

# TWO

## CHAPTER

# *Our Family Genealogists Biographies*

**Demetria McArthur Taylor** (5th gen)

**Raphael N. Thompson, Sr** (4th gen)

**Georgeva Gerald Wright** (4th gen)

**Carletta Thompson** (4th gen)

**Kahlila Kamara Mitchell-Lee** (6th gen)

**Jamilla Kamara Smith** (6th gen)

**Bradford Thomas Thompson** (5th gen)

**Emeritus:**

**Maggie Lee Viola Thompson Gerald**



## Demetria McArthur Taylor: Biography

**Dr. "Dee" Demetria McArthur Taylor (retired educator and administrator) comes from a long and renown lineage of Robeson County, NC Educators.** She served as a public and private school educator and leader (45 years in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey.). Her leadership roles have consisted of the following: Executive Director of Professional Development (Fulton Co. Schools); Reading Curriculum Coordinator, English/Language Arts Curriculum Coordinator, Academic Achievement Coordinator (in Secondary Ed of DeKalb Co. Schools); Teach Gwinnett Certification Supervisor (Gwinnett Co. Schools); and instructor/professor in community colleges and universities

(Atlanta campuses, Carrollton, Baltimore, Phila.) - - Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees (Phila. Community College, Georgia Perimeter, Morgan State Univ., GA State Univ., Univ. of West GA, Brenau Univ., Clark Atlanta Univ., Univ. of GA).

Her educational matriculation includes early years at Hilly Branch Elem. and secondary at Rowland Southside HS, and completing high school at Durham HS. Advanced studies included North Carolina Central Univ. (BA, English), Johns Hopkins Univ. (Master of Science, Clinical Reading), L-7 Certification in Educational Leadership (Georgia State University), and her doctorate/Ed.D. (Clark Atlanta Univ.). She served as an invited member of the Ga Professional Standards Commission (Board of Examiners).

Demetria (5th generation) is the older of two daughters of Lois Gerald McArthur and Lloyd R. McArthur. She and her sister, Jenifer McArthur Harvey (5th generation/Maryland) are the maternal great grand-daughters of Elias M. Thompson/Roxy Ashley Thompson and the paternal 2nd great grand-daughters of Alexander H. Thompson. Demetria became engaged in genealogy through listening to her grandmother (Maggie Thompson Gerald) with whom she lived for several years. Maggie, a school teacher and homemaker, spent a great deal of time with Demetria -- giving her the facts, the folk lore, and the rich oral and written accounts about the Thompson and the Ashley family historical accounts, the accomplishments, the failures (not to repeat), the struggles, the core values, and the perseverance. Demetria has devoted most of her adult life since the mid-1970's tracing the family genealogy and gathering critical information to help her family understand their heritage. Being a genealogist started as a very engaging hobby, but quickly became a passion and purposeful calling in her life. She gained much of her information from Raphael N. Thompson, Sr. (4th generation) and Georgeva Gerald Wright (4th generation). Both of them were educators by vocation and the grand-children of Elias M. Thompson and Roxy Ashley Thompson). Demetria is responsible for developing many Thompson- Ashley family trees (the popular frame-ready charts in the early 1990s given as family reunion gifts to attendees) and updating the family trees for many family reunions over the years that she has co-ordinated. This passion led her and her sister, Jenifer, to travel to 3 countries in West Africa (Ghana, Benin, Ivory Coast) "to make the connections." As they toured the slave castles, walked through the Door of No-Return, they recalled Grandmother Maggie telling about their grandfather Robert Ashley's painful story of being ripped from his family and native land as a very young boy (about twelve years old). This travel to West Africa simply deepened her thirst to know more about her ancestors and connect with more family in different ways. She developed the first family website and spear-headed the family Facebook group in an effort to engage more of the 6th generation relatives to become more active, socially engaged in the media, and leaders in the larger circled of family. Both efforts continue to thrive today as



Lois Gerald McArthur (4th gen,  
beginning teacher years, 1940-50)



Ryan Joseph & Daughters



Brandon & Sons



key sources for family information, inspiration, and networking. She played a key role with the family team that worked with and supported the efforts of her cousin Carletta Thompson (the leader) in winning the final case awarding the **Thompson Institute's NC Historical Marker**, located on Fairmont Rd, in Robeson County.

Demetria is a published author of 2 books and continues her research and writing in retirement -- now completing her 3rd book (publishing expected May 2023). She was commissioned to co-author (1999) **The History of African American Education in DeKalb County: From the Collection of Narvie J. Harris** (still in circulation in the US and United Kingdom). Her journal publications, teaching materials/training concepts and GaDOEducation contributions are still used today as building blocks. In retirement, she has continued to make contributions to teacher retention addressing shortages in education. She served on the leadership team that led Georgia State University's (College of Education) receiving Teacher Quality federal grant awards for teacher professional development/retention (\$6.5 million followed by another 5 year award of \$13.5 million). She served as the university grant director for both grants. Additionally, she has trained countless professionals known as career changers (who voluntarily left successful careers in other industries to become educators). She has been highly recognized in professional arenas for her high pass rate and teacher success in alternative certification programs.

Demetria is a devout Christian who continues striving to be God's servant-leader and a purpose-driven woman (formerly Fairfield Baptist, now Beulah Baptist Church (e.g., the Church Strategic Planning Committee, Sunday School/Vacation Bible School teacher, coordinator of the tutorial ministry programs called Learning Educational Advancement Program/L.E.A.P., Spotlight on Youth recognition program, adult-ed skills coach for church members seeking new jobs or certification status, and the initiator of a COVID-19 Pandemic Virtual Academic Support for students to Zoom in after school for online tutoring. She is an avid reader, author and enjoys traveling (West Africa, Italy (Rome, Florence), UK, Canada, Mexico, Caribbean, Hawaii, Virgin Islands, and most of the US. America. Married to Joseph Taylor (of Durham) for 54 years, they began (and continue) the ancestral research journey together since the mid-70's. She is the mother of two sons, Ryan (NJ) and Brandon (GA), who have blessed her with a beautiful tribe of grand-children whom she cherishes and enjoys beyond measure. Brice Nicholas Taylor, Olivia Simone Taylor, Sophia Ryan Taylor, Marcalen Robert Taylor, and Batise Romare Taylor, and Mykeala Michael Duncan.

- Alexander H. and Venice Barnes-Thompson (1st Generation)
- Mahalia Thompson-McArthur and Benjamin McArthur (2nd Generation) (6th Child of Alexander H. and Venice Barnes-Thompson) 14 children
- Joshua and Hettie Jane Martin-McArthur (3rd Generation) 10th child of Mahalia Thompson-McArthur and Benjamin McArthur) 12 children
- Lloyd Roger McArthur and Lois Gerald-McArthur (4th Generation)
- **Demetria McArthur Taylor and Joseph Taylor (5th Generation)**  
2 sons: Ryan Joseph Taylor and Brandon Taylor (6th generation)

## My Mother, Lois Gerald McArthur (My First and Life-time Teacher)

### Raphael Nash Thompson: Biography

(Dec 15, 1926 - Jan 9, 2018)



On December 15, 1926, Reverend Allen Gordon Thompson and Odessa Humphrey Thompson brought into this world Raphael Nash Thompson. A child of many talents, he was raised to have a strong devotion to his family and church. He was also taught the value of hard work. At the age of 3 he could recite from memory entire verses and chapters from the New Testament. While still a toddler, he witnessed the passing of his mother. Several years later, his father married Laura King. She

was a great second mother to him, helping to steer him to the successes that he has had through the years.

Raphael helped his father on their farm, getting up early to do many of the necessary chores. Most of all he loved when there was a rain, because that would allow for a rest break. After the rain he would be ready to continue working. There were five siblings in the family, four brothers and one sister. Raphael worked in their country store, giving service as needed. He also did very well in high school, getting voted valedictorian. In addition, he had skipped some grades during his school years, which allowed him to begin college at the age of fifteen. He attended North Carolina College (now called North Carolina Central University) for 2 years, then decided to serve in the military. After 2 years in the military he returned back to North Carolina College. He also went on to receive a masters degree from the New York University Business School.

While building his career, he gets to know a special lady, Melba Tuck. They had known each other during their high school years. Eventually they marry and live in Fort Valley, Georgia. From the union three children were born. They are Roslyn, Raphael Jr., and Roderick. There is one special grandchild, Gina. During this time he worked as an Assistant Business Manager at Fort Valley State College. Building on his experience he moves to Durham, North Carolina with the family to teach at then

CONGRATULATIONS!! HILLY BRANCH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

MRS. LOIS GERALD MCARTHUR

- Graduate of Hilly Branch Class of 1944
- Graduate of Fayetteville State University, BA degree in Elementary Education
- Educator for 37 years starting in 1948
- Teacher of students at the elementary level through adult education  
(Rowland, NC, Hilly Branch School, Berges, NC, Yanceyville, NC, Perdue, NC, Roxboro, NC)

*Any time you were down and out, you could always call on Mrs. McArthur to cheer you up." I always found her to be a very efficient teacher. I remember her as an educator who always put her children first. Each year her classes showed they really cared about her in return.*

Mr. Johnny M. Lunsford, Retired Principal of Southern Junior High School, Roxboro, NC  
Chairman of the Person County Commission

*As a co-worker, I knew McArthur as a very dedicated educator. She exemplified a great love and concern for her students' learning, but always went a step beyond their classroom achievement to show a commitment to her students' general welfare. I was touched many times when she gave all or half of her personal lunch to her students who had no lunch provisions. This was the true essence of her caring nature and the keen sense to know how these provisions impacted their learning.*

Ms. Gwendolyn Smith, Retired Educator, Person County Schools

*The first and greatest teacher is a parent. Our mother, Lois McArthur, is the best teacher we have ever been blessed to know. We honor her for all she has taught us and countless other children.*

Dr. Demetria M. Taylor, (Atlanta, GA)

Mrs. Jennifer M. Harvey, Entrepreneur (Baltimore, MD)



Source: Hilly Branch Alumni Association

"Historical Publication" August 2001

North Carolina College. He teaches as a professor of Business Administration. The students know him not only as a professor, but also as a fatherly figure for those in need. He would often invite his students over for dinner and at times the students would cook their native cuisines for the whole family (Indian, Chinese or Nigerian foods). Raphael kept busy. Some summers he would teach summer school or he would work at Price Waterhouse and General Foods in New York.

Raphael was very involved with giving his service to his church. He played the church piano, sang in the Adult Choir and was on the Trustee Committee. Even at home in spare moments, he loved to play hymns and other songs on the piano. Interested in building a new church, he helped to find and develop "Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church," working along with then Reverend Lorenzo Lynch and presently Reverend Clarence Burke.

He always did the coordinating for our family reunions until he decided to pass it along to another fantastic relative as he saw it was time for his retirement on that. He also retired from NCCU after almost 50 years of teaching. In addition to his wife, children and grandchild, he leaves behind a first cousin, Georgeva Wright, and numerous other cousins, nieces and nephews. He also leaves behind a multitude of highly successful students. Former students often came to visit, thanking him for steering them in a direction for success. He certainly has been a gift of a role model, not only for his family but for humanity.



Georgeva Gerald Wright was born in Lumberton, North Carolina on August 23, 1925, where she completed her high school education from Hilly Branch Elementary School as Salutatorian of the graduating class of 1942 at the age of 16. Georgeva attended Fayetteville Teachers College receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree (Education) in 1948.

In 1948, Georgeva Wright began her professional teaching career at the historic Rosenwald High School in Fairmont, NC for ten years. During this time, she met and married Booker Taliaferro Wright in 1951. They had two daughters, Andrea E. Wright Banks-Zuniga (1952) and Cynthia Lachita Wright-Richard (1958).

In 1958, she relocated to High Point, NC; where she taught fifth grade at Leonard Street Elementary School for twelve years. Family came first and foremost; Wright returned to Robeson County to be a "care giver" for her ailing parents, Carson M. Gerald and Maggie Thompson Gerald, while teaching fifth graders at Fairmont Middle School for fifteen years. Mrs. Wright's progressive spirit motivated her to obtain her Bachelor of Arts degree (Secondary School Education) from the North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, NC in 1966. Her professional career of 35 years of dedication, growth, and productivity to her educational field and her students ended in 1983.

Georgeva was active in many professional, civic and religious organizations. She was a dedicated choir musician, missionary chairperson, Sunday school teacher, and established the first Vacation Bible School at the Hilly Branch Baptist Missionary Church in Lumberton, NC. Other organizations included the Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Stars, Dawn of Morning Chapter #294, as the Worthy Matron; former Executive Director (Treasure) for the Lumber River Housing Development, Inc., (an affiliation of the Lumber River Baptist Association), since 1983; chairperson for the numerous events for the Hilly Branch Alumni Association; and the North Carolina Association of Educators.



Georgeva found supreme pleasure and consolation in helping others. Much of her energy was spent bringing peace and happiness to her family and others. Georgeva loved to travel and sponsored many community trips to sensational places such as Hawaii, California, New Orleans, and Grand Canyon. As a world traveler, she has adventured to four countries: Mexico, Canada, France, and Italy. She has seen the splendor of the Eiffel Towers of Paris, the Louvre of France, besotted by the Vatican City of Rome/the St. Peter's Basilica, and prayed in the Sistine Chapel. She has toured the great European museums, the beautiful gardens and the royal palaces.

Mrs. Wright's life created a legacy of family, friends and productivity for generations to follow. She has been honored in her hometown and publicized in the Robesonian newspaper in a two-page Life Styles tribute on her 95th birthday, August 23, 2020. Tributes included her Pastor, State Representative, Mayor, family, associates in organizations, community, former students, and many others.

Mrs. Wright is a reflection of her past symbols, of life of service and love - Thompson-Ashley core values.



Georgeva (4th gen) has two daughters:  
**Andrea Banks-Zuniga** (5th gen), Dir. of Housing Planning, Development and Planning/Social Work  
**Cynthia Wright-Richard** (5th gen), an Engineer and Mathematics Educator

Additionally, she has three grandsons (6th gen):  
**Wallace Everett Banks, Jr.**,  
**John-Wright St. Clair Zuniga**, and  
**Keith Marshem Richard**.





**Carletta Thompson** is the 9th child of 10 children born to the late Jordan Letha and Susanna Patterson-Thompson. She is the granddaughter of the late Rev. Elwell W. and Lydia Devaughn-Thompson. She is the great granddaughter of the late Rev. Alexander Hill and Venice Purcell-Barnes-Thompson.

*See: Complete Biography for Carletta Thompson Chapter 4: page 76 The Thompson Institute*



"They are a bright and energetic team working effectively to get very positive outcomes. They ignite immense pleasure in digging deeper with others interested in our rich past," as Demetria affirms.

### "The Twins" - Kahlila and Jamilla (6th gen)



Kahlila Kamara Mitchell-Lee

Jamilla Kamara Smith



Kahlila and Korvon Mitchell-Lee

**Kahlila and Jamilla** are our newest family genealogists. They are identical twins (in their early 30s in 2020) who are 3rd great granddaughters of Alexander H. Thompson and 4th great granddaughters of Dinah Barnes. They reside in Baltimore, Maryland.

They shared, "We started gaining an interest in genealogy after seeing an ancestry commercial back in 2014. From there we became engrossed in research, especially in dissecting the complications of slavery. Our greatest accomplishments so far have been locating siblings, mother's and previous slave owners for Alexander Hill Thompson and Mariah Barnes Thompson. It was certainly a tear-inducing moment seeing their names listed in an inventory." Demetria commented, "The twins" bring insightful views and a fresh critical eye to ancestral research. They are relentless fact-finders, excellent technology users able to locate less-represented information and are our Ancestry.com DNA-gurus in the family. They have been instrumental in helping a number of relatives and others understand their DNA results, and unite with unknown family members. They have joined the veteran genealogists (Demetria and Carletta) in very critical ways. They, too, now understand the thrill of finding lesser-known facts, validations, treasured artifacts in the historical archives. They have learned feelings of the struggles, as well as the successful impact of our ancestors. They will become our newest leaders in the 6th generation to carry to torch forward - - so our family will not forget."



Jamilla Kamara Smith, Xavier Smith, Tyrell Smith, Mekhi Smith

Brad Thompson (5th generation/great grandson of Elias M. Thompson) is the former President of BTA Public and Governmental Relations, a small consulting firm located in Raleigh, North Carolina. The focus of his company was developing competency in advocacy and non-profit organizations in reaching established goals and financial stability.

Brad has more than thirty years of Lehman Foundation Scholar and an Engineering graduate of North Carolina State University, he has had a stellar career as an administrator for some of the worlds largest corporations including IBM, Hewlett Packard, COMPAC, and Westinghouse Corporation. He has also served as a Bureau Chief for OSHA under former Labor Commissioner Harry Payne and as Special Assistant to former State Auditor Ralph Campbell.

After many years as a community advocate serving on over 30 boards and commissions, including Chair of the Raleigh Community Relations Committee in (1975-1976) and the past President of the Raleigh Wake Citizens Association (1985-1986), Brad was elected in 1993 as a City Councilman in Raleigh, representing the Southeast area. He was elected Mayor Protem in his first year and was called "the very definition of an effective councilman" by the Raleigh News and Observer. After three terms, he elected not to run and became the State Director for US Senator John Edwards, one of only two African Americans to serve in that capacity in the country.

Brad has been Co-Chair of the Southeast Raleigh Assembly, a group of 41 citizens that seeks to improve economic conditions and quality of life for those residing in the Southeast area of the city. This group makes policy recommendations to the Raleigh City Council. He also has served or is serving on the board of the Raleigh Transit Authority, The Fair Housing Hearing Board, Chair of the Southeast Raleigh CDC, the Southeast Raleigh Improvement Commission, the Raleigh Area Development Authority (RADA), Chair of the Community Alternatives for Supportive Housing (CASA), The Museum of Natural History, Vice Chair of the Agency for Public Telecommunications, Treasurer of Democracy NC, Blueprint, and Chair of Progress NC Action. He is a member of the corporate and government experience. A Herbert South Central CAC and President of the Raleigh Wake Citizens Association. He is also a Life Member of the NAACP.

Brad is a very active Democrat having served at every level from Precinct Officer to National Delegate. He has attended five National Conventions and has served as Whip of the North Carolina Delegation three times. He was recently Chair of the Second Congressional District. He has coordinated many successful campaigns and is often sought out for political advice. He works diligently, strategically and tirelessly to increase voter participation and to identify/call-out voter suppression. He has authored several publications, newsletters, and blogs engaging citizens to engage in non-violent political activism and cultural advancement. He espouses to what Congressman John Lewis challenged our race to do "be courageous and get in good trouble."

Brad has won dozens of awards for his community service including the Order of the Long Leaf Pine and the African American Hall of Fame. He is a Deacon at First Baptist Church in Raleigh and is a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

Brad retired in 2012, but continues to be active in community affairs - - making the Thompson-Ashley Impact. He has been married to Dorothy Shaw Thompson since 1968, and they have four adult children: Bradford, Jr., Stephen, Evan, Susan Nicole.





## I Have Lived...

By Bradford Thompson,



I have lived through many changes in American society.

I was born after World War II when returning heroic African American soldiers despite barriers and limitations at home fought so that freedom and liberty would be available to others.

I was alive as President Truman opened up the armed forces.

I was here when the Supreme Court decided that "separate and equal" was anything but that.

I saw the Emmitt Till photo in Jet magazine.

I was present in America as the Montgomery Bus Boycott occurred and the Sit-ins in Greensboro and around the country and the rise of Martin Luther King, Jr. as African Americans longed for justice.

I saw as SCLC and CORE and SNCC rose to be as strong as the NAACP in speaking for African Americans.

I watched as President Kennedy was assassinated.

I read that Medgar Evers was killed.

I cheered as the throng gathered for the historic "March on Washington".

I witnessed Stokely, the Black Panthers, Malcomb, H "Rap" Brown and others who challenged non-violence as a way to gain improvement in this society.

I applauded as President Johnson signed the Civil Rights and Voting Rights legislation.

I marched. I boycotted. I integrated.

I grieved as Malcomb X was killed. Even more when MLK, Jr. was assassinated. Also Robert Kennedy.

I joined those who were rioting.

I read the Black books, recited the Black poets, and listened to Jazz.

I suffered through Viet Nam.

I was disappointed that Humphrey, Mondale, and Dukakis did not win.

I worked hard for Jesse Jackson in '84 and '88.

I attended the Congressional Black Caucus Weekends in the hope I could pick up tips that would improve my advocacy.

I was happy to see the increase of the number of Black People in Congress.

I was impressed by the numbers as I attended the Million Man March.

I joined other progressives as the debate was elevated on how America could be improved.

I celebrated the election of Barack Obama as President.

I endured Trump.

But I have always been Black.

We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go. VOTE!



## **LEADING GENEALOGIST (in the 20th century)**

**Maggie Lee Viola Thompson Gerald, Leading 20th Century Oral History Genealogist, Emeritus (3rd gen - 1889-1985)**

Daughter of Rev. Elias Moore Thompson (2nd gen)

Also featured: Rev. Allen G. Thompson (3rd gen, 1894-1988), son of Rev. Elias M. Thompson (Maggie T. Gerald's younger brother); Allen Gordon (3rd gen, 1894-1988), coordinated the first Thompson-Ashley Family Reunions Graduated from Thompson Institute and advanced to Fayetteville Normal School. Served as pastor at Hilly Branch Bapt. Church. Instrumental in establishing (providing the land to Robeson Co. Bd of Ed.) to build Hilly Branch School. Served as the first principal at Hilly Branch School.

ADD insert: Son of Elias M. Thompson (former slave), co-founder of The Thompson Institute). Trained Teacher, Community Organizer, Hilly Branch Church Leader

Daughter of Elias M. Thompson (former slave), co-founder of The Thompson Institute)

**Maggie Gerald: Trained Teacher specializing in Homemaking (her teaching credentials were earned from the Thompson Institute)**

**SEE:Thompson Institute Graduates for Diploma (1914), first class receive paper diplomas.**

