

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
ON THE DEATH OF DR. HARRY LEMUEL HAMILTON**

Dr. Harry Lemuel Hamilton - a rare man of honor, a pioneer in race relations and in assisting minority and disadvantaged students, educator, editor of scientific journals, a passionate supporter of the agricultural and life sciences, and a compassionate and respected African-American leader - died on Sunday, February 4, 1996. He served as the first director of the Minority and Disadvantaged Student Program for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison from 1973 to 1976.

Dr. Hamilton was born in Talladega Alabama on July 10, 1907, son of a congregational minister and his school teacher wife. He was educated at Talladega College, graduating as a chemistry major in 1928. In 1935, he completed his master's degree in organic chemistry from the University of Wisconsin. He earned a Ph.D. in soil chemistry from the University of Wisconsin in 1948 while working at the Forest Products Laboratory of the USDA.

Dr. Hamilton's professional positions included teaching high school at Kings Mountain Academy in North Carolina and at Avery Institute in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1938, he became a chemistry professor at Tougaloo College, near Jackson Mississippi. In 1942, he and his family moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he served his country during wartime as a supervisor in the manufacture of gun powder at the Badger Ordnance Works in Baraboo. For several years, he served as a research chemist at Bjorksten Laboratories. Subsequently, he served for 17 years as editor of two scientific journals for the American Society of Agronomy.

It was after his retirement in 1973 that he was selected as the first Director of the Minority and Disadvantaged Student Program, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison, serving in that role until 1976. In this position, Dr. Hamilton helped recruit minority and disadvantaged students and was known widely for his compassionate understanding and treatment of students.

He was highly respected by all who had the opportunity to know him. He was described by friends and colleagues as a gentleman, a hard worker with a sharp mind, an inspired founder, leader and sage in the NAACP, an advocate for senior citizens throughout the state of Wisconsin, a molder of good will among all races, a dedicated leader in the First Congregational Church, and the epitome of dignity. With his wife, Velma, he welcomed hundreds of students from around the world to the University through the Friends of International Students.

He was an active leader in the Rotary Club and shared his leadership abilities and vision in a large number of civic activities, including a position on the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights, President of the Dane County Association for Mental Health, a past president of the United World Federalists, a member of the Izaak Walton League, a co-chairman of Madison for Fair Housing, a member of the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, and a member of the board of directors for Oakwood Village. He was selected as a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity and was active in the Capital District Lodge of the Prince Hall Masons.

In 1934, he married Velma Fern Bell of Beloit, Wisconsin. From their marriage came three outstanding children and six grandchildren. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather. Harry and Velma lived a lifetime love-affair with education and public service. As a happy team

together, and as individuals in their own right, they were constantly engaged in worthy causes which brought to each of them many honors and distinctions.

He received many recognitions and awards including the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award and the first annual Manfred E. Swarsensky Humanitarian Service award from the Madison Rotary Club. In 1981, he was designated the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award by the Dane County Mental Health Association, and in 1985 he was honored as Distinguished Citizen by The University of Wisconsin Afro-American Alumni Association. Because of his widespread civic involvement, in 1992, he was honored when the Harry L. Hamilton Science Laboratory was named for him in the Velma Hamilton Middle School in Madison, Wisconsin.

Harry L. Hamilton's life was filled with a spirit of dignity, fairness, equality, tolerance, and a powerful force for the rights of all persons. His lowkeyed speech, his gentle counsel, and his gracious heart will be greatly missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

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