



*African-American/Caribbean Education Association, Inc.
(AAACEA/INC)*

"Working to better the education of our children"

***Hon. Ernestine Washington
The Library Science/ English Language Arts
Scholarship***

Biography

Honorable Ernestine Washington has said, "I am a child of my small, rural Gullah village background which I credit being as great a part of my up-bringing as my parents, school and church." In her small village of Sol Legare, James Island in the County of Charleston, S.C., everyone was family. The community practice of loving and caring for each other instilled in me, character, a commitment of caring and serving unselfishly. She attended public schools where she stayed on the Honor Roll and was inducted into the National Honor Society. A bright young scholar, she won a full four year scholarship to South Carolina State College in Orangeburg and graduated in 1954. Her brilliance brought her to New York where she was accepted at the prestigious Columbia University and earned an MS degree in Library Science. Her desire to return home fell short when she experienced unusual racial practices bringing her back to New York. Her enthusiasm and exemplary work awarded her the position of Branch Manager (Supervisory Librarian) becoming the "first" African-American to achieve this level in the Queens Borough Library System, as well as, the first Children's Librarian. She was responsible for overall supervision of staff, community relations, internal operations of the agency, budget, books, programs and services, and material needs of the community. She also worked in the New York City school system where she was responsible for teaching classes in library use and research, outlining expenditures on various types of materials, and writing proposals for federal funding. To her credit, the RIF (Reaching Is Fundamental) proposal was successfully awarded to her school. Her work would continue through the years and she became known as the Honorable Ernestine Washington as a result of her community activism and work on Community School Board 29, where she was overwhelmingly elected. She was the co-founder of the Laurelton Theatre of Performing Arts and the Black Librarians Caucus of New York. She presently serves as Chair of Social Concern, as Officer of Top Ladies of Distinction, Queens Empire Chapter, as Officer of the St. Albans Human Resource Center Headstart Board of Directors; and she is a member of various community organizations. She was a champion against the Multiplex Theater planned for the Springfield Gardens community and involved with Queens educators that gave students shares of common stock. She has been recognized for her exemplary service to the community by the Metro Eagles' Sports Club, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Veterans Administration Hospital Montrose, New York, and recognized by Dr. Leroy T. Walker, President of the U.S. Olympic Committee for supporting America's Olympic athletes at the Centennial Olympic Games. Honorable Ernestine Washington serves as the Education and Politics Chair of the African-American/Caribbean Education Association. A woman of great warmth and selflessness, she lives and practices these words everyday: "It's a great pleasure serving the people of Queens and wherever I can be of service".