



April 2022

CONSORTIA

SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

This second COD Newsletter is a fitting time to imitate the movement of the Sankofa Bird by looking backward while moving forward. Do you believe it is valuable to do this individually and collectively?

Reflecting can be therapeutic and provide reasons for behavior changes. But sometimes, we may dwell too long upon the past and miss opportunities for moving forward in order to gain new insights, new visions, and renewed energy. As COD members we are a unified flock in flight...think about this powerful, truthful, and compassionate energy!!

This present time is like nothing we ever experienced before. The global pandemic that is in our midst continues to affect our body, mind and spirit. But look how we have endured and have used unique ways to gather and communicate with our family, friends and colleagues. New mind-sets are in place. Our tool-boxes are filled with intentions and methods to make a difference in our homes, and in communities where we live, work and thrive. We are more than victims. We are more than conquerors... so, let us **soar** like the majestic Sankofa Bird and **move forward !!!**

Respectfully,

Marguerite

Dr. Marguerite T. Birt



OUR PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

By Dr. Ethel Pitts Walker

My journey with the Consortium of Doctors (COD) began in 1993 when I was inducted into the organization in Savannah, Georgia. What a phenomenal group of professional women! Conceived and led by Dr. Abigail Hester Jordan, it was a unique experience. COD, as a collection of African American women with doctorate degrees, had the mission to enhance the lives of others. Over the 31 years of its existence, the leadership has taken COD through positive and negative changes, growing, dividing, and rebuilding.

COD has a history of stressing education and a sense of dedication to help young people. At one time, the women served as mentors to children in Savannah and communicated regularly with the young people after the national conference ended. Today COD continues the education emphasis with its Hadiya Pendleton Essay Contest that gives monetary awards to winners of the contest and brings winners to the national conference.

One of the most important achievements is the establishment of the African American Family Monument on the waterfront of Savannah. This was Dr. Jordan's dream, and will forever stand as a testament to the African American enslaved who survived the Middle Passage.

The pandemic of 2020-2021 demonstrated that COD was strong enough to survive the lack of live contact and continue functioning as a virtual organization.

Going into 2022 COD is determined to move forward with its legacy. Plans to meet in Savannah will build on the rich history including the Pendleton Video Contest. The future of the organization is growing as technology has created different directions, once again rebuilding the membership.

COD will continue to move forward because it holds fast to the words of Marian Wright Edelman: *"Service is the rent we pay to be living. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time."*

REFLECTIONS OF COD

by Dr. Barbara M. Reid, Class of 1994

As told to Attorney Carolyn Battle Thomas Class of 1997



Dr. Barbara Reid and I have had a mentorship/friendship for more than 20 years. It is my great privilege to share her Reflections on COD based on many of our conversations about her journey with COD, the most recent during my last visit to Tennessee in February.

Dr. Reid holds an undergraduate degrees from Knoxville College and Meharry Medical College; a master's degree from Columbia University; a Ph.D. from University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Reid opened the University of Tennessee/Knoxville School of Nursing in 1971 as Associate Dean before she earned her PhD and was the first African American staff member to hold that position. She was promoted to tenured professor until her retirement in 1991. The University of Tennessee maintains a scholarship in her name.

Dr. Reid was inducted in 1994 with 15 others, including my mom. They were the 4th class of the Consortium of Doctors. The Bouquet of Doctors Banquet was a black tie affair and Astronaut Mae Jamison was the banquet speaker. Dr. Reid had an after party on the roof of the Savannah Hyatt!

No one remembers what year she was elected treasurer, but she served well beyond the two-term limit. COD suspended the bylaws and re-elected her at least twice. She was named one of the first Platinum members of COD, an award established in 2016 for members with twenty (20) or more years of service to the organization. In 2018, she was named in COD's first Emeritus class and is the only living member.

Dr. Reid loves sharing her journey each summer at the Youth Summit. One of her favorite stories to share is that she received an AKA scholarship and she didn't know who they were. That led her to pledge in 1948. Her local chapter honored her in July 2017 as the oldest living active member.



THE WIND BENEATH HER WINGS

By Paul Butler

If it is wind that I provide beneath her wings, I must humbly submit it is merely an echo of what she provides to me. Therefore, it would be presumptuous of me to state that which I am to her without accentuating all that she is to me.

She is the gentle and often strong breeze that keep my very soul afloat while I strive to be as much for her. She's the love of my life and has made our years together seem as fleeting as the days in a week. She's my friend and thought partner in all matters of our life and a loving mother to our children that demands excellence while exercising love.

She never attempts to hover above, yet always find ways to breathe a breath of encouragement to all whom may fall within her sphere. She accomplishes these feats with a zeal that's seemingly effortless as she goes about her day-to-day itineraries because it's a part of her authentic being.

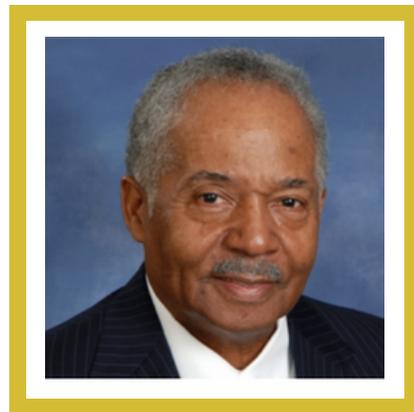
If I am to her a fraction of all she is to me, I will then be fortunate to be considered worthy of being *"the wind beneath her wings."*

-Paul Butler-

THE WIND BENEATH HER WINGS

Jesse F. Tucker, M.S.

Former Assistant Director for Adult Probation - State of Tennessee



I am Jesse F. Tucker and I have been married to Dr. Carolyn Baldwin Tucker for 52 years. She and I have two wonderful children and four remarkable grandchildren. During our richly blessed years of marriage, Carolyn and I have worked on and been responsible for many successful projects.

My role has been that of an encourager for Carolyn and to facilitate her in any way possible. Over the years I have found Carolyn to be a forthright, caring, spiritual person with whom I share basic values and beliefs.

When Carolyn decided to run for the Metro Council, I was her Campaign Manager. Together, by the Grace of God, with the help of our children, family, and friends, Dr. Carolyn Baldwin Tucker became the first African American woman to win a countywide race in the history of Nashville-Davidson County.

To God Be The Glory!

-Jesse Tucker-



THE WIND BENEATH HER WINGS

By James S. Cross, Ph.D.

When my wife asked if I would write an article for the newsletter, I was very quick to say NO! Later, I thought about all the times over the years when she had made sacrifices on my behalf. She has gone places with me when she would have preferred to be any place else. She has done things for me – often at great sacrifice to herself – from typing and editing my doctoral dissertation to hauling our two sons to T-Ball, baseball, football, soccer, etc while I traveled and worked...

So, I am taking this opportunity to say to my wife of 55 years how much I love and appreciate her for all that she has done, and continues to do. She is my best friend, and has brought me great joy every day of our lives together.

Being an active member of the Consortium of Doctors has brought Brenda great joy. I was happy to support her when she was secretary, but I'm glad she no longer holds an office, because now she has promised to spend more time with me.

Ya Hoo!

-JSC-



*The Best is
Yet to Come!*



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