



Walker Family Fund





















The J.D. and Laurena Walker Family Fund (The Fund) promotes a legacy of lifelong learning and service endowed by its founder, Evelyn Walker Armstrong. The Fund perpetuates family values endowed by her parents. J.D. and Laurena Walker, the second of three generations from Griffin, GA, migrated to Philadelphia, PA in 1926. Evelyn, her sister Mary Ann, brothers James, and Edward were encouraged to pursue an education, service, and work ethic.



Ms. Armstrong (center) started The Fund after retiring from MERCK. Since 1997, The Fund has demonstrated growth through the development of its beneficiaries. Originally established as The J.D. and Laurena Walker Foundation of the NHF, The Fund serves as a development resource for public charity programs.

On September 11, 2006, Ms. Armstrong collaborated with family members, beneficiaries and friends to form the Delaware nonprofit corporation, YOUTH ACHIEVERS USA INSTITUTE. YouthUSA administers The Fund, as well as other youth and community development programs.

The Fund offers descendents of J.D. and Laurena Walker, as well as beneficiaries, a sustained reminder of the good works and family values endowed to them by ordinary people on an extraordinary journey. The public benefit of The Fund is its investment in America's future workforce. Although no contributions or earnings inure to any private shareholder or individual, YouthUSA offers its donors a "Return on Investment" through sustained interest in our beneficiaries.

						
Curtis T. Word Cheney U. Educator	Bonita Walker Howard U. Cmty. Organizer	Elana Jenkins Howard U. Entrepreneur	Lorraine L. Lockett Howard U.	Sir Charles Hill Haverford Col. Finance	Etoy Ridgnal Scripps Col. Educator	Robert Selders II LSU Entrepreneur
						
Ashleigh Duroncel Baton Rouge CC Banking	Min Kristen C. Simpson, PGCC U.S. Senate Staff & Ministry	Pandwe Gibson Scripps Col. Harvard U. Educator	YouthUSA	Lauren Sullivan- Lark, Spellman & MeHarry Medical CollegeMedicine	Jamie Hines University of Maryland	Carmela Bolding U. of DC and Trinity U. Communications
						
Carolyn Coe Communications		Chalondra B. Stradford Hospitality	Jah-meelah Broughton Howard U. Educator	Tenisha Owens U. of Texas Early Childhood Education	Truvaughn Ebanks Prince Georges Cmty. College	



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J. D. WALKER 1899-1968

The brick mason's legacy was to serve the people. J. D. Walker's family values modeled husbandry and raised the bar on fatherhood.

Born in Griffin, GA, June 6, 1899, J.D. had one brother, Edward Matthew, and a sister, Mattie Bell. At an early age, J.D. was baptized as a Christian. He joined his parents, Matthew and Anna, as a member of the Eighth Street Baptist Church. The church was located within blocks of Camp Milner (now Griffin Municipal Park), where most of Georgia's troops were mobilized for the Confederate Army. Matt Walker was a skilled brick mason, a respected resident of Griffin, and one of the "builders" of historic Eighth Street Baptist Church. Matt served with Charles Puriefoy, the son of a former slave and farmer, on the Deacon Board. Later, J.D. would meet and "court" the eldest daughter of Charlie and Mary Puriefoy, Laurena.

J.D. enlisted in the United States Army in 1917 and served in the 24th Infantry. On August 29, 1919, he was honorably discharged. He recalled how "colored" soldiers from the South would go to war and, later, discovered that their names had been changed on their military records. While serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, the government involuntarily changed his name to Jay D. Walker. Although his mother had named him J.D., he would live with this name change until his death.

On February 12, 1922, J.D. married his lifelong partner, Laurena Puriefoy. J.D. stood tall in his bride's eyes and solidly among ordinary men, preachers, doctors, educators and entrepreneurs. From this union, James Douglas and Mary Ann were born in Griffin, GA. In 1926, J.D. Walker, his bride and children fled with the entire Puriefoy family leaving 80 acres of farmland, the segregated South and devastating boll weevil.



In Philadelphia, the Walker family continued to grow with Evelyn and Edward Matthew. J. D. built a brick custom home for his family at 8308 Crothers Avenue, south of the city. Many recall it had an enormous fireplace, enclosed front porch, back porch, two staircases, a garage, garden, chickens and fresh eggs. The thin line dividing J.D. and Laurena's family was almost invisible. He also built two brick homes for her brother, John Wesley, whom they called Jay; one for her younger sister, Willie McDaniel; and, demonstrated his craftsmanship in stone with a split level custom home for her baby brother, Carson.

The brick mason labored at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. His workmanship became well known throughout and beyond Philly. He was also affiliated with "Kelly for Brickwork." The company was founded by John B. Kelly, Sr. John and his wife Margaret raised four children. Grace Patricia Kelly became an award-winning actress and the Princess of Monaco. J.D. Walker's exposure to the Kelly's also introduced him to family values beyond the Elmwood community, sometimes called Eastwick.

J.D. cared for his sweetheart's mourning father, families in need and held together a community of in-laws, by-laws and outlaws. In 1958, when the "City of Brotherly Love" placed profits above people, it disbursed the brick mason, his bride, her eight siblings and their families from the whole village. This was the second time that the Puriefoys and the Walkers were pressured to move. Airport expansion had broken the momentum of repatriating black families. The City of Philadelphia may have acted lawfully. However, the deal with developers of the expanded airport perpetuated a moral conspiracy. The move ripped families and communities apart. The brick and mortar foundations laid by J.D. Walker were destroyed. But, he had also invested heavily in the spiritual foundation of Beulah Baptist Church for 42 years.

J.D., his bride, in-laws, and their children had joined Beulah in 1927 under Reverend James. F. Bolden. In 1958, Reverend John R. Henderson, the pastor of Beulah, was called to Glory. The church remained without a pastor for more than a year and a half, under the leadership of Chairman J.D. Walker and the Board of Deacons. After an intense search, Thursday, November 6, 1959, the board called for a church election. Reverend William A. Lee was installed on February 21, 1960. From 1958-1963, Deacon Walker was engulfed in the relocation of Beulah from Eastwick to West Philadelphia because of the redevelopment program. The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority claimed Eastwick was the largest urban renewal project in the country, affecting more than 19,000 residents and several churches. On July 16, 1963, the cornerstone was laid in Beulah's new church at 50th and Spruce Streets.

On November 1, 1968, God called Deacon J.D. Walker home to rest. His favorite scripture was John 9:4, **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."**



Walker Family Fund

LAURENA PURIEFOY WALKER 1897 – 2000



She had no fear of winter for her household because all of them had warm clothes. She quilted her own bedspreads. She dressed like royalty in gowns of the finest cloth. She carefully watched all that went on in her household and did not have to bear the consequences of laziness.

On January 25, 2000, a blanket of fresh snow covered the earth along North America's Atlantic coast. Just about everything stopped, including the federal government forcing a moment of silent tribute to America's 102- year- old GrandMentor. Early morning calls caught friends and family of Laurena Puriefoy Walker snowed under the new millennium's heaviest snowfall. Mrs. Walker's "light" had shined for three centuries.

On this day, she left her earthly home for the mansion that had been revealed long before in Wisdom's kiss. Laurena Puriefoy Walker enjoyed the simple pleasures of an abundant life. Born Laurena Puriefoy on September 7, 1897 in Griffin, GA, she is the third of nine children born to Mary and Charles Puriefoy--her brothers and sisters...Otis, Charles, Lucille, Nettie, Elizabeth, Willie, John Wesley, and Carson.

Mrs. Walker attended County Line Baptist Church outside Griffin. She met her husband J. D. Walker. Of this union, four children were born - James, Mary Ann, Evelyn and Edward. She was born in Griffin, GA, and grew up in and around Spalding County. She attended Broad Street Elementary School and Cabin Creek High School. Cabin Creek High was a private Christian school, operated by a coalition of African American churches. Mrs. Walker recalled that the group of churches included 8th Street Baptist, where both her father and future father-in-law were deacons. Reverend John Henry Moore, pastor of Griffin's 8th Street Baptist is said to have been involved in establishing both Morehouse and Spelman Universities.



Walker Family Fund



JAMES DOUGLAS WALKER 1922-1993

This page honors the life and legacy of James Douglas “Jim” Walker. Under the foundation’s Family Values program it encourages lifelong learning in electrical engineering and related related technologies. Family and friends are welcome to contribute to the foundation’s James D. Walker Scholarship in his memory.



Walker Family Fund



EDWARD WALKER, SR 1932-1994

This page honors the life and legacy of Edward "Big Ed" Walker. Under the foundation's Family Values program it encourages lifelong learning in construction and mathematic related professional disciplines. Family and friends of Big Ed Walker are invited to contribute to the foundation's Edward Walker Scholarship in his memory.



Walker Family Fund



MARY ANN WALKER RALLS JANUARY 9, 1925 – JULY 5, 2010

Mary Ann (Walker) Ralls has been known as an enabler. She holds the pieces together even when many forget that they need to be held together. Often at great personal sacrifice, she has been the survivor, the gatekeeper, and at times, the “heavy” in managing access and regimen for a matriarch of 100-plus years.

Mary Ann, the second of four direct descendants of J.D. and Laurena Walker, has, over time, taken on diverse roles. To her brother, James, she has been the traveling and fishing buddy. To her youngest brother, Edward, and her sister, Evelyn, she has been a trailblazer who knocked quietly on society’s doors and time after time, got in.

Her niece, Yvonne Walker Andrews and her nephews, Edward, Jr. and Mark can recall the influence on their lives by one they call “Ran” as they grew up in Philadelphia. Even the great nieces and nephew, Nicole, Tiffany, Jessica and Anthony have gained lifelong memories of visits and extended stays with their great-grandmother as a result of “Ran’s” unique family ministry.



Mary Ann maximized contacts made while working at Merck Pharmaceuticals, Temple University, the local television station, KYW-TV, United Steelworkers and the Philadelphia Navy Yard. She was able to expose and orient Stephanie to people of all cultures and

professions--some of whom included, actor Sidney Portier, former baseball great Bill White, entertainer Sammy Davis, Jr., Dr. Patrick Swygert who later became president of Howard University in Washington, D.C., and many others. Her administrative and networking abilities were instrumental in the establishment of North Philadelphia’s Progress Plaza, and the Opportunities Industrial Centers (OIC)--both of which were visions of her pastor at the Zion Baptist Church, Dr. Leon H. Sullivan.

As an enabler to her widowed mother, Mary Ann returned to service at The Beulah Baptist Church of Philadelphia. From 1968 to 2000, Mary Ann has served as the principal helpmate of her mother, Laurena Puriefoy Walker. Mary Ann’s sustained service qualifies her as an emeritus board member for YouthUSA and principal advisor for the ministry’s GrandMentor Program. The one life most impacted by Mary Ann’s enabling qualities is that of her only child. Born February 13, 1948, Stephanie was “enabled” from the beginning to overcome insurmountable obstacles and celebrate victories. Mary Ann is said to have braved a New York blizzard to arrive at the Bronx Hospital to deliver her baby. The laboring experience included repeat trips on foot between home and the hospital before her baby girl won her citizenship. As an enabler, Mary Ann stood firm against challenges to ensure that her daughter knew her connection to the church, to music and to ministry. She saw that Stephanie attended the best schools, even when the system sought to deny her.



Walker Family Fund

EVELYN WALKER ARMSTRONG APRIL 18, 1927 – JANUARY 10, 2015



Evelyn Walker Armstrong is co-founder of Youth Achievers USA Institute (YouthUSA) and Director of the J.D. and Laurena Walker Family Fund. In her determination to give something back to society, she believes that all who are in a position to further the principles governing spiritual, intellectual, and financial growth and development for individuals, families and communities should be willing to try to make a difference.

Ms Armstrong often reflects on solid leadership and strong religious beliefs demonstrated by her father, J.D. Walker, steadfast faith embodied in her mother, Laurena Puriefoy Walker, and consistent mentoring by her maternal grandmother, Mary Puriefoy. "Granny," as her grandmother was affectionately known, always believed in her "little black girl's" potential to succeed. The spiritual, professional

and emotional investment in Evelyn Walker has produced an intellectually grounded visionary with an unyielding compassion for family and community.

Measurable Achievement



"All I ever needed was someone to believe in me," says Evelyn. Ms. Armstrong holds a Master of Science in Library Science degree from the Drexel University, College of Information Science and Technology, Philadelphia, PA, and a Baccalaureate in Economics and Political Science from Howard University, Washington, D.C. She also took graduate courses at Temple University, School of Business, Philadelphia, PA.

Ms. Armstrong's accomplishments at the Merck Research Laboratories, Merck & Co., West Point, PA and Rahway, NJ, distinguished her as a pioneer for 21st Century published scientific information services. As Director of the Merck Literature Resources Center, Ms. Walker Armstrong spearheaded the design, development, and operation of eight information centers located in research and operating divisions in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

She also served as a consultant for other Merck information centers in Terlings Park, England and Montreal, Canada. Under her leadership she managed the design and implementation of a corporate-wide integrated library network system; a system that provided on-line published scientific and medical literature access to all research and operating staff.

Meaningful Service

Ms. Armstrong was a member of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association, Information Management Section and served as Steering Committee Chairman for various projects. She served as Chairman, Pharmaceutical Division of the Special Libraries Association, and consultant to the Visiting Advisory Committee on American Library Association Accreditation when Drexel University College of Information, Sciences and Technology was up for accreditation renewal. Compounding "Granny's investment" in her as a young girl, Ms. Armstrong today serves as a principal advisor for strategic planning and financial services, supporting The Annual Youth Achievement Awards, a program of Youth Achievers USA.



Her record of community and professional service includes local support to Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America, American Society for Information Science, Montgomery County Emergency Services and the Drug Information Association. She served as a trustee on the Jenkintown Library Board, Jenkintown, Pa as well as the Board of Visitors, Howard University College of Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences. She has traveled extensively, visiting six of the world's seven continents.

Ms. Armstrong exemplifies a commitment to life-long learning through academic experiences having served as a member of the Drexel University adjunct faculty, a member of the A.J. Drexel Society Cabinet, continues to serve as a consultant to The iSchool at Drexel University. She is distinguished as a 1992 Drexel 100, the University's alumni hall of fame, launched that same year, marking Drexel's 100th anniversary.

Extensive family, corporate, and community experience eminently qualifies Ms. Armstrong as a philanthropist, speaker, scholar, trustee, and counselor.



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SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Curtis T. Word, 1998-99
Ft. Washington, MD
Cheyney University

Matthew Drysdale, 1999
New York, NY
West Chester Community College

Andrew Fautleroy, 1999
New York, NY
Delhi College of Technology

Patrick Pierre, 2000
New York, NY
West Chester Community College

Pandwe Gibson, 2001-02
Chicago, IL
Scripps College
Harvard University

Bonita Walker, 2001-03
Boston, MA
Howard University

Lauren Sullivan-Lark, 2002-03
Philadelphia, PA
Spelman University
MeHerry Medical College

Jameelah Broughton, 2003
Los Angeles, CA
Howard University

Carmela Bolding
Trinity University
Truvaughn Ebanks

Prince Georges Community College, 2008

Robert Selders
Louisiana State University

ORGANIZATIONS AND CHURCHES:

Haitian Relief Fund (AMEC)
Heritage Internationale Ministries
One Way Deliverance Ministries
Disaster Relief to "Hurricane Rita" Churches