

## **A teacher educator who challenged minds and changed lives for African Americans**

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### **Abstract**

The path to quality education for African Americans has been rough and often fraught with resistance from the time that they were denied any education, to “separate” education, and even to “no child left behind” education. Any significant achievement for them in the American educational system required blood, sweat, and tears on the part of somebody. This manuscript first provides an overview of how education for African Americans has unfolded in this country. To set the stage for how a person might enhance opportunities for Blacks to gain an education, a role and scope picture of the college professor is presented. From these two perspectives, the life-long effort of a dynamic college professor is revealed. The story depicts the professor’s background and educational attainment, employment choice, efforts at program development, fund procurement, preparation of students, and advocacy for graduates’ advancement. It also pinpoints specific hurdles that the professor had to overcome along the way and reveals how in the end, the efforts did not go completely unnoticed. The case comes together as “The house that Jackie (pseudonym) built for Mack.” Jackie spent a lifetime challenging minds and changes lives for African Americans. Even after retirement, she continued to enhance the development of her former students. There still is a need for professors like this teacher educator; for some battles have been successfully fought, the victory has yet to be won in affording full educational opportunities to African Americans.

Keywords: African Americans, college professors, effective teaching, equal educational opportunities, HBCUs, and teacher education.

## Introduction

Considerable time elapsed from the discovery of America (1492) to the establishment of Harvard College (1636), the first higher education institution in the country. But the founding of Harvard was no good news for African Americans as it would be many years later before an African American would enroll in a college in America.

This manuscript examines the past and speculates on the future of higher education opportunities for African Americans. Factors considered are major historical educational events, the work and impact of college professors, and what might be needed in the future for more African Americans to obtain a quality higher education.

The question may be asked, can the work of one person or a few individuals play a major role in facilitating higher education opportunities for African Americans? Jalongo (1991) stated that sometimes just one teacher's or child's story is like a lightning rod that captures all the energy of its situation. Case stories of professors are more than interesting anecdotes; they are reflections of professional perspectives, priorities, and practices. Through the stories of teachers' lives, responses can be formulated to their questions and the abstract can be made more concrete (Jalongo, 1991), and ultimately, a better educational system can be framed.

Any effort for educational advancement needs periodic assessment. The effort to cause African Americans to become more representative in earning higher education degrees has that same need. True review and assessment should focus on the problem, methodology, resources, and outcomes. This manuscript takes a very introspective look at these indicators.

## Road to higher education for African Americans

The road to higher education for African Americans may be viewed in terms of three levels of opportunity: a time when education was legally or commonly forbidden, limited or restricted opportunities, and a time of modest gains or glamorized affiliation. The term "modest gains" should in no way be interpreted as having reached the point of representative participation in higher education.

Education forbidden or denied: For years, a majority of the Black population in this country was prohibited from learning to read or write. If people are denied the opportunity to read or write, attending college is out of the question. This is supported from the finding that Harvard College was established in 1636 (Greenblatt, Rodriguez, Rosenberg & Salomone, 2006), but it would be another 163 years before the first African American, John Chavis, would attend an American college or university. Chavis attended Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, but there is no record of his receiving a degree from the University. In 1850, Harvard Medical School accepted its first three black students, but later rescinded the invitations due to pressure from white students (*The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, n.d.).

Limited or restricted opportunities: Later efforts of African Americans to obtain higher education reflect some limited opportunities and some hurdles. Reports differ on exactly when African Americans were first admitted to college. Cowan and Maguire (1995) reported that the first African American studied at Princeton in 1763. Greenblatt

and et al. (2006) reported that it was 1799 when the first African American, John Chavis, attended a college or university in America. It was 1823 when the first African American, Alexander Lucius Twilight, received a bachelor's degree in the United States from Middlebury College in Vermont (Rockler-Gladen, 2006). Other milestones, and some hurdles, under the concept limited or restricted opportunities were:

- 1854: Ashmun Institute (now Lincoln University) was founded as the first institute of higher education for black men. Later graduates were Langston Hughes and Thurgood Marshall;
- 1904: The Kentucky legislature passed the Day Law, prohibiting interracial education;
- 1932: By this time there were 117 historically black institutions of higher education, 36 public and 81 private; and
- 2005: The Bush administration changed the formula for Pell Grant eligibility. About 89,000 low-income students would no longer receive a Pell Grant (*The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, n.d.).

Modest gains or glamorized opportunities: To reflect gains in higher education for African Americans, a review was made of studies that investigated the characteristics of students who enroll in postsecondary education. Between 1976 and 2004, minority enrollment increased as a percentage of undergraduate enrollment from 17 to 32 percent. The percentage of female undergraduate enrollment has surpassed that of male undergraduate enrollment and the trends in graduate enrollment were similar to those for undergraduate enrollment. In 2003-04, a larger percentage of Black students received financial aid than did White and other ethnic groups (KewalRamani, Gilbertson, Fox & Provasnik, 2007). Selected gains or glamorized milestones under this concept include:

- 1892: An Amherst College football player, William Henry Lewis was named the first black All-American athlete;
- 1954: In *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional;
- 1980: President Jimmy Carter signed Executive Order 12232, a federal program to strengthen HBCUs and increase funding;
- 1990: Barack Obama was elected the first black president of the Harvard Law Review; in 2008 Obama became President Elect of the United States; and now, is President of the United States of America; and
- 2002: Thirty years after Jake Ayers Sr. sued the state of Mississippi claiming that the state's black colleges and universities were underfunded, a federal judge approved a \$503 million settlement in the case (*The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, n.d.).

The often path to quality higher education for African Americans (and possibly all students) is the shoulder of competent faculty. In her infinite wisdom, Jackie wrote, "Recognizing that the faculty is key to the extent to which the institution will actualize its mission, Jackson State University over the years has endeavored to build and maintain a faculty committed to the excellence of all aspects of the university. To fulfill this objective, obviously effective teaching is a prerequisite." To put the importance of faculty and effective teaching in perspective, she goes on to say, "On a hierarchy of its assets or one of its essential needs, perhaps only the financial resources necessary to

operate the university, sine quo non, would be ranked above a competent faculty (Office of Academic Affairs, 2000 p. ix).

HBCUs have been credited with nurturing and producing leaders who exhibit fortitude in advancing social equality for all. These universities' rich supply of social capital, a direct consequence of their mission and history, makes them a unique fixture in the landscape of higher education, one whose special features have not been duplicated by historically White institutions (Palmer & Gasman, 2008).

### **Role and scope of the college professor**

College faculty constitute the foundation for any academic effort requiring expertise, whether it is training students or carrying out research. To accomplish the mission, they perform multiple roles such as instructor, adviser, researcher, university citizen and departmental colleague. The generic behavioral categories also contain a variety of distinct activities. For example, instruction is not limited to classroom teaching. It includes time spent on working with student organizations, formal classroom instruction, independent instruction, noncredit instruction, counseling, and supervising students. Instruction also entails grading papers, preparing course materials, and developing new curricula. Research includes measures of time spent on inquiry and scholarship, including preparing for and conducting research, preparing or reviewing articles or books, attending professional meetings, giving performances in the fine or applied arts, and seeking outside funding for research (Fairweather, 1996).

From a student-impact perspective, most teaching activities can be divided into three broad categories to bring about desired learning and changes in student behavior and development: instructional expert, manager, and counselor. As instructional expert, the teacher plans, guides and evaluates learning. This role serves as a kind of core role that the others tend to support. As manager the teacher has oversight of the classroom environment, which also involves modeling a positive attitude toward the curriculum and toward school and learning in general. Teachers who reveal a caring attitude toward learning and the learning environment help to instill and reinforce similar attitudes in their students. As counselor the teacher must be prepared to work with students, parents, and colleagues in making the school experience as supportive as possible (Moore, 1992).

The role and scope of the college professor is perhaps endless. They may be viewed from a literary and journalistic perspective, being seen as searchers for truth and the molders of youth (Brown & Thornton, 1963). The role and scope may be viewed from a diversity perspective, where there is conviction that teaching is a task of such social and personal importance that every class hour deserves careful preparation (Brown & Thornton, 1963).

From a performance standpoint, college professors are expected to be self-demanding, alert and questioning in the discipline, and concerned about excellence in teaching. As a result of the teaching, students should develop an increased fund of information and depth of understanding and an increased ability to use new knowledge and understanding in solving problems. Students should also develop an enhanced intellectual curiosity, a greater sense of satisfaction from worthwhile accomplishments, more confidence in their own powers, laudable ambitions, and a sense of values and

ideals of citizenship. Ultimately, the instructor will attempt to develop in students certain skills of scholarship in the discipline (Brown & Thornton, 1963).

In terms of the amount of effort, one study (Fairweather, 1996) reported that faculty in 4-year institutions averaged 55 hours work per week. Almost 49 of those hours were spent working at their institution, the remainder was about evenly split between other paid activities and unpaid service. The faculty, on average, spent more than half of their time on instruction-related activities, about one-quarter of their time was spent on research, 14 percent on administration and less than 5 percent each on service, consulting, and professional development.

To ensure that college professors are able to efficiently and effectively perform their duties, the college must assure sufficient time to teach, study, reflect, prepare and evaluate the results of their teaching. Also, the college should provide reasonable rewards for teaching, in terms of salary, rank, recognition and such fringe benefits as retirement, health insurance, travel to professional meetings, and assistance with the costs of publication, if needed (Brown & Thornton, 1963). A very intrinsic and interpersonal reward associated with college teaching is the opportunity to interact with mature minds and to enlighten and to inspire and challenge youthful minds (Brown & Thornton, 1963).

Perhaps contrary to the casual observer, college teaching is not for the faint of heart or the leisure seeker. According to Jackie (Office of Academic Affairs, 2000), few professional careers are more complex and challenging than college and university teaching and with such understanding, the administration of Jackson State University continually seeks ways and means to improve the performance of individual faculty members.

### **What makes for a distinguished professor?**

From studies on teaching effectiveness, findings indicate that effective teachers are masters of their subject; can organize, emphasize and clarify ideas; can point out relationships and motivate students; and are reasonable, open, concerned and imaginative human beings. Effective teachers recognize the impact of prior knowledge on subsequent learning and connect new information with what students already know through the use of metaphors, analogies, examples, stories and demonstrations (Seldin, 1991). Such teaching strategies are especially important when facing students who may be underprepared or undermotivated or simply not attuned or developmentally ready (Katz & Henry, 1988).

The best teachers are active and avid learners themselves and have high expectations for students. When a teacher is fully committed to learning, she has a sense of efficacy, the belief that she can help even the most difficult or unmotivated students (Jalongo, 1991). A distinguished professor will go the extra mile in preparation for the job, as was true with Jackie. When earning her doctorate she wrote, "Although I have completed (the required) course work, I am now enrolled in two psychology courses – Personality and Modern Learning Theory. I did not have time to take these last year but felt that they would be valuable for my work at the college" (Jackson State University files). On another occasion Jackie wrote to the vice president, "...we have designed a set of activities which we strongly believe would insure an increase in the quality of our

performance as teachers and consequently, bring about more effective development in students” (Jackson State University files).

### **The case of a dynamic college professor**

Here is the case of Jackie (pseudonym), a dynamic and inspirational college professor. It reflects her background and educational attainments, employment and professional accomplishments, extra ordinary attributes, some defining moments in her life, and some honors and awards that she received.

**Background and educational attainments:** Jackie was born in St. Matthews, SC. She became affiliated with the Methodist faith, graduated high school, earned a B.S. degree with a major in biology from South Carolina State College (at the time it was State Colored Normal, Industrial and Mechanical College of South Carolina), Orangeburg, SC, earned the M.A. degree with a major in educational psychology from Teachers College-Columbia University, New York, NY (the master’s project was “Correlational Study of Performance on a Verbal Scale and a Non-Verbal Scale of Intelligence Administered to Bi-Lingual Subjects), did postmaster’s studies at Columbia University, and earned the Ph.D. degree in psychology and special education from the University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK (the doctoral dissertation was “An Experimental Study of Test Performance as a Function of Different Intensities of Chronic Anxiety.” At the University of Oklahoma she passed, quite successfully, both the French Reading Examination and the Spanish Reading Examination (Jackson State University files).

**Employment and professional accomplishments:** Jackie first served as an instructor at South Carolina State College for two years and then accepted employment at Jackson State University (at that time it was Jackson State College). When she was initially employed at Jackson State, the college had no ranking system for faculty. At the time of her retirement from the University in 1980, she was professor, with tenure, and head of the department of educational psychology. She held membership in professional societies such as Association of American University Professors, Council for Exceptional Children, and American Association of Mental Deficiency (Jackson State University files).

**Extraordinary attributes:** Jackie was a trailblazer when it came to program development and grant procurement at Jackson State. The dean appointed her chairman of a committee to establish plans, procedures, and resources for initiating a program of Special Education for the Mentally Retarded during the 1965-66 school year. She went on to pioneer many other initiatives including the Mable Carney Chapter of the Student National Education Association; Psi Chi, the national honor society of Psychology and an affiliate of the American Psychological Association; a Learning Resource Center; and “The Teacher as a Behavioral Scientist” experimental approach that was the precursor of the University’s Department of Educational Psychology (Jackson State University, 2004). The yields of her grant-writing efforts included the following:

- “Planning Grant – Education of the Handicapped,” US Office of Education, P.L. 85-926, \$20,000;
- “Preparation of Professional Personnel in the Education of the Handicapped,” U.S. Office of Education, \$128,400; and

- “Preparation of Professional Personnel in the Education of the Handicapped,” State Department of Education, \$46,028

An astute teacher: Jackie was a teacher of high expectations. One course that she taught was general psychology. In the grading criteria section of the syllabus she wrote, “Evaluation is viewed as a means of determining to what extent previously defined course objectives have been achieved.” Bases for the final grade were daily class performance (mastery of course content as manifested through verbal discussion, quality of written assignments and projects, and experiments), 30%; average of four periodic tests, 30%; final examination, 30%; and evidence of student growth, 10% (Jackson State University files).

Staunch advocate for minority participation and equal educational opportunities: Jackie retained a presence in high decision-making places and used her knowledge and influence to promote opportunities for Blacks. Amid the turbulent 60s, she conceived, designed, and directed a comprehensive program to promote academic and personal growth in African American students that enrolled in previously all-white schools (Jackson State University, 2004). In 1975 she was invited by the National Science Foundation to review proposal applications. In writing to the vice president for his reaction regarding being absent from duty, she wrote, “Realizing the desirability of having minority members on review panels, I wish I felt more like participating” (Jackson State University files).

Jackie’s continued service of citizenship, advocacy and community support is furthered mirrored in her memberships in Central United Methodist Church, the University Club of the Jackson State University Development Foundation, Incorporated, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the Links, Incorporated, and the Auxiliary of the Medical, Surgical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Association of Mississippi. She was also an original steering committee member of the Head Start Program for Jackson (Jackson State University, 2004).

Expressions of profundity: The literature points out that poor administration-faculty relationships, or disagreements, are not uncommon in colleges (Apps, 1988). Sometimes faculty and administrators get at odds with each other on crucial issues. Jackie had the fortitude, with tremendous grace, to stand face-to-face with administrators to make the case for faculty. Sometimes using few words, other times using a stream of complex and endearing expressions, Jackie’s message always garnered action or strong emotions. For example, in an effort to retain the use of a building for the Practicum-Laboratory Center, Jackie wrote to the vice president saying, “Please be assured that I have no inclination at this time to contend, persist, or attempt to persuade, although I am accustomed to some struggle in accomplishing most of what I have tried to do. Our plans either have sufficient merit to establish a good case or they have not” (Jackson State University files).

Defining moments in the life of Professor Jackie: A career of teaching presents times of both exhilaration and frustration. What one does or how one stands during such times shows true character. Demonstrating character was no problem for Jackie. Here are some of her actions or responses of others as opportunities or critical situations presented themselves:

- For the State of Mississippi, she served on the Interagency Commission on Mental Health and Mental Retardation and the Task Force Committee for

Statewide Planning for Vocational Rehabilitation (Jackson State University, 2004).

- Jackie's Tutorial Program of the 60s was adopted as a chapter project by the Jackson Chapter of the Links, Incorporated that later received the "Project of the Year Award" from the Links, Incorporated nationally (Jackson State University, 2004).
- The executive dean wrote to Jackie saying, "I wish to commend you for your excellent preparation and presentation of the proposed special education program to be offered at Jackson State College. Your insights into the problem of the mentally retarded and your concern about doing something to prepare them for useful and satisfying roles in life serve to rekindle our faith in and respect for the human personality (Jackson State University files).
- The head of the Office of Experimental Projects and Programs, National Science Foundation, Washington, DC wrote to Jackie saying, "The NSF invites your assistance in evaluating project proposals submitted to the Student Science Training Program. We would like very much to have you serve on a review panel to advise the Foundation on the relative merit of proposals submitted to this program" (Jackson State University files).
- Health eventually became a matter of concern. In 1976, Jackie wrote to the vice president requesting approval for being absent from the spring commencement exercise for medical reasons (Jackson State University files).

Tokens of appreciation for Professor Jackie: At many colleges and universities, particularly the larger research institutions, rewards to faculty come from research and scholarly productivity first, campus teaching second, and public service a distant third. Some institutions are making conscious efforts to examine their reward and recognition criteria, to make certain that faculty involvement in continuing education and public service is properly recognized (Apps, 1988). Jackie lamented on rewards and recognition saying

"Of all the interactions among faculty members, few have the motivational impact on the individual member as does the knowledge that his work is known and respected by the administration and the faculty" (Office of Academic Affairs, 2000, p x). Jackie certainly did not get her due, however, she was accorded some recognition for a life dedicated to challenging minds and changing lives of African Americans. A few expressions for her included:

- As a graduate student, she earned Certificates of Proficiency in statistics, research, French, and Spanish from the University of Oklahoma (Jackson State University, 2004).
- The assistant dean of the University of Oklahoma wrote to the president of Jackson State University, "...one of your faculty has completed her doctorate.... Mrs. Jackie has been an outstanding graduate student with us and has performed most creditably in all situations in which she has been placed. I think that her knowledge of the field is well exemplified by the fact that she scored in the 99th percentile on the advanced education section of the Graduate Record Examination. I would hope that with this outstanding record of achievement and accomplishment behind her that she would merit your greatest and most careful consideration in terms of the rewards which may come her way in the years



ahead. Her dissertation was well done, precisely stated, and among the best ones that have been completed here in some time” (Jackson State University files).

- Jackie was cited for “Outstanding Work and Devoted Service” on behalf of handicapped Mississippians in 1967, 1968, and 1969 (Jackson State University, 2004).
- The president of Jackson State wrote to Jackie informing her that she was being recommended to the Board of Trustees for the position of professor and head of the department (Jackson State University files).
- At the Jackson State University Founders’ Day Convocation and Dedication Ceremony on October 28, 2004, the University Park Auditorium was named in honor of Jackie (Jackson State University, 2004).

### **The house that Jackie built for Mack (one of her students)**

Concerning the impact of a professor on students, Jackie wrote, “The ultimate validity of a test of teacher-impact would require a pre-established set of teacher-behaviors which would define competence and the predetermined relationship between these behaviors and specific life experiences of students before and after graduation. For example, would ‘good’ (hard to measure) citizenship and productivity (more easily defined), be attributable to specific teacher-behaviors? If so, which specific teacher-behaviors and to what extent?” She also stated that because of “The multiplicity of uncontrollable variables in any school population, ... it may be virtually impossible to accurately assess the influence that teachers have on students” (Office of Academic Affairs, 2000, p ix). But one step in that direction may be to encourage students to tell what their professors did both for and to them. Below, a sample of that perspective is offered.

This is the story of the house that Jackie built for Mack (pseudonym), a former, yet forever student of Dr. Jackie. Mack presents some frames of the house that Jackie built for him. First, consider the campus culture and the behavior of the students with which Jackie had to work. It appeared that students actually studied instructors first and books second. The grapevine was very active on campus and a story was out on every professor. Students felt a need to know how much they would have to study in a course, how much they would enjoy the class, and what grade they would probably earn. Former students of the course and others who simply liked to gossip were the sources of this type information. Students tended to want instructors who required little or only a modest amount of work, had a sense of humor, and was on the liberal side when assigning grades (Jackson State University students, personal communication, 1963-1967).

Some instructors were believed to be too “hard” and were to be avoided if at all possible. They were labeled as the professors who had all the knowledge about the subject, used sophisticated words in their lectures, and had no mercy in evaluating students. So if multiple sections of the course were offered, students would go early for registration to select the teacher (and time) of choice. The hard instructors were selected when there was no other choice, or they were selected by the so-called “erudite” students who saw themselves a cut above the ordinary. As one would suspect, Jackie was considered among the toughest professors to set foot on the campus. She epitomized all the “hard characteristics” stated above and more. But aside from, or in addition to, her

toughness were the laudable facts that: she knew people in high places; had influence with campus, state, and federal officers and officials; and would fight for what she believed (Jackson State University files).

Mack was a rising senior and was one day walking across campus when another instructor stopped him and invited him to study in a federally funded program in special education. Because he had gone to summer school and would finish coursework ahead of the scheduled graduation date, he was shown how he could complete requirements for both elementary education and special education by May's graduation. This brought him into a close working relationship with Dr. Jackie, as she was director of the federal training program in special education. She had recruited competent staff to advise students, teach the curriculum, acquire appropriate resources, and arrange all types of supplemental and enrichment activities. A few of the courses were reserved for Dr. Jackie. Her persona commanded utmost respect. Many times she walked into the classroom with only her purse and lectured as if she had detailed notes and a well prepared PowerPoint presentation. Students were encouraged to participate in classroom discussion but their comments would be thoroughly scrutinized. One day Mack was to make a class presentation. So he went to class early and outlined the theoretical tenets of the concept across the chalkboard. When Dr. Jackie (personal communication, 1966) got through analyzing the merit of the tenets, almost all of them had been erased.

Students saw the end of their nose; Dr. Jackie saw light years down the road. Mack was happy about his B.S. degree and was in negotiation for employment in Americus, GA. Dr. Jackie (personal communication, 1967) was thinking about another city in Georgia and making arrangements for graduate studies. No one could easily refuse her plans because they had true merit. So, only weeks after graduation, Mack was attending Atlanta University. It was a successful experience and he was encouraged by the faculty there to continue his graduate work, however, he was able to successfully argue with them the importance of getting some teaching experience (B. Mosley, personal communication, 1968).










After two years of teaching, Mack's telephone would ring with Dr. Jackie on the other end of the line. She had been in contact with someone about graduate studies at the University of Florida. Mack had a wife, a child, and liked the new teaching position he had accepted. Therefore, he tried to evade the challenge. A few days later another call would come and it was then obvious that to stay in Dr. Jackie's good graces and ultimately do the right thing, he had to pursue the opportunity for further graduate studies (R.E. Jackie, personal communication, 1970). Mack later learned that Dr. Jackie had been fighting with the DC establishment to afford African Americans more opportunities for advanced study.

The first University of Florida adventure led to the Educational Specialist degree. Mack had planned to resume teaching, or maybe accept an administrative position in the Jackson public schools. Dr. Jackie (personal communication, 1972) thought that Jackson was fine but the assignment should be with her at Jackson State. The appointment was accepted and what an experience it was to work under the supervision of someone who was admired as an awesome professor – gifted with knowledge, a visionary leader, and a facilitator of professional empowerment. But it was understood that Mack needed further development and Dr. Jackie (personal

communication, 1974) helped him to get a leave of absence to complete the doctorate at the University of Florida.

When Mack returned to Jackson State with the doctorate, special education had been made a separate department and Dr. Jackie remained across the hall as chair of psychology. But her support was always felt and her influence would only grow stronger. It was in her retirement that a most valued encounter would take place. Mack was writing a manuscript, *If Faculty Are Called by Name, How Will They Respond?* (2000) and appealed to her to write the foreword for the document. It remains a most endearing work and a symbol of everlasting love and adoration between a professor and her student. Mack takes extreme pride in the house that Jackie built for him. Table 1 depicts a symbolic representation of the input, process and outcomes of the house

**Table 1 - A Professor Frames Educational Opportunities for Her Student: The House that Jackie Built for Mack**

| Input   | Process and Outcomes  |
|---|---|
| This is the land                   | leveled for establishing a double major at the B.S. level;  |
| This is the foundation             | poured for admission to an M.A. degree program;   |
| These are the walls              | constructed for acceptance and matriculation at the Ed.S. level;  |
| These are the beams              | attached for appointment as a college faculty member;   |
| These are the rafters            | pitched for completing the doctoral degree program;   |
| This is the roof                 | nailed for exposure to professionals across the nation;   |
| This is the furniture            | arranged to write the foreword to a manuscript on faculty response to orchestrated reinforcement; and                               |
| These are the lighting fixtures  | illuminated for all to see that the battle isn't over until African Americans have equal opportunity to quality higher education.   |
| These are the methodologies   | used for the House  that Jackie built for Mack. |

that Jackie built for Mack. Moreover, it shows just how much a professor can do in providing educational and career opportunities for a student. While this is the testimony of one student, there are obviously many, many more who have the same or similar stories to tell. Hail, hail to Jackie! She is the professor of Mack's heart.

### **Need for more professors like Jackie – Educational carpenters**

Jackie's success as a professor just didn't happen, she made it happen. Several indicators for success stand out from close review of her career. She highly prepared herself for the job, made a conscious choice to work with African Americans of whom she knew had undeveloped potential, worked relentlessly with students – never giving up on them, sought to enhance those with deficiencies so they could perform competitively with the dominant culture, and advocated professional development as a lifelong venture for her students.

As Dr. Jackie made her mark at Jackson State to frame educational opportunities for African Americans, obviously other persons like Jackie were making their influence felt at other HBCUs. Thus, building residences across the country for African Americans to positively impact the educational enterprise. Today's challenge is to keep the wave going. The road has been paved and foundations have been laid. Needed now is another generation of educational carpenters to further the educational advancement of African Americans. There is a need for a new crop of professors who will be motivated, professionally developed, in search of self-actualization, have a passion for teaching students of diverse backgrounds, and who are fearless of challenges or obstacles that may come their way.

It is easy to determine where Jackie stood. She was truly motivated for college teaching – having unwavering concern for her discipline and her students, developed at the highest level professionally, self-actualized to the fullest extent, and fearless of the forces that needed addressing at the college and in the profession. It is now time to add to the ranks of Jackie.

### **Summary and implications**

The road to higher education has not been smooth for African Americans. Legislations and litigations broke down some barrier but skillful educational carpenters had to emerge to make a real impact. It would require persons who would first best prepare themselves and second, who would commit to making a difference in the life of their students. It would require someone completely devoted to challenging minds and changing lives. Jackie was one such person and she did the job so well.

Perhaps the greatest implications from this study are that legislations and litigations have their place but work gets the job done; that African Americans may come to college with deficiencies but dedicated teachers can turn rough diamonds into fine jewelry; and that dedicated work may appear to go unnoticed but in time, it has its rewards and good history will not go unrecorded. It becomes increasingly clear that if America would truly open up the door of educational opportunities, make available the needed resources to develop human potential, and properly reward competent and dedicated professors, the country would be the recipient of a remarkably quality citizenry.

It will then be said of many as it was said in a tribute to Jackie, “With a circle of love for and from her family and an accomplished and established career of teaching and service, Dr. Jackie is devoted to her family, her community, and her God” (Jackson State University, 2004).

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