

# VIA Heritage Association (VIAHA) Hall of Fame

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Contacts:

**Jimmy Hollins, Chairman, VIAHA**  
434-825-6117/burleyvarsityclub@gmail.com

**Bernard R. Anderson, HOF Committee Member**  
703-851-2989/banderson361@verizon.net

## 2017 VIAHA Hall of Fame Class Chosen

*Second HOF Class features 11 Inductees*

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA** — Eleven individuals and who have made outstanding contributions to high school athletics and activities have been selected to the 2017 class of the Virginia Interscholastic Association Heritage Association (VIAHA) Hall of Fame.

The class features five athletes (Mattie Parham Bell -- Carver HS, Chesterfield County; Leroy Keyes – Carver HS, Newport News; Milbert Arthur Megginson – Dunbar HS, Lynchburg; Marty Miller – Langston HS, Danville; and Charles Price – Parker-Gray HS, Alexandria); three coaches (Howard Allen – Langston HS, Danville; Walter Lovett – Carver HS, Newport News; and Harry Waters – Dunbar HS, Lynchburg); and three contributors (Garwin DeBerry – Burley and Charlottesville HS; Clarence Oliver – Petersburg HS; and Knox W. Tull, Jr. – Phenix HS, Hampton). Members of the Class of 2017 will bring total membership to 38. The second annual Hall of Fame induction dinner will be held on Friday, June 23, 2017 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Charlottesville, VA.

The Hall is dedicated to preserving the rich heritage and legacy of African-American students and adults who participated in the Virginia Interscholastic Association from 1954-70 and its predecessor organization the Virginia Interscholastic Athletic League (VIAL).

Prior to public school desegregation, one of the most influential organizations in Virginia was the Virginia Interscholastic Association (VIA), which served young African-American students who attended segregated high schools in the state. The impact this association had on shaping the lives of these students went far beyond governing athletic events. The VIA brought together students, parents and mentors to develop a strong foundation of character and ethical responsibility in the students. The notable careers of many VIA graduates are testaments to the successful efforts of their teachers, principals and counselors.

Athletes and coaches considered for nomination are those who excelled on VIA athletic teams. Contributors are professionals who may have excelled in VIA non-athletic activities or in such areas as school administration, media, officiating, medical services and other professions. A fourth group is best described as the Legacy category. This includes such potential nominees as VIA athletic teams that gained extraordinary distinction or coaches, athletes, contributors and/or teams from VIAL or post-VIA era history.

The VIAL/VIA's original home was at Virginia State College (now Virginia State University) from 1954–1970. After merging with the Virginia High School League (VHSL), all VIA records are now stored at Virginia State University.

The deadline for nominations in 2017 is September 30.

## About the VIA Heritage Association Hall of Fame

The VIA Heritage Association Hall of Fame (VIAHA) is organized as a means of recognizing and preserving the rich heritage and legacy of African-American (Black) high school sports and activities under the direction of the VIA from 1954-70 and promoting greater appreciation and understanding of the contributions of Blacks to the history of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### VIA Heritage Association (VIAHA) Hall of Fame 2017 Inductees

#### Athletes

#### **Mattie Parham Bell**

**Carver High, Chesterfield County (1951)  
Basketball (Legacy Selection)**

Mattie Parham Bell's family was the first black family to live in her neighborhood in Colonial Heights, VA. There being no black schools in the jurisdiction, Mattie and her siblings had to walk approximately four miles one way to attend the Matoaca Laboratory (Elementary) School on the campus of Virginia State College (now University). For this reason her mother did not allow her to begin school until she was 8 years old. She initially attended D. Webster Davis High School – also on the VSU campus. In 1948 she transferred to the newly opened George Washington Carver High School in Chesterfield County where she played varsity basketball. At this time girls played "Six on Six" basketball. This consisted of three forwards playing defense only and three guards playing offense only with each group playing only in half court. Mattie was an outstanding defensive player who dominated play with steals, blocked shots and overall quickness that matched many boys of her age. Playing on back to back State Runner-up teams coached by Mrs. Roberta Harris White, Mattie was selected to the Virginia Interscholastic Athletic League (VIAL) All State Basketball Team. She continued her education at VSU School of the Industries and earned a Terminal Certificate in Tailoring. She served with distinction on the staff of VSU for 40 years - including as assistant instructor in Tailoring. Mattie's community service includes assisting in the founding of the Petersburg Symphony Orchestra and she is a lifelong supporter of the Good Sheppard Baptist Church.

#### **Leroy Keyes**

**Carver High, Newport News (1965)  
Multisport**

Leroy Keyes is one of the finest all-around athletes in Virginia history. As a 1965 graduate of Carver High School in Newport News, VA, he was an outstanding athlete in football, basketball, and track and field. In football, he scored 44 touchdowns in three seasons and rushed for more than 1,000 yards as a senior. In basketball he scored more than 2,000 points and demonstrated outstanding defensive skills. In track and field he is believed to be the first Virginia high school athlete to long jump 24 feet. At Purdue University, Keyes played a major role in securing the school's first ever Rose Bowl appearance in 1966. An outstanding player at running back and defensive back, he was a consensus All-American in both 1967 and 1968. He was the first player in Purdue's history to rush for more than 1,000 yards in a single season, and concluded his college career as the school's all-time leader in rushing touchdowns – a record that stood for nearly 30 years. In 1968 he finished second to O. J. Simpson in voting for the Heisman Trophy - college football's highest individual honor. The Philadelphia Eagles selected him as the third overall pick in the 1969 NFL Draft. In 1987 he was named as both an offensive back and defensive back on Purdue's All-Time Football Team and was selected as the school's "All Time Greatest Player."

## **Milbert Arthur Megginson**

**Dunbar High, Lynchburg (1969)**

**Basketball**

Milbert Megginson was a five foot 10 inch point guard for the Dunbar Fighting Poets in the final years of VIA completion. He advanced from the Junior Varsity player as a sophomore to a Varsity reserve as a junior to a VIA All- State and All-American player as a senior in 1969. With his all-around skills as a ball handler, defensive wizard, court awareness and long range shooting skills he was known as the ‘Wizard of Oz.’ At the conclusion of his final season at Dunbar, he played in a high school all-star game in New York City and was named a High School All American as one of the top 100 High School Players in the United States. Mr. Megginson declined the numerous college scholarship offers in order to support his widowed mother. His All-American trophy, playing jersey (#4) and photo are on permanent display at Dunbar Middle School in Lynchburg. Mr. Megginson passed in January 2015.

## **Marty Miller**

**Langston High, Danville (1964)**

**Baseball**

Marty Miller is a 1964 graduate of Langston High in Danville. He competed in basketball and baseball where he had a .684 batting average his senior year and a career average of .513. He accepted a scholarship to Norfolk State University where he was an All-CIAA player in 1967 and 1968. He had a career batting average of .400 and became the university’s first player selected as an NCAA College Division All-American in Baseball. After a tour in the U. S. Army he returned to Norfolk State as an assistant baseball coach in 1972 and became head coach in 1973. In his 32 years as head coach he compiled a record of 718-543-3, won 17 conference championships and was named CIAA Coach of the Year 15 times. He coached six All-Americans and 22 players who signed professional contracts. He has the most baseball wins in CIAA history. He was inducted into the CIAA and Norfolk State University Halls of Fame in 2003, the Hampton Roads Hall of Fame in 2012 and the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame in 2014.

## **Charles Price**

**Parker-Gray High, Alexandria (1941)**

**Football**

Charles Price was a 1941 graduate of Parker-Gray High in Alexandria and a 1945 graduate of Virginia State College (now University). At VSU, he lettered in football and track. Charles “Bruiser” Price was an All-CIAA fullback for VSU’s 1945 CIAA Championship team. After college he played professional football with the Los Angeles Dons of the All American Football Conference and Hawaiian Warriors in the Pacific Coast League. In 1946-47 he was an assistant coach at Parker-Gray. For 11 years he head coach in football, basketball and tennis at Lucy Addison High School in Roanoke. Between 1959 and 1964 he was head coach for football and track and assistant coach for basketball at Luther Jackson High School in Fairfax County. The 1964 team had a 9-0 record allowed only 20 points all season and won the VIA Football Championship. He was also voted VIA Football Coach of the Year. In 1965 he became Langley High School’s (Fairfax County) first football coach. With this assignment, he became one of the first African-American head football coaches in the Virginia High School League’s Group 1-A. In 2001 he was elected to the Fairfax County Football Hall of Fame.

## Coaches

### Howard Allen

#### Langston High, Danville

Howard "Hank" Allen was born in Dolphin, VA, attended public schools in Englewood, NJ and graduated from Hampton Institute (now University). He excelled in basketball, baseball and soccer in high school and was captain of the basketball and soccer teams at Hampton. He was selected as an All-CIAA basketball player in 1940. After receiving a Master's Degree at New York University, he began his teaching career at Langston High in 1952. In 17 years as a basketball coach, he never had a losing season and won more than 70 percent of his games in compiling almost 300 wins. His teams played in 11 VIA Western District finals, appeared in four VIA State Semifinals, was State Runner-up twice and won the final VIA State Basketball Championship in 1969. Coach Allen's baseball teams won seven District Championships and were VIA State Champions in 1957, 1958 and 1964. Upon the integration of public schools after 1969, Coach Allen joined the staff of the University of Virginia's Consultative Resource Center which was dedicated to the support of desegregation efforts in the state of Virginia. In 1973 he earned the Doctor of Education Degree at UVA. Dr. Allen's former players give strong testimony on his contributions to the development of young men as much as his abilities as a winning coach. He passed in June 2012.

### Walter Lovett

#### Carver High, Newport News

Dr. Walter Lovett is a 1947 graduate from George P. Phenix High School, Hampton in 1947 and Virginia State University (VSU) in 1951. As head football coach at Carver High School in Newport News he won the school's only VIA State Championship by defeating Burley High of Charlottesville in the 1961 championship game. After several years as an assistant, he became head football coach at VSU in 1970. He won CIAA football championships in 1970 and 1972 – VSU's first football titles since 1952. He was named CIAA Coach of the Year in 1970, NAIA Coach of the Year in 1971 and 1972. In 1973 he was named head football coach at Hampton University and later served as Athletic Director. He was inducted into the VSU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1990. For his significant contributions to the community, leadership in collegiate football and commitment to the CIAA mission, he was elected to the CIAA Hall of Fame in 2014.

### Harry Waters

#### Dunbar High, Lynchburg

Coach Waters was born in Wildwood, NJ and graduated from Wildwood High School. He attended St. Paul's College for two years then transferred to and graduated from Virginia Union University and Columbia University. He worked for a time as a manager at Seaview Beach in Virginia Beach, VA. This was a recreational area used exclusively by African-Americans during Virginia's segregated era. In 1949 he began a career as history teacher and football coach at Dunbar High in Lynchburg. He became the basketball coach in 1950. He won the VIA's Western District Championships in 1956, 1962 and 1969. The 1966 team was Western District Champions, VIA State Champions and runners-up in the National Negro High School Tournament in Montgomery, Alabama. In 20 seasons as Dunbar's basketball coach, he won 386 games. Coach Waters' Track and Field teams were distinguished by winning the mile relay at five consecutive Penn Relays. He later coached basketball at E. C. Glass High School and taught at Sandusky and Heritage High Schools. Mr. Waters is fondly remembered as an outstanding coach, teacher and mentor to his many students. He passed in July 2003.

## Contributors

### **Garwin DeBerry**

**Burley and Charlottesville Highs, Charlottesville**  
**Coach, Teacher, Mentor**

Garwin DeBerry is a 1965 graduate of Burley High School in Charlottesville. He was an all-around athlete who participated in football, basketball, baseball and track and field. He aspired to be a coach from an early age. He helped lead the football team to VIA Western District Championships in 1963 and 1964 and State runner-up Championship in 1964. He received a football scholarship to attend Virginia State College (now university) in Petersburg. He began his coaching career in New Jersey before returning to Virginia. For 35 years he coached at Charlottesville High including the last 28 years as head football coach. In 1980, he became the first African-American head coach at a formally all white school in the area. He was named as District Coach of the Year 6 times, won one Regional championship and qualified for the state playoffs 12 times. His contributions as coach, teacher and mentor have been recognized in many ways. In October 2015, the football field at Charlottesville High's Tommy Theodose Stadium was named in his honor for exceptional service.

### **Clarence Oliver**

**Petersburg High, Petersburg**  
**Music (Legacy Selection)**

Mr. Oliver is a nationally known drummer and entertainer. He attended Carter G. Woodson Elementary in Hopewell and graduated from Petersburg High in 1972. His skills as a drummer were shown in public performances as early as age 11. By the age of 14 he was performing with professional bands throughout Central Virginia. He has played with 5 artists currently enshrined in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame – Etta James, The Dells, Solomon Burke, Hank Ballard and Grand Master Flash. He also recorded and toured with Ray, Goodman and Brown (The Moments) and toured with saxophone artist Najee. Mr. Oliver currently performs with the CYT band at the Mount Airy Casino Resort in the Poconos, Pennsylvania.

### **Knox W. Tull, Jr.**

**Phenix High, Hampton**  
**Engineering**

Mr. Tull is a graduate of George P. Phenix High School in Hampton, VA. He attended Hampton University for 2 years. He then transferred to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. He subsequently earned the Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) in Atlanta, GA. He has completed the Owner/President Management Program at the Harvard Business School in Boston, MA. Mr. Tull is a registered Professional Engineer in the District of Columbia and several other states. Before starting his own engineering company (Jackson and Tull) in 1974, Mr. Tull worked as a civil engineer with consulting engineering firms in Washington, DC and Atlanta, GA. Earlier in his career, he also served on the faculties of Howard University in Washington, DC and the University of the District of Columbia. Mr. Tull has served on the NASA Advisory Council (NAC). He is a member of several professional, technical and civic organizations. Jackson and Tull received NASA's George M. Low Award in 2000. Mr. Tull was inducted into Georgia Tech's Engineering Hall of Fame in 2014. His varied community service efforts include his personal commitment of time and resources to the development of the VIA Heritage Association.

**2016 Inductees into the VIAHA Hall of Fame were:**

Athletes – Walter Bowser, Roosevelt Brown, Joseph Buggs, Jesse Jefferson, Jr., Louvenia Johnson, Earl Lloyd, Raymond Pollard, Benita Fitzgerald Moseley, Bryant Stith, Charles Stukes, and Donald Ross.

Coaches – Fredrick Cooper, Arthur Gardner, Robinette Hayes, George Lancaster, William Lawson, Jr., Thad Madden, Carl Pinn, George Quarles, Maxie Robinson and Robert Smith. Contributors – James Hayes, Calvin Jacox, Clarence Jones, George Peterson, Elmer Sampson and Earnest Shaw. Special Recognition – The Armstrong-Walker Football Classic.