc.net

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



On behalf of the Executive Board of the Historic Frederick Douglass High School Alumni Association, Inc. I extend my sincere gratitude for your support, commitment and dedication to the Alumni Association. We

want to continue to support the students at our Alma Mater. Our goals are to sponsor events and activities for the Alumni. These activities will enhance our school's environment, perpetuate its legacy of "Pride, Dignity and Excellence", and provide a voice for the alumni and friends of Frederick Douglass High School in City and State government. Additionally, we raise revenue for scholarships and for assisting students in need. Finally, the Association focuses on providing our Alumni with social and cultural events that will immortalize the Spirit of Frederick Douglass High School.

This quarter our newsletter highlights several Black History notables that attended Frederick Douglass High school. As we embrace the legacy that each of us are a part of, let us continue to support our students to become the "history makers" of tomorrow,

Johnnie Foreman, Jr.  
Chairperson

### Black History Month 2025

During Black History Month, it should be noted that our school, established in 1833, is the second-oldest high school in the United States created for Black students. One of its remarkable early achievements was its dedication to the arts and music. The school offered classical training, rigorous standards, and community performances—including operas like "The Flying Dutchman"—at a time when most art venues were segregated.

This training inspired great musicians like Eubie Blake, a famous jazz pianist and composer and jazz vocalist and bandleader Cab Calloway. His career spanned over 65 years, first African American musician to sell one million copies of a record.

Other notable graduates of Douglass High School include Dr. Carl J. Murphy, the writer, journalist, and publisher of The Afro-American newspaper; Victorine Adams, the first Black woman to serve on the Baltimore City Council, and Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African American to serve on the United States Supreme Court. Source: <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/article/2020366>

We extend honorable mention to Hilda Chambers, the oldest FDHS alumni. Ms. Chambers is 109 years old as of the date of this printing and will be 110 in June 2025.

This month, we want to feature a member of our Class of 73, Mr. Raymond Lucas. Raymond is an IT professional, STEM educator, digital artist, mentor to youth and adults, and photographer who continues to contribute to our community and influence young people.

## Raymond Lucas , Class of 73



A husband and father to one daughter, Ray leaned on education, particularly literacy, and examples of excellence as he navigated life. He was class president of the IBM's 1977 Field Engineering graduation class and went on to

have a 32 year career with IBM and IBM companies. Ray was also a three time President of 100 Black Men of Maryland. This organization, under his leadership, mentored countless Black youth in Baltimore schools and colleges. Later, he led the Howard County Public Schools STEM after school program, exposing youth to science, technology and math through team projects and competitions. His teams often competed at the State and National level. In addition, Ray combined photography and technology to create works that have been seen throughout Maryland in numerous galleries. He has written several essays on leadership and can boast of a legacy of community contributions that continue to influence. A huge "pat on the back" is due to Raymond for his impact in the community.



Speaking of a "pat on the back," Ray closed his 1977 Field Engineering graduation with these words that still apply today:

*"We've all accomplished our first major goal and all of us deserve a big "pat on the back." While we're getting this pat on the back, we shouldn't*

*be thinking of what we have accomplished. We should be thinking of what we **are going to accomplish**. In other words, we should be setting new and higher goals. Success is not gained haphazardly. You have to make some kind of plan for your future and setting goals gives your future the guidance necessary to attain your goals."*

Definitely words that we can leave for the current FDHS students and future generations!!



## December 2024 Holiday Reception

On December 19, 2024, the HFDHSAA held its annual Holiday Reception, open to all alumni. Turnout was great, food was good, and relationships were renewed.





**Hold the date - Alumni Weekend in May 2025**

Alumni Day Convocation/Luncheon  
Alumni Social Activity  
Alumni Worship Service

**May 2-4, 2025**

## **BOOK DONATIONS**

FDHS' media specialist, Ms. Brooke Fakunmoju, extended a hearty "thank you" to our President, Kevin Jackson, for his donation of books to the school library. Teachers and students saw the titles of the books and promptly began requesting them. The support and literacy contribution has had an overwhelmingly positive response.

Other Alumni are encouraged to donate new or gently used books in good condition. The need is great and greatly appreciated.

## **Donations for Homeless/Hardship Students at Douglass**

Over the years, the Alumni Association has donated items for *homeless/hardship* Douglass students. The school provides assistance to students who require support while being mindful of their circumstances without attaching negative labels or opinions. Consequently, Ms. Owens has provided a list of what items are needed. You can continue to support this need by bringing items to the alumni office or to any of the Alumni general meetings.

- deodorant (men/women)
- soap/body wash
- toothpaste/toothbrush/mouthwash
- female hygiene products (pads/if possible, wipes)
- lotion
- female/male razors
- hats/gloves
- comb/brush
- shampoo/conditioner
- gently used shoes
- gently used warm clothing items (coats etc./especially large size XL-4X)
- socks (if possible, large & extra-large)
- notebook/notebook paper
- washcloths
- mechanical pencils
- bookbags

## **NOTICE TO ALL FELLOW ALUMNI**

As a result of the Association receiving requests to post flyers for events on our Facebook page, and, in order to assure alignment with the overall mission of the Alumni Association, a new policy for posting is in effect immediately. Any group or organization wishing to advertise an event through the Historic Frederick Douglass High School Alumni Association, Inc. must agree to contribute a percentage of their proceeds to our scholarship program. We appreciate your understanding and continued support in this matter.

All Alumni are welcome to continue to request posts for reunions and fundraisers that will benefit Douglass students. Our goal is to provide financial scholarships to students pursuing post-graduate education

**Membership Renewal Reminder**

If you have not sent in your membership dues, please take the time to renew your membership now. The Association’s fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. We encourage you to send in your dues, as well as remind your classmates to join the Alumni Association.

If additional information is required, please contact Pat Rhodes at (443) 254-0420 or pawrhodes@comcast.net. Membership dues should be sent to the Historic Frederick Douglass High School Alumni Association, Inc., P.O. Box 25151, Baltimore, Maryland 21229.

**as of Feb 11, 2025**

- Current Lifetime Members 203
- Current Golden Life Members 36
- Regular Membership (Paid) 77
- Non-Members (on file but no pymt) 664

Which number are **you** in?

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**Renovation Update**

Members of the Executive Committee were able to visit the Gwynns Falls building renovation site on February 10, 2025 to get an update on the progress. Please see the HFDHSAA Facebook page for a written summary and pictures of the work in progress.

**Upcoming Association General Meetings**

- Thursday February 20, 2025
- Thursday March 20, 2025
- Thursday April 17, 2025
- Thursday May 15, 2025

**In Memory of Alumni we lost in 2024:**

- Ismae S. Wilkes-Bowie (54)
- Peggy S. Jackson (66)
- Joan Williams (71)
- Cornelius (Rico) Curry (72)
- Angela Tilley (73)

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