

2021

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

STATE EMPLOYEE'S BLACK HISTORY  
MONTH VIRTUAL CELEBRATION



HONORING NORTH CAROLINA

# LEADERS IN HEALTH & WELLNESS

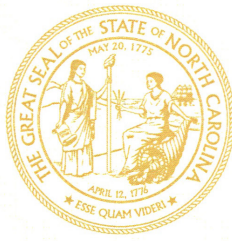




## **Black History Month 2021**



Black Health Care Professionals have made valuable contributions to North Carolina, and continue to blaze trails for future generations. The following is a small collection of health and wellness leaders who have embodied some of the highest ideals of the health care profession and are a testament to victories born from struggle. We celebrate them with great expectations for the future.



# State of North Carolina

**ROY COOPER**  
GOVERNOR

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

2021

**BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**A PROCLAMATION**

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month reminds us of our responsibility to honor the contributions and achievements of African Americans and their pivotal role in shaping our state and nation; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, first launched “Negro History Week” in 1926, and is widely regarded as the father of Black History; and

**WHEREAS**, African American activists, academics, military and political leaders, artists, and innovators have helped develop and shape North Carolina’s heritage and cultural landscape; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina is home to the largest number of four-year, degree-granting Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the nation; our ten HBCUs have a rich heritage steeped in tradition, activism, and service dating back to the foundation of Shaw University in 1865; and

**WHEREAS**, African American activists in North Carolina launched the nation’s Sit-In Movement in Greensboro and assembled the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Raleigh; in our rural Eastern and Western regions, activists led the Edenton Movement demonstrations and organized the Asheville Student Committee on Racial Equality; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans in North Carolina have long played a vital role in serving our state and nation during times of need, including through military service and through the practice of medicine; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans in North Carolina entered formal medical practice after the Civil War; in 1866, M.T. Pope, L.A. Scruggs, and John T. Williams were the first African Americans in North Carolina to graduate from medical school at Shaw University in Raleigh; in 1896 St. Agnes Hospital was established at St. Augustine’s College in Raleigh, where heroic nurses saved lives during the 1918 influenza pandemic; and

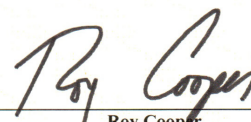
**WHEREAS**, in 2019, Swannanoa native Ernest Grant, Ph.D. became the first Black male president of the American Nurses Association, and has served as a steadfast resource and advocate for nurses treating COVID 19; Hillsborough native Kizzemekia Corbett, Ph.D. led a team of investigators with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to research and find a vaccine for COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the events of the past year have made it clear that there is an ongoing need to address racial inequality across our institutions of medicine, law enforcement, government, education, technology, and more; and

**WHEREAS**, this year’s theme, Health and Healing, aims to address the history of health disparity and promote steps that Black North Carolinians can take to preserve their health; the State of North Carolina is proud to recognize the achievements, sacrifices, and progress of our African American community, but also acknowledges the important work that remains in service of achieving true equity in our system;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim February, 2021, as “**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**” in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.



  
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Roy Cooper  
Governor

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-ninth day of January in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-one and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.

**HONOREES**

## Brigadier General Clara Leach Adams-Ender, RN

b. 1939 in Willow Spring, Johnston and Wake Counties

**The first Army nurse and first African American woman to command a major Army base.**



Brigadier General Clara Leach Adams-Ender, RN was a pioneering nurse and retired Army officer who accomplished many first in the United States Army. Raised in Willow Spring, North Carolina, Adams-Ender entered NC A&T University in 1956. She participated in the Greensboro sit-ins as a student. In need of financial support, she joined the Army Student Nurse Program to pay for her final two years of school. She graduated in 1961 with a BSN and joined the United States Army at the rank of Second Lieutenant.

Adams-Ender served in the U.S. Army Corps from 1961-1993. She continued her education as she traveled around the globe, earning an MS in Medical-Surgical Nursing from the University of Minnesota, a Master of Military Arts and Sciences from the Army Company and General Staff College in 1976 (the first woman to do so), and became the first African-American Nurse Corps officer to graduate from the United States Army War College in 1982.

Adams-Ender was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in 1987. In 1991, she was named commanding officer of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, becoming the first Army nurse and first African American woman to command a major Army base. Her military service awards include the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Army Commendation Medal.

Adams-Ender retired at Fort Belvoir in 1993. Today, she runs her own management consulting firm, Caring for People with Enthusiasm (CAPE). NC A&T University has honored her with a named professorship in nursing. Adams-Ender is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



## Captain Alvin Vincent Blount, Jr, MD

1922-2017; b. Wake County Greensboro, Guilford County

**The first African American surgeon to serve in and become chief surgeon of an Army MASH unit and litigant in *Moses v. Cone*, which desegregated hospitals in the south.**



Captain Alvin Vincent Blount Jr, MD, was a surgeon, civic leader, and civil rights activist. Born in Wake County in 1922, Blount earned a BA in Chemistry from NC A&T University in 1943 and an MD from Howard University in 1947, where he studied under Dr. Charles Drew.

Five years after completing medical school, Blount became the first Black physician to serve in a MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) unit. Blount was deployed to Korea with the 8225th MASH from Fort Bragg in 1952. While in Korea, Blount also became the first Black physician to act as chief of surgery in a MASH unit. He earned the Korean Service Medal for his service as a surgeon during the Korean War.

Blount is best known for his work as a surgeon and civil rights activist in Greensboro. The first African American to be certified by the American College of Abdominal Surgeons, Blount served as chief of surgery at L. Richardson hospital. Unfortunately, the hospital was under-resourced, and Black physicians in Greensboro began to advocate for changes that would allow them to admit patients to Moses H. Cone Hospital, which had more resources and newer equipment. Blount and other physicians sued the hospital for admitting privileges and, in 1963, won. The Supreme Court's decision in *Simkins v. Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital* effectively desegregated all hospitals in the southern United States. Blount became the first Black physician to perform surgery at Cone in 1964.

In addition to running his private practice and serving as Medical Director for the Guilford Health Care Center, Blount was a respected civic leader and philanthropist. He was also a mentor to many Black professionals, including NC Supreme Court Justice Henry Frye, and to countless NC A&T students. Dr. Blount passed away in 2017.

## Carrie Early Broadfoot, RN

1870-1945; Raleigh, Wake County; Fayetteville, Cumberland County

**Founder and first President of the North Carolina Association of Colored Graduate Nurses.**



Carrie Early Broadfoot, RN was born in Lynchburg, Virginia in 1870. She graduated from Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital in Philadelphia in 1899, then served as the hospital's superintendent from 1900-1904.

Broadfoot relocated to Raleigh to accept the position of superintendent at St. Agnes Hospital School of Nursing around 1905. She married in 1908, moved to Fayetteville, and took a ten year sabbatical from nursing.

Broadfoot hoped to offer her nursing expertise to support the war effort during World War I, but instead led efforts to address the 1918 influenza pandemic. She returned to Fayetteville to practice as a private nurse following the pandemic.

In 1921, Broadfoot and four other nurses attended the annual meeting of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses and decided to form a state chapter in North Carolina. The first meeting of the North Carolina Association of Colored Graduate Nurses was held in Winston-Salem in 1923. Broadfoot, who had also served as recording secretary for the national association, served as the state association's president from 1923-1931.

In 1923, Broadfoot was recruited to serve as Superintendent of the Negro Division of the State Sanatorium in Hoke County and as Director of the sanatorium's nursing school, the North Carolina Sanatorium Training School for Negro Nurses. She remained at the sanatorium until 1944, when the effects of a stroke forced her to move in with relatives in Roxbury, Massachusetts. Broadfoot passed away in 1945. She was inducted into the North Carolina Nursing Association's Hall of Fame in 2016.



## Maude Lee Bryant

1897-1983; Moncure, Chatham County

### Midwife and traditional birthwork advocate.



Maude Lee Bryant was a midwife from Moncure, North Carolina. She was introduced to midwifery by her mother, who was also a midwife, and began delivering babies at the age of 21. Bryant primarily delivered the children of African American women but also delivered a number of white children. She helped to bring nearly 100 local children into the world and was respected statewide as a traditional birth worker. The University of North Carolina School of Medicine released a short film about her in 1984, "Traditional Birthing: Maude Bryant," which was distributed nationally. She occasionally spoke about midwifery at medical conferences and provided some instruction on traditional birthing to students at UNC Medical School.

Bryant raised eleven children of her own and worked alongside her husband, Gade Bryant, on their family farm in Chatham County. She stopped practicing midwifery at the age of 47, following the birth of her grandson. Maude Lee Bryant passed away in 1983.

## Michelle Bucknor, MD, MBA, FAAP

Raleigh, Wake County

**CMO at UnitedHealth Community & State and a leader in addressing social determinants of health.**



Dr. Michelle Bucknor is Chief Medical Officer at UnitedHealth Community & State, a position she has held since 2019, and a board-certified primary care pediatrician with over 20 years of clinical experience. She is a leading advocate for addressing social determinants of health through collaborative community engagement.

Bucknor previously served as the Chief Medical Officer for Community Care of North Carolina and for Advance Community Health in Raleigh. She has also served on the NCPeds Public Policy Committee and currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education in Raleigh. Prior to living in North Carolina, Bucknor served as the Associate Medical Director at Children's Mercy Pediatric Care Network and as General Pediatrician at Children's Mercy Hospital, both in Kansas City, Missouri.

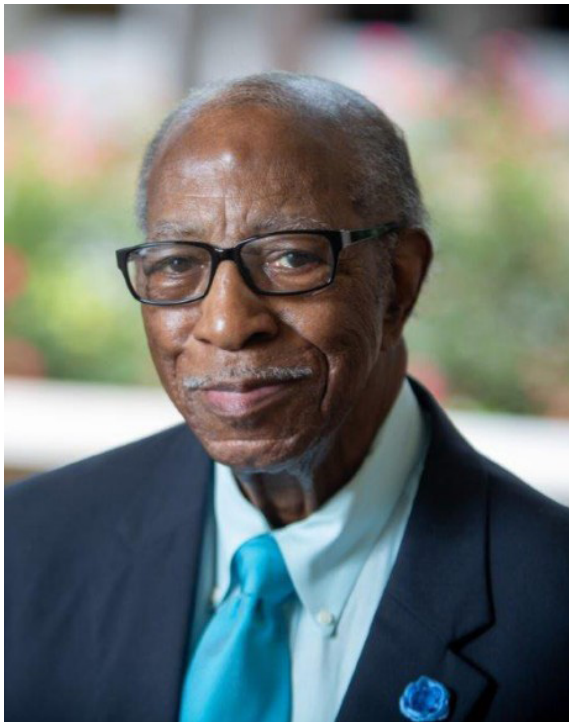
Bucknor earned a BS from Dillard University, an MBA In Healthcare Administration from Avila University, and an MD from the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

*Image: Michelle Bucknor, MD, MBA, FAAP: Advance Community Health*

## Dr. Frederick Burroughs

1930-2019; Raleigh, Wake County

### The first African American physician at Rex Hospital in Raleigh.



Dr. Frederick Burroughs was a highly respected physician and the first Black physician to join the staff at Raleigh's Rex Hospital. Burroughs was born in New Jersey in 1930. He earned an undergraduate degree in Chemistry with a minor in Biology from Hampton University and hoped to attend medical school, but was drafted into the Army. He remained in the Army for six years, then entered Meharry Medical College.

Burroughs moved to Raleigh in 1969 to open a private medical practice. His practice, integrated but still operating in the shadow of segregation, served patients from Raleigh and from rural areas of eastern North Carolina. In the early days of his practice some patients settled their bills with venison or produce from their farms. He still, when needed, made house calls in those years.

He later founded the Sunnybrook Medical Center, home to the offices of several African American doctors of various specialties, and operated the center for 27 years. He joined the staff at Rex Hospital in 1977, becoming the hospital's first African American physician. He retired in 2011.

Burroughs served as an adjunct professor at UNC School of Medicine for 15 years and was a mentor to many. He successfully lobbied for changes to the Murphy Act, which awarded loans to African Americans studying in out-of-state graduate programs not offered at North Carolina's HBCUs. These loans could be forgiven in exchange for work in "high need" rural areas, which kept young African American physicians from serving in urban centers. Burroughs' efforts led to a relaxing of this requirement and allowed him to recruit more Black physicians to the Raleigh area.

Burroughs was honored by the North Carolina Pediatric Society with the Tayloe Award for Outstanding Community Service in 2003 and was named a Living Legend by the UNC School of Medicine in 2015. He passed away in 2019.

## Goldie S. Byrd, PhD

b. Magnolia, Duplin County, Winston-Salem, Forsyth County

**Renowned scientist who studies the genetics of Alzheimer's disease in African Americans.**



Dr. Goldie S. Byrd is the Director of the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity (MACHE) and Professor of Social Sciences and Health Policy at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. She is a professor and nationally renowned researcher with focuses on health equity, the genetics of Alzheimer's disease in African Americans, and the inclusion of minorities in research and clinical trials. She began exploring these research areas in 2002, while on faculty at Duke University Medical Center.

In 2003, Byrd joined the faculty of NC A&T University. She served as the first female chair of the Department of Biology and as the first permanent female Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. She also served as the Interim Executive Director of NC A&T University's Center for Outreach in Alzheimer's Aging and Community Health, which she founded in 2012 using grant funds from Merck. The organization focuses on assisting those caring for people with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia as well as training and research.

Byrd has also served as a faculty member at Tennessee State University and North Carolina Central University (NCCU). She won the UNC Board of Governors Award of Excellence in Teaching in 2001 for her work at NCCU and was named to the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame in 2010 for her achievements in the field of science.

Byrd serves on the executive board of the NC Institute of Medicine and co-led the task force that created North Carolina's strategic plan for addressing Alzheimer's and dementia, leading to a North Carolina Registry for Brain Health. She also serves as co-chair of North Carolina's COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee.

Dr. Byrd earned a BA in Biology and a BA in Biology Education from NC A&T University and a PhD in Microbiology from Meharry Medical College in Nashville.



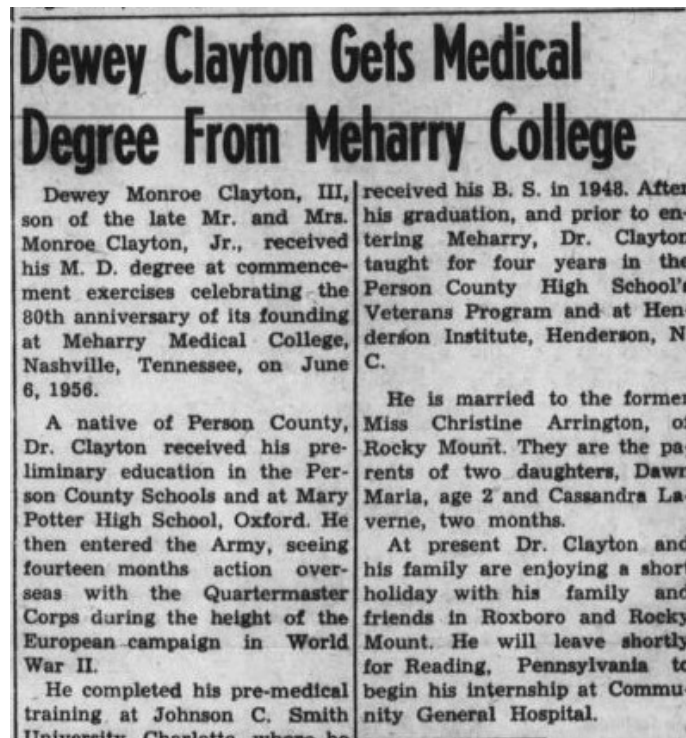
## Dr. Dewey Monroe Clayton III

1923-1977; Roxboro, Person County

**African American physician in Person County and civil rights leader.**

Dr. Dewey Monroe Clayton III was born in Person County in 1923. He attended Person County Schools and Mary Potter High School in Oxford. He then entered the Army and served in the Quartermaster Corps during World War II. Following the war, he completed pre-medical training at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, earning a BS in 1948, and graduated from Meharry Medical College in 1956. Prior to entering medical school, Clayton taught school for four years, serving as a teacher at Person County High School's Veterans Program and at Henderson Institute in Henderson, NC.

Clayton was the only African American physician in Person County when he began practicing medicine in Roxboro. A civil rights leader, Clayton fought for admission to the UNC School of Medicine in 1948 and won a suit to integrate Person Memorial Hospital in 1964. The lawsuit was the first to be filed with the U.S. District Court in Greensboro following the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He also, along with Julius Chambers, filed a lawsuit to integrate the schools of Person County. Clayton passed away in 1977.

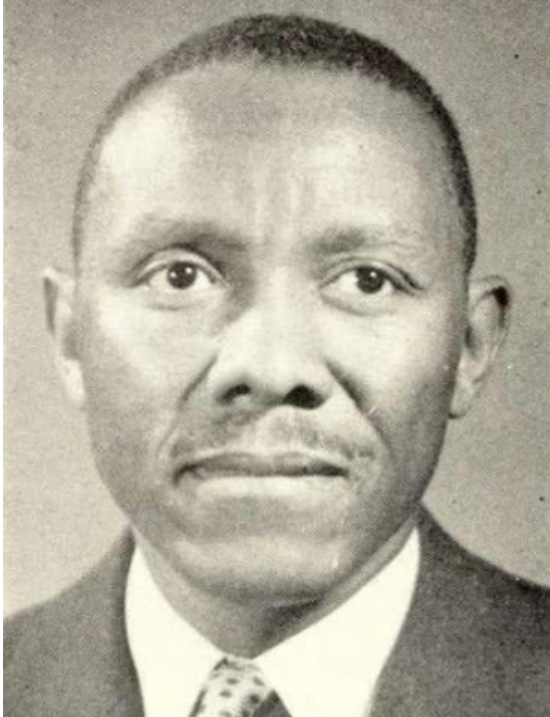




## Dr. William Alexander Cleland

1907-2001; b. Hickory, Catawba County , Durham, Durham County

**The first African American pediatrician in the city of Raleigh.**



Dr. William Alexander Cleland was born in Hickory, North Carolina and raised in Durham. He moved to New Jersey after high school, where he worked while attending Kittrell College. He completed his undergraduate studies and completed medical school at Howard University. He interned at Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, DC and was awarded Julius Rosenwald Fund fellowship to study pediatrics at New York University in 1936.

Cleland served in the Medical Corps of the United States Army during World War II, serving in the Mediterranean theater. He moved back home to Durham after the war to establish a pediatric practice, becoming the first African American pediatrician to practice medicine in the city. In addition to working in private practice, Cleland served as the President of the Staff and as a pediatrician at Lincoln Hospital, operated four well-baby clinics for the Durham County Health Department, and served as President of the Old North State Medical Society.

Cleland was honored with the City of Medicine Community Service Award in 2000 and Duke University School of Medicine has honored him with a named professorship in pediatrics. He passed away in 2001.

## Kizzmekia Shanta Corbett, PhD

b. 1986 in Hurdle Mills (Orange County) Hillsborough (Orange County)

**Pioneering viral immunologist whose research led to a vaccine for COVID-19.**



Hurdle Mills native Kizzmekia Shanta Corbett, PhD is a research fellow and the scientific lead for the Coronavirus Vaccines and Immunopathogenesis Team at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Vaccine Research Center (VRC). She and her team worked with Moderna to develop the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

Corbett began working in the lab at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill while a high school student in Hillsborough, through Project SEED. She earned a BS in Biological Sciences and Sociology from the University of Maryland-Baltimore County in 2008 and a PhD in Microbiology and Immunology from UNC-Chapel Hill in 2014.

A viral immunologist, Corbett has studied dengue virus, respiratory syncytial virus, the influenza virus, and novel coronaviruses. In addition to contributing to the development of novel coronavirus vaccines, a universal influenza vaccine that Corbett worked to develop is scheduled to enter phase 1 clinical trials. In an interview with Sanjay Gupta, Corbett noted that vaccine development allows her to combine her scientific training with her “empathetic nature for people.”

Corbett has worked at the NIH as a biological sciences trainer (2006-2009), studied dengue virus in Sri Lanka as part of her dissertation research at UNC-Chapel Hill (2009-2014), and became a research fellow at NIH in 2014, where her specific focus is the development of vaccines for novel coronaviruses.

The city of Hillsborough, North Carolina named January 12, 2021 “Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett Day.” She has acted as a public voice for science advocacy, COVID-19 prevention, and vaccine promotion during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Representative Carla D. Cunningham, RN

b. 1962 in Wadesboro, Anson County; Charlotte, Mecklenburg County

**Registered nurse, nationally recognized advocate for healthcare, and NCGA representative.**



The Honorable Carla D. Cunningham, RN has worked in healthcare for over 30 years and has used her voice as a state legislator to support policies that improve healthcare outcomes in North Carolina. Prior to serving as the North Carolina General Assembly's representative for District 106, Cunningham worked as a nurse. She has worked in numerous nursing fields, including hospice nursing, home health, intensive care, coronary care, neurology, pediatrics, and geriatrics.

Just before her election to the NCGA in 2012, Cunningham worked as a hospice nurse while serving on the NC Commission for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services. She has also engaged in community activism to improve healthcare outcomes. In 2009, Cunningham served as co-chair for the Charlotte Healthcare Coalition, which organized a march in support of the Affordable Care Act in 2010.

Rep. Cunningham holds an LPN from Central Piedmont Community College (1981), an Associate of Science in Nursing from Gaston College, and a BSN from Winston-Salem State University (2009). She has been awarded numerous healthcare-related honors, including the H. Keith Brunnemer Jr. Award from the Mental Health Association for outstanding contributions to mental health in the area of leadership and the 2017 Legislative Lifesaver Award from the NC Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

## **Dr. John Thomas Daniel Jr.**

1934-2014; b. Wilmington, New Hanover County; Durham, Durham County

**The first African American to serve on the NC Board of Medical Examiners.**



Dr. John Thomas Daniel Jr. was born in Wilmington in 1934. He completed his early education at Pender County Training School and Palmer Memorial Institute and graduated from Howard University Medical School in 1964. Following graduation, Daniel trained at the U.S. Naval Hospital at St. Albans, NY, interned in Manhattan, and completed a surgical residency.

Daniel relocated to Durham, where he began a career in surgery. He served as an attending surgeon at Lincoln Hospital, on the surgical teaching staff at Watts Hospital, and as Medical Director for the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. He was Assistant Clinical Professor of Surgery at Duke University College of Medicine.

Daniel was a leader in the Durham-Orange County Medical Society and the Old North State Medical Society. He was the first African American President of the NC Board of Medical Examiners. Dr. John T. Daniel passed away in 2014.



## Dr. Leroy Scott Darkes

Raleigh, Wake County, b. 1956

**A respected physician with a commitment to serving geriatric populations.**



Dr. Leroy Scott Darkes is a physician in Raleigh, North Carolina. He is board-certified in internal medicine and is known for his expertise in geriatric healthcare. He is committed in both the clinical and educational aspects of being a community healthcare provider. Darkes was the long-time Community Medical Director for Rex Senior Health Center in Raleigh, which he helped to establish in 2004. He was appointed to the NC Minority Health Advisory Committee by Governor Mike Easley in 2004 and was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 2018.

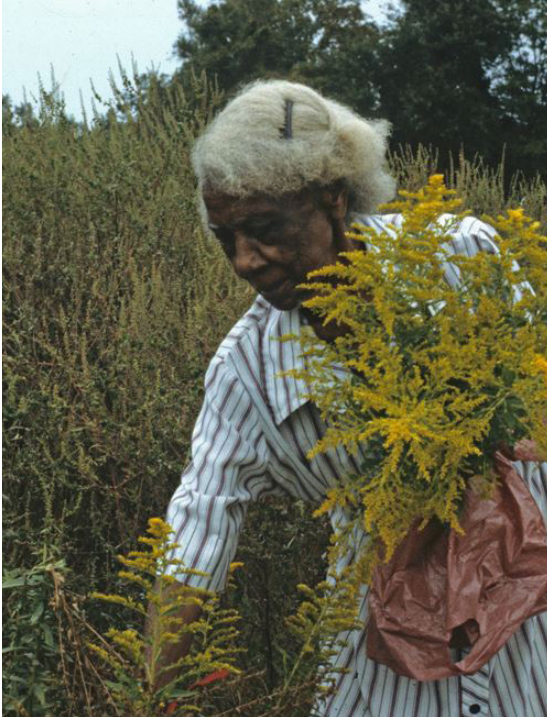
Darkes is a graduate of Rutgers College and earned an MD from Rutgers University Medical School in 1982. He currently practices internal medicine at UNCG Internal Medicine at White Oak in Raleigh and is a provider in the UNC Senior Alliance Network.



## Emma Dupree

1897-1996; Falkland and Fountain, Pitt County

### Award-winning herbalist and traditional healer.



Emma Dupree was an award-winning herbalist and traditional healer from Pitt County. Her interest in folk medicine began when she was a young child; her curiosity about the natural world and its healing properties stayed with her for the rest of her life. Dupree cultivated a medicinal herb garden and gathered wild plants and herbs from the banks of the Tar River for use in the tonics, teas, and other preparations she developed. She was best known locally for her “nine-herb tonic,” a cure-all that she packaged in repurposed vinegar, mayonnaise, and pickle jars. She did not accept payment for the traditional medicines she offered to her community. She did, however, accept molasses, honey, and other items for use in her medicinal preparations.

Dupree was the subject of a 1979 film produced by East Carolina University School of Medicine entitled *Little Medicine Thing*, a nickname given to her when she was a child. The film was used as part of the University’s medical curriculum.

Emma Dupree was a recipient of the North Carolina Folklore Society’s Brown-Hudson Award and of the North Carolina Heritage Award, a lifetime achievement award recognizing outstanding traditional artists in North Carolina.

Emma Dupree passed away in 1996.

## Thereasea Clark Elder, RN

1927-2021; Charlotte, Mecklenburg county

**Served as the first African American public health nurse in Charlotte and integrated the Mecklenburg County Public Health Department.**



Thereasea Delerine "T.D." Clark Elder, RN was born in Charlotte in 1927. The early deaths of two of her siblings moved her to become a nurse, and she began working at Charlotte Memorial Hospital while a student at West Charlotte High School.

Elder attended Johnson C. Smith University and the U.S. Cadet Nursing Program before entering the Lincoln Hospital School of Nursing in Durham. She earned a degree in nursing from Lincoln and completed additional training in pediatrics at Howard University's Freeman Hospital.

Elder began her formal nursing career at Charlotte's Good Samaritan Hospital in 1948. She went on to earn a public health nursing certificate from UNC-Chapel Hill and became the first African American public health nurse in Charlotte in 1962, when she integrated the Mecklenburg County Public Health Department. She retired from the Health Department in 1989.

Elder also had a passion for history; she was President of the Greenville Historical Association and founded the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Black historical Society. A beloved community leader, she mentored everyone from young people in her church to prominent women in politics. She was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 2001. Thereasea Clark Elder passed away in January of this year.

## Laura I. Gerald, MD, MPH

b. Lumberton, Robeson County; Winston-Salem, Forsyth County

**Leader in addressing social determinants of health and  
President of the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust.**



Dr. Laura I. Gerald is President of the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, a position she has held since 2016, and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill. The trust works to improve the health and quality of life of North Carolinians, a goal shared by its leader.

Gerald, a board-certified pediatrician, began her medical career as a pediatrician in her hometown of Lumberton. She has worked as Senior Medical Consultant for Community Care of North Carolina, served as ED of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission, oversaw statewide health policy as the NC State Health Director and the Director of the Division of NC Public Health, and worked as the Market Medical Director for Evolent Health.

Gerald is committed to addressing social determinants in health outcomes, both as a clinician and in her non-profit work. Notably, she chaired the task force that recommended state compensation for people involuntarily sterilized through a eugenics program administered in North Carolina from 1929-1974.

Gerald was the 2020 recipient of the NC Pediatric Society's David T. Tayloe Sr. Award for Outstanding Community Service. She holds a BA from Harvard and Radcliffe Colleges, an MD from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and an MPH from Harvard University School of Public Health.

## Ernest James Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN

b. 1958 in Swannanoa (Buncombe County); Chapel Hill (Orange County)

**The first African American man to lead the American Nurses Association.**



Dr. Ernest J. Grant was born in 1958 in Swannanoa, North Carolina. He began his career in nursing as a student at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, where he earned an LPN. As an LPN he first worked on a medical-surgical unit, then accepted a position with the Jaycee Burn Center at North Carolina Memorial Hospital (now at the UNC School of Medicine). His experiences as an outreach clinician at Jaycee inspired him to continue his education and to lobby for better fire and burn safety regulations. Grant earned a BSN from North Carolina Central University in 1985, an MSN from UNC Greensboro in 1993, and a PhD in Nursing from UNC Greensboro in 2015, the first African American man to earn a PhD from that program.

Grant's contributions to fire and burn care and safety are extensive. Notably, he was named the 2002 Nurse of the Year by President George W. Bush in recognition of his role as a volunteer nurse caring for patients injured during the attacks on the World Trade Center. Many of North Carolina's regulations related to fire and burn safety, including age restrictions on the purchase of fireworks and the mandated preset temperature on water heaters, are the result of Grant's efforts.

Grant was named the first male president of the American Nurses Association in 2018. In this role he has advocated for nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic and engaged in public education and advocacy related to COVID-19 prevention. He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the B.T. Fowler Lifetime Achievement Award from the NC Fire and Life Safety Education Council (2013).

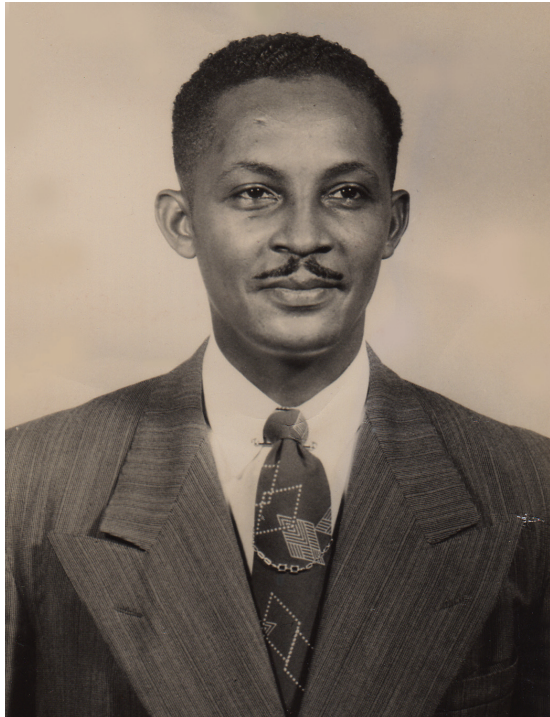
Known for his commitment to diversity in the nursing profession and engagement with young nursing professionals, particularly African American men, Grant has established the Ernest J. Grant Endowed Scholarship in Nursing at UNC Greensboro.



## Dr. Samuel James Gray

1912 - 1965; Wilmington, New Hanover County

**The first Black physician with admitting privileges to James Walker Memorial Hospital in Wilmington.**



Dr. Samuel James Gray was born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1912 and immigrated to the United States in 1930. He earned an MD from Howard University, his undergraduate alma mater, in 1937. His medical internship brought him to Lincoln Hospital in Durham and was followed by a residency at Community Hospital in Wilmington.

Gray opened his own practice, Gray's Clinic, around 1943. In 1956, Gray and two other doctors, Hubert A. Eaton and Daniel C. Roane, sued, unsuccessfully, for admitting privileges to James Walker Memorial Hospital. They sued again, this time joined by two of their patients, and finally succeeded in 1964. Their 1956 case helped to lay the groundwork for *Simkins v. Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital* (1963), which effectively desegregated hospitals in the south.

In addition to his medical practice, Gray and his family owned several Wilmington-area businesses, including a taxi company listed in the Green Book.

Gray became the first African American physician with admitting privileges to James Walker Memorial Hospital in 1964, one year before his death.



**Charlene Green, MD**  
Greensboro, Guilford County

**Current President of the Old North State Medical Society.**



Charlene Green, MD is the current President of the Old North State Medical Society (ONSMS). She is a private practice anesthesiologist with Anesthesiology Consultants of North Carolina in Greensboro at Cone Health. Dr. Green is a native of Baltimore, Maryland who earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1985. In 1989, Dr. Green obtained her Doctor of Medicine from the University of Maryland. In medical school, Dr. Green was one of 12 students in her year selected for the Combined Program of Psychiatry Program (CAPP) which enabled her to spend the summer of 1986 at Guy's Hospital in London England in a training program. Dr. Green was also one of two medical students who received Honors in Biochemistry. Dr. Green completed her medical internship CA-1 year at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland from 1989-1990. Dr. Green

completed her anesthesiology residency at Duke University Medical Center and in 1994 completed a Pain Medicine Fellowship at Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Green is a Diplomat of the American Board of Anesthesiology, Board Certified, April 1996, and a Diplomat of the American Board of Anesthesiology, Board Certified, Pain Medicine, September 1998.

Dr. Green is Chief of Anesthesia at Cone Health in Greensboro, NC, a member of the National Medical Association (NMA), and is on the Board of the NMA Region 3. She is current First Vice Chair of the North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, current NC House of Delegate member of the American Society of Anesthesiologists, and a Past President of the North Carolina Society of Anesthesiologists (NCSA), a graduate of the Cone Health Physician Leadership Academy in 2018 in Partnership with the Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, NC.

As President of Old North State Medical Society, Dr. Green has led collectively with her Board and her strategic operational team statewide efforts to educate the communities and public and has advocated for the most vulnerable patients and people residing in North Carolina communities that particularly produce poorer outcomes. Old North State Medical Society takes a team and hands-on approach to advocating for North Carolinians. Old North State Medical Society seeks to protect the quality of care in all communities in North Carolina, particularly during the current COVID-19 pandemic that has disproportionately affected and devastated minority communities. Providing COVID-19 culturally sensitive messaging and resources to North Carolina communities particularly of the vulnerable population are strategically instrumental to supporting better health outcomes.

## Dr. Charles Johnson

Durham, Durham County

**The first African American faculty member at Duke University School of Medicine.**



Dr. Charles Johnson was the first African American fellow in Endocrinology and the first African American faculty member at Duke University School of Medicine. Born in Alabama, Johnson served in the United States Air Force and used his G.I. Bill benefits to attend Howard University, where he earned a BS in Physics in 1953. He returned to the Air Force after graduation, then enrolled at Howard Medical School, earning an MD in 1963.

Johnson came to Durham in 1967 to complete a fellowship in Endocrinology at Duke University. He then served as the Director of Medical Services at Lincoln Hospital from 1968-1973. In 1970, Johnson became the first African American faculty member at Duke University School of Medicine. As a professor, he advocated for racial equality, mentored Black students, and leveraged his position on the Medical School Admissions Committee to recruit faculty, residents, and students with marginalized identities to the medical school. He remained at Duke until his retirement in 1996.

Johnson was also active in statewide and national advocacy and professional service throughout his career. He lobbied for the creation of East Carolina University's medical school to improve access to healthcare in eastern North Carolina and served as the 89th President of the National Medical Association (1990).

Johnson was awarded the Humanitarian Distinguished Alumni award from the Duke Medical Alumni Association in 2000 and an eponymous professorship, the Charles Johnson, MD, Chair of Medicine, was established in his honor at Duke University School of Medicine. Johnson is Professor Emeritus of Medicine in the Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism, and Nutrition at Duke University School of Medicine.

*Image: Dr. Charles Johnson: professional photo*

## Leonard Medical School

1880-1918; Raleigh, Wake County

**The first four-year medical school in the United States.**



Leonard Medical School was the first four-year medical school in the United States. It was founded at Raleigh's Shaw University in 1880, aided by the support of missionaries and northern philanthropists. Land for the school was donated by the North Carolina General Assembly. The school trained more than 400 Black physicians over the course of its nearly 40-year history. Leonard was the only medical school for African Americans located between Washington, D.C. and New Orleans at the time of its establishment.

In 1914, Leonard Medical School transitioned to a two-year curriculum. Graduates went on to larger medical schools to complete their training, including Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee and Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C. Leonard Medical School closed in 1918.

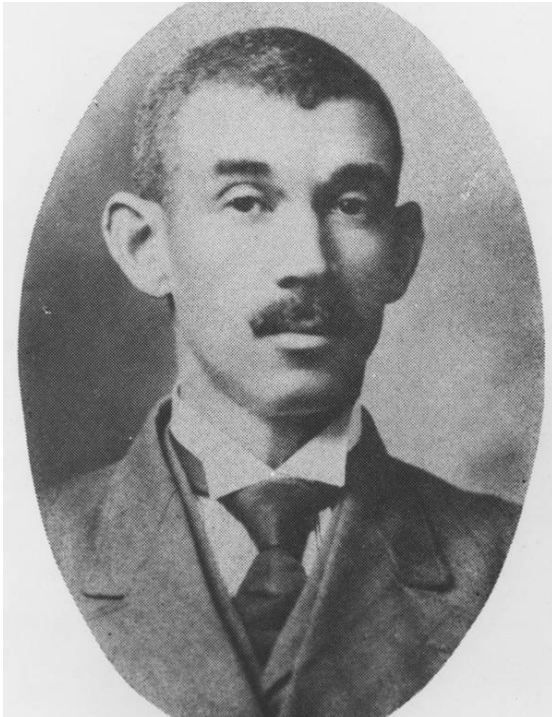
Prominent alumni of Leonard Medical School profiled in this booklet include Dr. Lawson A. Scruggs, Dr. John T. Williams, Dr. Manassa T. Pope, Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore, and Dr. William Green Torrence.

Two of the school's buildings are still standing today, each of them built in 1910. Tyler Hall (originally Library Hall) houses Shaw's business office and human resources department. Leonard Hall houses Shaw University Divinity School.

## Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore

1863-1923; b. Columbus County; Durham, Durham County

**The first African American to practice medicine in Durham and founder of Lincoln Hospital.**



Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore was born in Columbus County, North Carolina. He completed his early education in Columbus County, then attended normal schools in Lumberton and Fayetteville. He taught for a brief period, then entered Leonard Medical School at Shaw University.

Moore graduated from Leonard Medical School in 1888, only three years after entering the program, and became a founding member of the Old North State Medical Society while he was still a student. He then established a medical practice, becoming the first African American to practice medicine in Durham. He helped to organize a community pharmacy for African Americans in 1895 and founded Lincoln Hospital, the first hospital for African Americans in Durham, and Lincoln Hospital School of Nursing in 1901.

In addition to his significant medical achievements, Moore was a nationally recognized business person, entrepreneur, and community leader. In 1898, he co-founded the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, which sold health and life insurance to African Americans. He later served as the company's president. He also established the Durham Colored Library (now the Stanford L. Warren Library) in 1916. Moore was an ardent proponent of rural education and led statewide initiatives in support of the establishment of Rosenwald Schools in rural communities. Moore passed away in 1923.



## Joyce Clayton Nichols, PA-C

1940-2012; b. Roxboro, Person County; Durham, Durham County

**The first woman and first African American woman to be formally educated as a PA.**



Roxboro native Joyce Clayton Nichols, PA-C became the first woman and first African American woman formally educated as a physician assistant in 1970 when she graduated from Duke University's Physician Assistant Program. Nichols began her career as an LPN and became interested in entering the Physician Assistant Program while working at Duke. She was rejected the first two times she applied to the program and, once a student, applied her tenacity to advocating for the admittance of other women in the program. The majority of students in the program today are women.

Upon graduating, Nichols established one of the first rural, satellite health clinics in the United States in northern Durham County, North Carolina. She worked here until 1972, when Lincoln Health Center in Durham took over the clinic. She then accepted a position with Lincoln and retired in 1995. Nichols helped to establish and served on the boards of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and the North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants. She was the first African American to serve on the AAPA Board of Directors.

Nichols was also committed to service, both in her profession and in her community. She served as a preceptor and adjunct professor at Duke University in the Department of Community Health and sat on the Board of Directors for Durham County Hospital Corporation and the Lincoln Community Health Center. She also served as a commissioner for the Durham Housing Authority. Serving as a commissioner had personal significance for Nichols, who successfully fought an eviction from McDougald Terrace by the Durham Housing Authority all the way to the Supreme Court in 1969.

Nichols received the Nancy Susan Reynolds Award for Advocacy in 1991, was named the AAPA Paragon Humanitarian of the Year in 1996, and was inducted into the Duke University PA Alumni Hall of Fame in 2002. Joyce Nichols passed away in 2012.

## North Carolina Association of Colored Graduate Nurses

1923-1949; Winston-Salem, Forsyth County

**The first association for African American nurses established in North Carolina.**



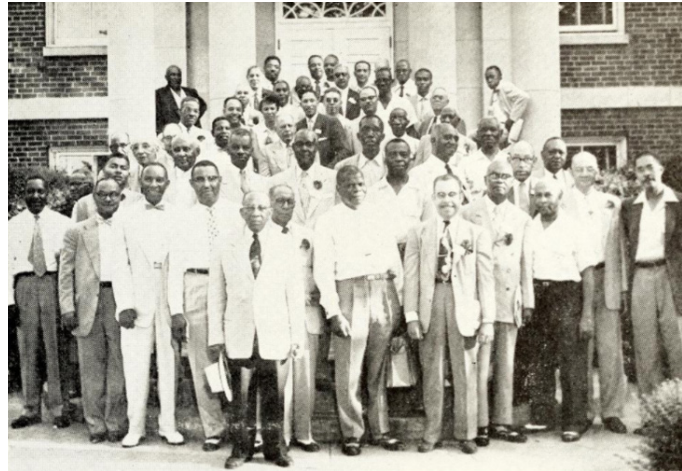
The North Carolina Colored Graduate Nurses Association (NCCGNA, later the North Carolina Association of Negro Registered Nurses) was formed at a meeting of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) in 1921. Founded by Carrie Early Broadfoot (the national association's recording secretary), Charlotte McQueen Faison, Anna Sanders, M.L. Taylor, and Elizabeth Miller, the first chapter meeting of the association took place at the YMCA building in Winston-Salem in 1923. The national association was established in New York in 1908 to provide professional benefits and support to African American nurses, who were not permitted to join white nursing associations.

The North Carolina Association of Colored Graduate Nurses served African American registered nurses in North Carolina until 1949, when it merged with the North Carolina Nurses Association. NCACGN had 269 members at the time of the merger.

# Old North State Medical Society

Greensboro, Guilford County

**One of the oldest African American medical societies in the United States.**



Old North State Medical Society (“ONSMS”), a chapter of the National Medical Association, was established in 1887 to support the interests of African American and minority physicians. Its principal focus has been to educate and advocate for equal access to quality health care for the most vulnerable patients and populations residing in North Carolina.

Old North State Medical Society is one of the oldest African American medical societies in the United States. It was founded by Leonard Medical School graduates Dr. Manassa T. Pope, Dr. John T. Williams, Dr. Lawson A. Scruggs, and Dr. Marcus C. Alston. Dr. Aaron M. Moore was also a founding member of the society, joining while he was still a student at Leonard Medical School.

Throughout its history, Old North State Medical Society (ONSMS) has been a part of many historical and landmark decisions involving healthcare in North Carolina, such as helping to advocate for the establishment of East Carolina Medical School as well as being involved in the landmark 4th Circuit Court of Appeals federal case of *Simkins v. Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital* in 1963. The decision in this case led to the elimination of segregated health care in the United States of America.

In 2020, Old North State Medical Society was in the forefront of COVID-19 testing throughout the state of North Carolina. Old North State Medical Society is a trusted medical organization in North Carolina for the African American, Latinx, and other minority communities particularly in regards to culturally sensitive messaging during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reach of ONSMS spans the urban and rural areas of the state including Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, Jacksonville, Raleigh, and Winston- Salem, which include ONSMS’s affiliate physician medical societies.

*Image: Old North State Medical Society: ONSMS / UNC Chapel Hill*



## Statement from Old North State Medical Society

Covid prevalence, morbidity, and mortality have not been distributed equally within North Carolina and nationally. Communities with high proportions of historically marginalized populations are especially adversely impacted by covid. Differences in risk due to occupational exposure, medical conditions, and barriers to effective medical care all likely contribute to the devastating impact of covid in these populations and communities.

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.cbs17.com/news/north-carolina-news/data-highest-covid-19-deaths-rates-found-in-nc-counties-with-high-percentages-of-black-residents/amp/>

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/hospitalization-demographics>

<https://covidtracking.com/race/dashboard#state-nc>

Old North State Medical Society acknowledges race-specific aspects of disease vulnerabilities should drive the coronavirus vaccine distribution. A race and culturally sensitive plan must ensure both equitable opportunities of access and equitable opportunities of administering vaccines. Failure to quickly develop and implement such a plan would be a glaring example of a deadly and racially disproportionate impact on the African American, Latino and Indigenous communities, which is simply unacceptable in our increasingly diverse society.

Additionally, and not mutually exclusively, Old North State Medical Society believes that we must support our school aged children, physically and emotionally. While we recognize that difficult decisions must be made to prioritize vaccinations, the decision to do everything we can to ensure and safeguard the future of our next generation is not a difficult one. Prioritizing the vaccination of school personnel will allow teachers and students to return to school safely; this is especially true for children who fall within any definition of "medically fragile" based on the communities from which they come.



## Marilyn R. Pearson, MD

Johnston County

**Award-winning public health director committed to expanding access to healthcare.**



Dr. Marilyn R. Pearson is the award-winning Public Health Director for the Johnson County Public Health Department (JCPH). She began her career as a physician for the health department's clinics, a position she held for seven years. She has worked to expand access to healthcare to those who are uninsured or underinsured and was responsible for establishing JCPH's Behavioral Health Services Division. In recognition of these efforts, the NC Association of Local Health Directors named Pearson the North Carolina Health Director of the Year in 2015.

Pearson is active in her community and is a member of Community Care of North Carolina's Board of Directors. She holds a BS from Clemson University and an MD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## Dr. Manassa Thomas Pope

1858-1934; Raleigh, Wake County; Charlotte, Mecklenburg County

**Pioneering member of Leonard Medical School's first graduating class.**



Dr. Manassa Thomas Pope was a member of Leonard Medical School's first class of graduates and, in 1886, became one of the first African Americans licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina. Pope moved to Henderson, North Carolina following medical school, where he accepted an appointment to serve as the town's postmaster. He then moved to Charlotte, where he established a private medical practice and co-founded Queen City Drug Company with fellow Shaw alumni Dr. John T. Williams and Dr. Robert B. Tyler.

Pope served in the Spanish-American War as a surgeon and officer. Following the war, he relocated to Raleigh, establishing a private practice (first on Fayetteville Street, then on Hargett Street). He ran in the 1919 Raleigh mayoral election but did not win the race.

Pope built a home for his family on Wilmington Street, which later included a small examination room. The home is now the Pope House Museum. Dr. Manassa Thomas Pope passed away in 1934.

## Charlotte Rhone, RN

1874-1965; New Bern, Craven County

**One of the first African Americans to become a registered nurse in the United States.**



Charlotte Rhone, RN, was born in New Bern in 1874. She graduated from Freedmen's Hospital School of Nursing in Washington, DC in 1901 and returned home to New Bern to serve her community. She began her nursing career as a private nurse because there were no hospitals in the New Bern area that were willing to hire African American nurses. She primarily provided home health care and childbirth assistance to her patients.

Rhone became one of the first African American women in the United States to become an RN when she registered with the NC Board of Nurse Examiners in 1903. She moved to Durham in 1910, where she served as the head nurse at the National Religious Training School (now North Carolina Central University).

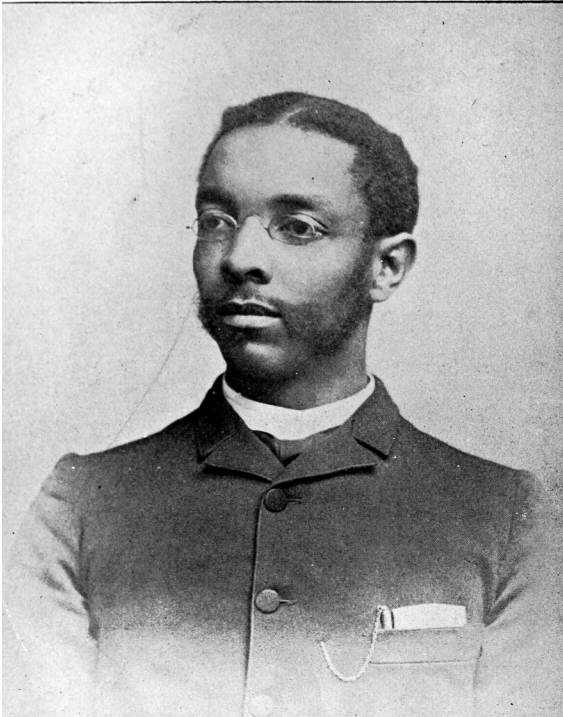
Returning to New Bern in 1915, Rhone resumed private practice nursing, but her career trajectory shifted following a devastating fire in New Bern in 1922. In the wake of the fire she became the first African American welfare worker in Craven County and was tasked with supporting recovery efforts for the Black community. She went on to serve as Assistant Superintendent of the Craven County Welfare Department in the late 1930s and was a leader in the North Carolina Negro Social Work Association.

Rhone was also an entrepreneur and civic leader who operated the Rhone Hotel in New Bern. She was a member of The Climber's Club and the local Library Board of Directors. Charlotte Rhone passed away in 1965.

## Dr. Lawson Andrew Scruggs

1857-1914; Raleigh, Wake County; Southern Pines, Moore County

### Founder of the Old North State Medical Society.



Dr. Lawson Andrew Scruggs, enslaved in Virginia at the time of his birth, was a member of Leonard Medical School's first graduating class and was one of the first licensed African American physicians in North Carolina.

Scruggs simultaneously completed the literary course at Shaw University, earning an A.B., and coursework at Shaw's Leonard Medical School. He was the class valedictorian for both programs. After earning his medical license in 1886, Scruggs taught physiology, hygiene, and chemistry at Shaw University and served as Leonard Hospital's resident physician. He founded the Old North State Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Society (now the Old North State Medical Society) a year later, in 1887.

Scruggs left his position at Shaw to work in private practice for a few years, then taught for a time at St. Augustine's University, in

Raleigh, where he served as the first attending physician at St. Agnes' Hospital for Negroes. He was licensed by the State Board of Pharmacy in 1891 and worked at Capital City Pharmacy in Raleigh, a Black-owned drugstore.

Scruggs focused much of his time on establishing and managing The Pickford Sanitarium for Consumptive Negroes in Southern Pines in the 1890s and early 1900s. The sanitarium treated African Americans with consumption (tuberculosis) and other diseases impacting the lungs and throat. The sanitarium was nationally known and drew praise from prominent African Americans, including W.E.B. Dubois.

In addition to his medical pursuits Scruggs was an accomplished writer. Dr. Lawson A. Scruggs passed away in 1914.



## Dr. James Francis Shober

1853-1889; b. Winston-Salem, Forsyth County; Wilmington, New Hanover County

**The first African American with a medical degree to practice medicine in North Carolina.**

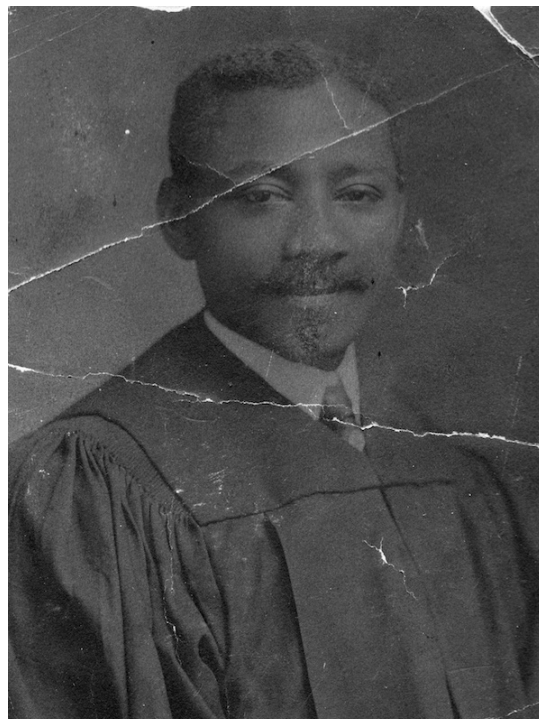


Dr. James Francis Shober was born in Salem (now Winston-Salem) in 1853. He and his mother were enslaved by a Moravian family at the time of his birth. Shober was a graduate of Lincoln University in Oxford, Pennsylvania (1875) and Howard University School of Medicine (1878). He opened a medical practice in Wilmington, North Carolina in 1878, becoming the first Black physician with a medical degree to practice medicine in the state of North Carolina. Dr. Shober passed away in 1889, at the age of 36.

## Dr. William Green Torrence

1880-1915; Asheville, Buncombe County

**Established the first African American medical clinic in Asheville.**



Dr. William Green Torrence was born in York, South Carolina around 1880. He was a graduate of Leonard Medical School at Shaw University and studied at Dearborn Medical College in Chicago.

Torrence began practicing medicine in Asheville in 1906. He established the first Black clinic in the city, Torrence Hospital, in 1910. He served as a director at the YMI and had medical offices in both the YMI building and in his home.

Torrence served as a consultant at Circle Terrace Sanatorium in Asheville and worked to address the impact of tuberculosis on African American communities. Tragically, Torrence passed away from tuberculosis in 1915, at the age of 35.

## Dr. John Taylor Williams

1859-1924; b. Fayetteville, Cumberland County; Charlotte, Mecklenburg County; Raleigh, Wake County

### Pioneering physician and American diplomat.



Dr. John Taylor Williams, born in Cumberland County, was a member of Leonard Medical School's first class of graduates and one of the first African Americans to be licensed as a physician in North Carolina. Prior to becoming a physician, Dr. Williams was a notable educator. He studied education at State Normal School (now Fayetteville State University), graduating in 1880. He later established the Myers Street School, a public school for African American children in Charlotte.

Williams left his career as an educator to attend Leonard Medical School, graduating in 1886. Following graduation he established a private practice in Charlotte and practiced as a surgeon at Union Hospital and Samaritan Hospital, both in Charlotte. He co-founded (along with Dr. Manassa T. Pope and Dr. Robert B. Tyler) the Queen City Drug Company, also in Charlotte, and served as the pharmacy's president.

Williams was also a notable politician and diplomat. He served on the Charlotte Board of Aldermen (elected to serve in 1889 and 1891) and was appointed Consul to Sierra Leone by President William McKinley from 1897-1906. Dr. John T. Williams passed away in 1924.

## Eugene Woods, MBA, MHA, FACHE

Charlotte, Mecklenburg County

**Award-winning healthcare administrator committed to healthcare equity and access.**



Eugene A. Woods, MBA, MHA, FACHE became the President and CEO of Atrium Health, a non-profit health system with locations in North Carolina and three other states, in 2016. Woods has shaped Atrium into an industry leader in diversity and equity of care and used his platform to condemn systemic racism and prejudice in the United States. Under his leadership, Atrium has led community initiatives that address systematic barriers to healthcare by committing funding to affordable housing, providing free summer meals to children, and organizing outreach efforts to provide COVID-19 testing in under-resourced communities.

Woods was appointed to the North Carolina Council for Health Care Coverage by Governor Roy Cooper's Economic Recovery Task Force and to the Governor's Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental, and Health Equity Task Force, which addresses "disparities in communities of color that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic." He has also served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the American Hospital Association.

Woods has nearly 30 years of experience in the field of health administration. He holds a BS in Health Planning and Administration, an MBA, and an MA in Health Administration, all from Pennsylvania State University.





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