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ARTHUR L. WASHINGTON, TWENTIETH CENTURY EDUCATOR AND CHANGE AGENT AT SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL

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ARTHUR L. WASHINGTON, TWENTIETH CENTURY EDUCATOR AND
CHANGE AGENT AT SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL

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First and foremost, I would like to thank GOD for without him, nothing is possible. I would also like to thank my committee for their assistance, especially my Committee Chair Dr. Davis for his leadership, support, and encouragement throughout this journey. Dr. Beckwith deserves special thanks because he continued with the committee though he retired from the University. I wish him great fortune and satisfaction in retirement. My loving wife, Linda, without her support, encouragement, and assistance this journey would not be complete.

I especially am thankful for the life and work of the subject of this paper, Arthur L. Washington. I appreciate that Richard (Ric) Washington had the foresight to realize the value of his father's papers, artifacts, and memorabilia. Thanks to Ric for the donation of the materials to the Missouri Historical Society, making it possible for me to gain tremendous insight into Washington's life's work.

The insight offered by the participants who agreed to interview brought this project to life. I will forever be grateful to those Sumner alum who shared their stories about Washington.

The journey has been long, and not without obstacles, but well worth it. I would not trade the experience for anything. Thanks to all who helped me along the way.

Abstract

In the history of the United States, the Midwest, in general, and Missouri, in particular, has had a complex role concerning issues of race. For example, St. Louis was the site for the 1857 Dred Scott Case, which determined those of African ancestry could never become citizens.

Fast forward to the 1940s and '50s and Missouri, as well as the rest of the United States, is still divided by race and largely segregated. As an African American man, Arthur L. Washington, would not be satisfied with the culture of the day. Born December 14, 1917, Washington envisioned the world with unlimited opportunities and diligently prepared for a lifetime of challenging the status quo. He pursued excellence until his death on April 2, 2001.

Washington was studious and athletic. As an educator, he was a teacher, coach, mentor, and administrator. He served the country in the segregated U.S. military and earned honors and awards. He returned to St. Louis to pursue his profession at his alma mater, Sumner High School.

Washington's story is as much about the richness of the history of this school as it is about the man who devoted his life to its persistence and growth. The researcher cannot tell Washington's story without also sharing the history of this institution.

Additionally, there were many who effected change in a similar manner. The researcher highlights three analogous lives in this study. Ray Crowe of Indiana, and Jodie Bailey and James Price of St. Louis, to name a few, must also be credited with making gains on the basketball courts that would have far-reaching influence in their communities.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

“Leaders must be close enough to relate to others, but far enough ahead to motivate them.”

■ John C. Maxwell.

This quote can easily be in homage to a man who, through his accomplishments and continued efforts in education and community involvement, was a leader. This man was Arthur L. Washington, a change agent who was a catalyst for transformation. He had a clear vision, was patient yet persistent, and asked tough questions concerning the status quo. He was knowledgeable and led by example while nurturing strong relationships built on trust. He impacted hundreds of malleable lives during his 43-year career at Sumner High School in St. Louis, Missouri.

Washington’s relationship with Sumner had begun years before his career started there when he attended as a student. After completing his secondary education at Sumner, he ultimately was employed there in numerous positions, from teacher, coach, and athletic director, to administrator. Washington, a competitive student-athlete at both the high school and collegiate levels, was a natural fit when he returned to work at his alma mater. Beyond the facts, there is a variety of anecdotal stories told about how Washington provided school lunch passes or bought athletic shoes for students to ensure optimum performance. This type of behavior was telling about his character. Washington’s generation took extreme pride in ownership and generally determined that anything these people affiliated with would be stellar. His also was a generation that had less respect for titles but more respect for pitching in to ensure the job got done well.

Sumner High School, where Washington committed his life's work, was established as a school for Colored students in 1875 and has since inspired a rich history of educating African Americans. Washington made substantial contributions to the school during his tenure. Sumner rose from near nothingness at its inception, to a premiere institution for its community. Initially, it took ten years for the school to surface after a necessity for it was mandated in 1865 when the Missouri Constitution called for appropriated public schools without regard to race.¹ According to the minutes of the 1875 St. Louis Public School Board of Education meeting, the state legislature directed the city's school board to provide a high school for Blacks.² This decision occurred as a direct result of African American parents in St. Louis complaining about inadequate educational buildings for their children.³

The initial location for the school, when first designated by the board, was a formerly all-White elementary school at Eleventh and Spruce streets in 1875. This area was considered mid/downtown and included the Mill Creek Valley and Chestnut Valley neighborhoods that were home to the African-American laboring classes. Numerous social, business and cultural institutions sprang up in the vicinity.⁴ The building was a combination elementary and high school renamed for Charles Sumner (1811-74) a United States Senator from Massachusetts and the first prominent politician to urge full emancipation. It made sense to name the school for the Massachusetts Senator, a

¹ "A Look Back: Early African-American Education in St. Louis was Hard Won," *St. Louis Beacon*, Sept. 20, 2009.

² St. Louis Public Schools, *St. Louis Board of Education Minutes, 1875*.

³ Bryan M. Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters* (Columbia: The University of Missouri, 2007).

⁴ P.A. Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis, 1910-1949* (Columbia: The University of Missouri, 2011).

dominant figure in the Civil War and post-Civil War Congresses. As Massachusetts' Senator, he was consumed by the cause of freedom for all people who lived on American soil. It was particularly fitting that St. Louis' new challenging pioneer project for educating Negroes, to get its name from such a personality.⁵

Naming the school after a prominent person during this time was also of note because it was common to number African American schools in Missouri. Though the Colored Educational Council asked, in 1878, that schools be named for prominent African Americans, the request did not become policy until 1890.⁶ As early as 1870, Senator Sumner had attempted to move the Congress to adopt a civil rights bill for African Americans. The intent was to ensure Blacks had access to public accommodations including integrated schools and also allowed to serve on juries.⁷

Though Senator Sumner was unsuccessful in his efforts, his intent did not go unnoticed as it earned him a prominent place in history. The St. Louis school named after him had humble beginnings in a twelve room building that had been deemed unsuitable for White students and abandoned.⁸ Sumner and similarly segregated schools remained the status quo for nearly a century.

Unfortunately, the first location was in the midst of grated prison cells; lumber yards, execution setups, and sometimes even dead bodies awaiting identification.⁹ The Negro community protested the deplorable setting and the school was moved to a second

⁵ John D. Buckner, Golda E. Crutcher and Catherine Williams. "A Brief History of the Charles Sumner High School." (St. Louis Public Schools anniversary brochure, 1965).

⁶ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁷ Henry Louis Gates Jr. *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

⁸ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁹ "A complaint with Illustrations to the Board of Education of St. Louis from the Colored Citizens of St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* June 11, 1907. <http://search.proquest.com>.

location, neighboring the original, at Fifteenth and Walnut streets in 1895. This setting was not considerably better and was physically close to the city's sporting districts. The city's nightlife, the sporting districts, in particular, nurtured a climate of vice. By the turn of the century, in this part of town, the line between legal and illegal behavior was almost nonexistent.

A concerned African American community was determined to have their children educated in an environment far removed from the pool rooms and saloons of the day.¹⁰ As a result of their continued efforts, finally, in 1910, a more suitable and permanent location was established at 4248 West Cottage Ave. (Pendleton {now Billups Ave} and Cottage) where it remains today.¹¹ However, the relocation to the more acceptable site was not without impediments. While the Colored Citizens Council (African Americans who voluntarily came together to support and advocate for educational equity in public schools for African American students) lobbied for a new Sumner High School; White organizations worked as diligently to prevent it. Leading the opposition was the Northwest Protection Association. They did not object to the necessity of the new high school, but to its location on Cottage Avenue. According to the White neighborhood association, an African American high school would cause property values to decrease. In addition to the loss of value, they also predicted a mass exodus of White residents if African Americans moved to be closer to the new school. This loss in White residents would "render the schools now used by White children, useless" due to low enrollment.¹²

¹⁰ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

¹¹ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

¹² "Red Ink Dodgers Protest Against Negro School," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* February 28, 1908: 16.

Even Whites who seemed to support African American education objected to locating the school in the Northwest part of the city. In a 1908 letter to the editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, an author who identifies as “Sympathizer” wrote the following;

Why not locate it (Sumner High School) in the district between Garrison and Jefferson, Washington, and Olive. This central district is already populated with the colored people, their most influential churches are there, with the possibility of more to come, and the streets to a large extent are occupied by them for business purpose. The market, Laclede, Lawton, Pine, Morgan, Franklin, Wash are almost given over to them as residence districts.¹³

This writer supported the idea of a new African American high school as long as it stayed within the prescribed boundaries of segregated St. Louis. There was no shortage of opinions on either side of the argument. In the same newspaper, an African American addressed the majority view. The writer stated that a colored school, Simmons, was located on St. Louis Avenue and there was already a White school located at Cottage Avenue, two blocks from the proposed site of the new Sumner. In terms of the population in the area, African Americans owned houses on numerous blocks that surrounded the proposed site including St. Louis Avenue, Kennerly, North Market, Garfield, and Whittier.¹⁴

This vocal opposition was nothing new for the Northwest Improvement Association. It took advantage of every opportunity to make it known that it intended to maintain the racial boundaries of the city’s neighborhoods. Just a year before the proposed Sumner High School location concern, the association fought to keep a Negro

¹³ “The Colored High School,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 3, 1908.

¹⁴ “Sumner High School,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 25, 1909.

garden out of its community. The Garden was to be a social venue for African Americans that provided evening and weekend entertainment. Playing on Whites fears of African Americans, a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article quoted Mrs. Grace Scully saying, “the streets would be unsafe for White women if such a place were allowed in the neighborhood.”¹⁵

The argument continued to spotlight the loss of property values, and the Association went a step further by saying that Whites worked hard for their money to pay for their homes and couldn’t afford to lose them. The financially strapped Association went on to raise nearly half a million dollars for legal fees to fight the garden. To strengthen its positions, it merged with adjoining wards and property owners adjacent to the property.¹⁶

The neighborhood association was committed to keep African Americans out of their neighborhoods, whether for leisure or entertainment. The Association was not deterred when the St. Louis Board of Education decided to continue the plans for the new Sumner High School. The neighborhood board’s Joint Committee on Instruction and Finance decided to consider legal action to stop any progress.¹⁷

Before filing the injunction, the Northwestern Improvement Association tried to get the proposed area condemned or considered “blighted.” This tactic was used as a way of obtaining desirable land, mostly from African Americans, to benefit Whites. Often the land was used on highways, shopping malls, or sports stadiums.¹⁸ The Association

¹⁵ “Many Plans Made to Block Negro Garden,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 25, 1907.

¹⁶ “Whites Against Negro School to Fight at Polls,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 4, 1908.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ C. Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

appealed to the House of Delegates to condemn the property and have the city purchase it.¹⁹ As a result, the House of Delegates passed the bill that authorized issuing of bonds to buy the entire block of property. The November 3, 1908 ballot included the proposal.²⁰

In the meantime, the School Board was undeterred and continued with their plans by placing advertisements for construction bids. The Board was criticized because they did not pause and below is an excerpt from a letter to the editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Do the People Rule? The recent advertising for bids for the new Sumner High School to be located on Cottage Avenue emphasizes the fact, they do not. Ninety percent of people living in the Northwestern part of the city have protested against the location of the Negro High School in their midst, well knowing that property will depreciate, ruining hundreds of hard working people who have partly paid for their homes, that it will be the means of bringing hundreds of Negroes to that part of the city.²¹

The voters did not pass the bond issues that would have prevented the building of the new Sumner High School on Cottage Avenue. So, the Northwestern Neighborhood Association and similar associations changed tactics, preventing African Americans from moving outside of approved racial boundaries. These associations relied on worries of Whites by perpetuating myths and predicting “negro invasions,” loss of housing value, and interracial marriages. In calling for support for the bond issue, fear was employed

¹⁹ “Injunction Possible Barrier to Negro New High School,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 8, 1908.

²⁰ “Whites Against Negro School to Fight at Polls,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 4, 1908.

²¹ “Do the People Rule?” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 8, 1908.

when Northwestern Neighborhood Association president said, “If we are beaten, the people of other parts of the city may be brought face to face with the same problem.”²²

In the end, the complaint by the Colored Citizens served its purpose, and the School Board agreed in 1908 to build the new Sumner High School. The school will be erected on Cottage Avenue in the Ville neighborhood at a cost of almost \$313,000 (Official Proceedings of the Board of Education of St. Louis 1907-1909). Though it was less than half the cost of the school they built for Whites just a couple of years earlier, it was still the most modern school for African Americans in the country. The new high school opened in 1911 with a gymnasium, laboratories, a library, drawing rooms, and a lunchroom.²³

Though the above date is taken from the board meetings, it should be noted that Sumner alumni were taught the school opened in 1910. The official historical record from the United States Department of the Interior National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, indicates the school was constructed in 1908-09. It can be surmised that the school opened for the 1910-1911 school, thus explaining the discrepancy.

Just as the Board has persisted, the African-American community remained committed to its purposes. A letter to the editor in March of 1909 demonstrates the sense of pride the citizens expressed in the victory.

As I passed up Cottage Aveue (sic) last Sunday my heart swelled with pride at the sight of the noble proportions of the new Sumner (negro) High School. For this splendid recognition for the rights of the colored people. We are indebted largely to those brave Democrats, Messrs. Schroers, Lockwood, Colnon, and Johnson and

²² “Negro School Site Depends On Park Vote,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 1, 1908.

²³ St. Louis Board of Education, *Annual Report of the, 1911*.

Attorney Grossman. We intend to have the greatest celebration that the colored people ever had in this town when this building is dedicated, and will have a grand ball and festival in the main hall, to which we will invite all our White neighbors.²⁴

It was a pivotal moment in the history of St. Louis. The success of the new Sumner High School was more than a building because it represented the commitment shown by the African American community to advocate for educational resources for its children working within the separate but equal framework. In St. Louis, the story of how the African-American community systematically fought for their rights served as the foundation for the future success of Sumner High School and its students successes.²⁵

The policy to provide separate but equal facilities was invalidated when the United States Supreme Court struck down the 1896 opinion that institutionalized it. In 1954, the decision in *Brown versus Board of Education* reversed *Plessy versus Ferguson*. The decision determined that education not require separating the races. According to the United States Department of the Interior National Park Service website, professional opinions were varied. Some considered it the most positive civil rights decision since slavery was outlawed. Others strongly opposed the decision and proclaimed that it negated the constitution. Those who supported states' rights considered it a personal offense to that philosophy. Nevertheless, as a nation of laws, the adjustment process began.²⁶ The Brown ruling meant that the law would no longer require segregated

²⁴ "Sumner High School," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 25, 1909.

²⁵ J.D. Anderson. *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860 – 1935*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988).

²⁶ United States Department of the Interior. '*Civil Rights; Brown v. Board of Education.*' <http://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilrights/brown-v-board-of-education.htm>). Accessed January 10, 2015.

schools. However, the United States Supreme Court permitted delayed action to grant states time to meet the requirements of the new decision. Not satisfied with the slow movement, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) lawyers subsequently, asked the Court to direct a more expeditious implementation the following year. This action is *Brown II*. As a remedy recommendation, the LDF introduced a plan requesting timely integration. It argued that a definitive timetable would ensure states take appropriate action. The outcome of the 1955 *Brown II* Decision reiterated that public educational would no longer be separate and, in fact, doing so, was unconstitutional. It was this Court case that included the language “all deliberate speed.”²⁷ The decision not only addressed academics but also covered the integration of all extracurricular activities to include the athletic programs.

Around the country, there was continued organized opposition to school integration with some schools in the South shutting down entirely to avoid integration.²⁸ St. Louis, however, largely segregated by geography, moved smoothly towards integration, notably in athletic competition.²⁹

The new United States Supreme Court decision cleared the way for St. Louis’ all-Black schools such as Sumner, Vashon and Washington Technical High School, to join the Public High League (PHL). With the Black schools as new additions to the PHL, curiosity was tantamount with spectators wondering how the top Black teams would match up with traditionally White PHL powers such as Beaumont and Cleveland.³⁰

²⁷ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

²⁸ Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration*. (New York: Random House, 2010).

²⁹ Earl Austin Jr. *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*. (Priority Book Publications, 2007).

³⁰ Austin. *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*.

This athletic arena is where Washington was most adept. Prior to integration, Sumner athletes, like all other African American students, were relegated to playing each other in unique conferences such as the Illinois-Missouri (ILL-MO) Conference. The St. Louis PHL had been off limits to the Black athletes as it was legally prohibited for Blacks and Whites to compete in the same league.³¹

With integration and the admission of Blacks athletes into the competition, it was immediately established that they would present a challenge. In 1956, the first year Blacks participated, the Sumner Bulldogs won the PHL Championship. Not only did the Bulldogs win the league title but they went undefeated in all of their PHL games. The Bulldogs also won the inaugural Christmas Tournament.³²

Washington was the Athletic Director (AD) and given his personal history, as well as his maturity and experience, he was exceptionally qualified to lead the coaches and the student-athletes. As AD, Washington brought his considerable experience to planning and arrangement scheduling through the era of integration and beyond. Washington had been very involved with the ILL-MO Conferences.

The Black Codes and Jim Crow

The history of this country is complex, and there are many moving parts. In telling the story of the education of the Negro, consider the concept of the Black Codes and Jim Crow. These practices gave legal credibility to a substandard treatment of the formerly enslaved, the Colored, the Negro people. Jim Crow was a character in minstrel shows in the early 1800s. The character portrayed an exaggerated version of all of the

³¹ Austin. *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*.

³² Ibid.

ugly stereotypes associated with enslaved Blacks. It evolved to stand for the legal oppression of African Americans after Reconstruction until the civil rights movement. Jim Crow translated into lawful segregation of African Americans in public facilities.³³

Jim Crow laws governed all aspects of life for the African American. Not only did these laws dictate that schools would be separate but also governed everything from drinking from separate water fountains to separation when eating in restaurants. The laws further applied to securing lodging, using public transportation and even for entertainment venues such as movie theaters. Jim Crow evolved from the Black Codes. Black Codes were a complex system determined to maintain the status quo after the abolition of slavery in 1865.³⁴ However, after Reconstruction, Jim Crow laws surfaced in the southern states. The United States perpetuated similar practices for many years. Though largely unsuccessful, African Americans did not sit idly by, but instead turned to the court system, putting their faith in the Fourteenth Amendment. The United States Supreme Court upheld the unfair treatment when it ruled in the 1896 *Plessy versus Ferguson* decision. In that decision, *separate but equal* became a cornerstone for legal segregation. It would take nearly sixty years before the high court would overturn this position with *Brown versus Board of Education*.³⁵

The Black Codes not only placed restrictions on services for African Americans such as education or hospital care, but they also ensured that African Americans had no say regarding their legal rights. They were kept from active participation in legal

³³ Ferris University. *The Original Jim Crow*. <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/origins.htm>. Assessed January 14, 2015.

³⁴ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

³⁵ *ibid.*

processes. The inception of the Black Codes made any number of real or imagined infractions criminal acts. Any function associated with public life was dictated by the codes and called for segregation.³⁶

The Black Codes reinforced a perception by Whites that they were the superior race and permitted them to use force with Blacks with no fear of retribution. This acceptable treatment often resulted in Blacks being taken advantage of concerning jobs and payment for services rendered. The Codes further prohibited African Americans from voting, testifying against Whites, or serving on juries. The Codes stipulated that African Americans could not integrate into schools, orphanages, nor hospitals.³⁷

The restrictions were enforced to maintain the status quo, to keep the balance of power and to ensure that Blacks would be available to do necessary manual and menial labor. Therefore, it followed that education was prohibited and in most states also was legislated. In Missouri, education for African Americans was made illegal in 1847, and it remained illegal until after the end of the Civil War. Nevertheless, educational movement surfaced in the manner of the secret successes of an underground railroad. Educators worked around the law that made it illegal for African Americans to be taught to read and write. Examples of these successes were directly attributable to activism by the African American community. One of the most noteworthy was when John Berry Meachum, a free Minister, and businessman, opened a school for African-American children on a steamboat. Other examples included holding school secretly in White and Black churches.³⁸

³⁶ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

The Black Codes were rescinded in 1866, but the oppression did not end. For one thing, the South's penal system was transformed from an institution that dealt almost exclusively with Whites, to one focused on newly freed Blacks. Legal scholar, Michelle Alexander believes this notion has evolved and persists today in that the judicial system is used to maintain and reinforce the current racial status quo in her book, *The New Jim Crow*. She discusses, "preservation through transformation" meaning that Whites can preserve their position at the top of the racial hierarchy by changing the rules and rhetoric of the game. For Alexander's purposes, she uses the example of slavery, Jim Crow, and the mass incarceration of African Americans.³⁹

When the Black Codes terminated, the laws of Jim Crow (legal segregation) began. Jim Crow rose from a case tried in Massachusetts. Ironically, it was Senator Sumner and Attorney Robert Morris who argued unsuccessfully for integrated schools in *Roberts versus the City of Boston*, 1850. The case provided a persuasive precedent for the doctrine that touted separation and *Plessy versus Ferguson* be subsequently enshrined into constitutional law.⁴⁰

In 1896, Jim Crow was reinforced when a United States Supreme Court decision required separate train cars for Blacks and Whites. The Jim Crow laws mirrored the Black Codes by requiring separate sections for Blacks and Whites. The segregationist philosophy of separate but equal is upheld in the *Plessy versus Ferguson* decision. When a Black man in Louisiana refused to sit in a colored section of a train, the Court decided

³⁹ Michelle Alexander. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. (New York: The New Press, 2012).

⁴⁰ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History* 2011: 92-93.

that different railroad cars for Blacks and Whites were required. It was this decision that eventually led to the extensive implementation of segregating all aspects of public life.

Though the *Brown versus Board of Education* decision in 1954 reversed the practices, the legacy was so ingrained in modern society that it persisted through the 1970s in many Southern states. Following the 1896 United States Supreme Court decision in *Plessy versus Ferguson*, Missouri was one of seventeen states (the fifteen former slave states along with Oklahoma and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia that engaged in enacting laws for segregation of the races, especially in education.⁴¹

The decision in *Plessy versus Ferguson* sanctioned Jim Crow laws and criminalized the mixing of races in virtually all aspects of public life—in public transportation and accommodations, meeting houses, churches, schools, work sites, and so on. At the same time, it simultaneously declared law “powerless” to overcome racial prejudices. “Law provided no safe harbor for Blacks seeking protection against racial discrimination. The United States Supreme Court legislated two separate societies in America.”⁴²

Missouri was one of many states that upheld laws separating the races after the Civil War (1861-1865) on the basis of this landmark case. The United States Supreme Court verdict in *Plessy versus Ferguson* considered segregation legitimate. In keeping with “established usages, customs, and traditions of the people” and “with a view to the

⁴¹ T.V. O’Brien. “What happened to the Promise of Brown? An organizational explanation and an outline for change.” *Teachers College Record* 109: (2007): 1875-1901.

⁴² C. A. Bracey. *Saviors or sellouts: The Promise and Peril of Black Conservatism from Booker T. Washington to Condoleezza Rice.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2008): 30.

promotion of their comfort and the preservation of the public peace and good order.”⁴³

Racial segregation was simply a way to set apart without discriminating. The Courts stamp of approval perpetuated negative stereotypes of Blacks as inferior. Jim Crow translated into forced subordination and degraded all African Americans in the United States.⁴⁴ Jim Crow was the standard, established after slavery ended and continued well into the 1960s. The institution of Jim Crow gave free reign to Whites concerning African Americans and further reinforced the perception that Blacks were lesser human beings. The laws allowed Whites to question Blacks regarding their comings and goings and gave them substantial latitude in a working environment. It was common to jail Blacks if they challenged or questioned their White employers.⁴⁵

It is safe to say that Jim Crow was a form of slavery that evolved after outright slavery ended. Jim Crow, with government backing, entirely controlled the lives of the African Americans. It was not until the Civil Rights Movement that segregation formally ended.

When the subject of this study, Washington, was born in St. Louis, Jim Crow was the acceptable law of the land. Born in 1917, Washington entered the world that was somewhat chaotic with a complex socio-economic environment. America was at conflict in the First World War and locally, mayhem in the streets was commonplace, to include the infamous East St. Louis riots.⁴⁶

⁴³ Bracey, *Saviors or sellouts: The Promise and Peril of Black Conservatism from Booker T. Washington to Condoleezza Rice*: 30

⁴⁴ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

The riots were sparked when desperate Blacks migrating from the South replaced striking White workers. When the strike was over; the union resented the Colored migrants, and they were not protected by the plants that hired them. Ultimately, the Colored migrants were the losers. In the end, thirty-nine Blacks and eight Whites were killed, more than a hundred Blacks were shot or maimed, driving five thousand Blacks from their homes.⁴⁷

In St. Louis, the Negro lived in a northern industrial city governed by southern inter-racial attitudes.⁴⁸ Though there had been some initial equality gains after the civil war, the gains were soon lost. “Section 1 of the Civil Rights Act, passed on March 1, 1875, held great promise when it stipulated that citizens of every race and color, regardless of any previous condition of servitude, must be “entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations....and privileges of inns, public conveyances... theaters and other places of public amusement.”⁴⁹ In the same vein, shortly after that, in 1881 the Tennessee state legislature introduced a bill that would ban discrimination on the state railways. However, the bill was narrowly defeated, and a compromise measure was adopted which provided Black customers with a separate first class car with all the conveniences of the White first class cars. “Most historians believe, although intended to improve conditions, this legislative compromise was the first of the Jim Crow laws.”⁵⁰

Despite legal segregation throughout the Nation, the St. Louis African American community that Washington grew up in, was stable and relatively concentrated along the

⁴⁷ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁴⁸ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

⁴⁹ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*: 169.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* pg 170.

riverfront or near the railroad yards. The laboring class African American community settled in a downtown and midtown districts of Mill Creek and Chestnut Valley.⁵¹ With the start of the 20th century, St. Louis was a complex, hierarchical city, but its African-American community learned to work within the confines of the society to ease the restrictions against it. Although a 1916 racial segregation ordinance failed due to the United States Supreme Court intervention, support for separation remained as attested to by the hundreds of race-restrictive covenants contracted between real estate interests and private citizens in the St. Louis metropolitan area from 1910 to 1948.⁵² The St. Louis African American community led the fight in Missouri to gain voting rights, fashion educational opportunities, establish churches and resist segregation. Though it is now among the most segregated cities in the nation, before the turn of the 20th Century, St. Louis was quite diverse. African Americans accounted for 6 percent of the population, and they were spread throughout the city, accounting for approximately 2 percent of all the poor, working class neighborhoods.⁵³

Though the aforementioned restrictive systems occurred in different time periods, they have one thing in common, the containment of African Americans. When slavery ended, the courts established Jim Crow. When separate but equal legislation was struck down by *Brown versus Board of Education* and the Civil Rights movement made substantial gains, a foundation was put in place for the courts to control African Americans, mass incarceration.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁵⁴ Alexander. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

African American Migration

Migration happens when large groups of people are either pushed out of an area for various reasons or, something outside of the area is so appealing that it pulls a group of people towards it, known as the push-pull theory. Essentially, certain factors compel people to leave or those that help determine migrants intended destinations.⁵⁵

Despite its foibles, after the turn of the twentieth century, St. Louis and other northern cities “pulled” African Americans and the policies in the South “pushed” them. The South pushed and the North pulled more than half a million African Americans between 1914 and 1920. They moved North and in doing so, influenced social, cultural and political change. The greatest change would be felt in the larger cities including Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, St. Louis, New York, and Pittsburgh. Coined *The Great Migration*, it reshaped Black America and the entire country.⁵⁶ Over time, the mass relocation would come to dwarf the California Gold Rush. By the 1970s, nearly half of all African Americans lived outside the South (the 11 states of the Confederacy). The South had previously been home to more than 90 percent of Blacks.⁵⁷

Southern Blacks were prompted to migrate North by factors including social, economic, and political challenges. The majority of southern Black farmers labored as sharecroppers or tenant farmers and either way; they were unable to dig out of debt. They routinely lived in dismal poverty and conditions were made worse in 1914 when a boll weevil infestation destroyed cotton crops across the South. The status of the poor,

⁵⁵ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁵⁶ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

⁵⁷ Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

exacerbated by the attitudes perpetuated by those Whites who believed themselves superior, expected Blacks to remain subordinate.

The era of World War I, presented opportunities in the urban North. Industry thrived, while, at the same time, White European immigration diminished, cheap laborers were harder to find. The growth of industry coupled with the shrinking labor pool created opportunities for Blacks that had previously been nonexistent. Business opportunities burgeoned for Blacks in the North. Thousands of Black Southerners welcomed the prospect of increased wages to work in industry. When they left the South, they abandoned their agricultural lives for the lure of a better, more prosperous life. It was somewhat revolutionary for those who migrated. Black men rapidly moved into the industrial arena and infiltrated industries to include automobile, manufacturing, and packinghouses. Black women who migrated became domestic workers.⁵⁸

An even stronger pull for the Black Southerners was the desire to escape the feudal caste system that remained in place after the Civil War, and promises of equality were broken.⁵⁹ The Great Migration was an explosive crusade driven by Black people who longed to improve their conditions. The *Chicago Defender*, a Black-owned newspaper that was widely read and distributed in the South, routinely encouraged Blacks to move north and discover a better life. Further influences came from friends and family in testimonies and letters from those who had already migrated. Migrants relied on these informal networks to help them navigate their moves to the North.⁶⁰ Word of mouth was such a powerful tool that Southern authorities made every attempt to try and

⁵⁸ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

⁵⁹ Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

⁶⁰ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

choke off news from the North. Law enforcement officials frequently took measures to stop the flow of the newspapers. Isabel Wilkerson recounts a story in her 2010 book, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, of the Meridian Mississippi Chief of Police who required that all copies of the *Chicago Defender* be destroyed to prohibit their distribution.⁶¹

There were several methods of sabotaging the movement, including closing down train stations to make it impossible for the passenger trains to pick up persons even when they held tickets. There were also instances when officials confiscated tickets, or local laws were passed to label would-be travelers as fugitives.⁶² Despite the White Southerners' efforts, Black Southerners left to seek a better life. They chose to leave as opposed to staying in the South and trying to change the inherently racist caste system that treated African Americans as no more than property.⁶³

Individuals left to scout out conditions, make living arrangements and find work. Once they settled, they sent for those left behind to join them. Word of mouth successfully provided would-be migrants with the necessary tools to make informed decisions. If the migrants had a road map with details on how to maneuver in their new-found environment, immigrants were assured a welcome reception in the new setting. Southern migrants could be confident they were leaving behind the fear of Jim Crow associated violence and entering into a world with a new sense of freedom and the possibility of equality.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*: 163.

⁶² Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁶³ Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

⁶⁴ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

It is important to understand that moving north and to St. Louis was no panacea. As G.S. Johns, a reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, who also wrote *Times of Our Lives: The Story of My Father and Myself*, describes the atmosphere.

St Louis was a murderous town and a complex city of interlocking relationships. Everyone had a prescribed place in the hierarchy; those who moved out of their role would be confronted. These interlocking relationships— between rich and poor, different immigrant communities, and across racial lines – were constantly a factor in St. Louis life.⁶⁵

Still, they came and infused their culture into their Northern communities. An effervescence flowed into every aspect of life and resulted in brilliant new music, literature, and art. The Great Migration changed the economy, the politics, and the culture of Black America.⁶⁶

More than six million African Americans left the South for the promise of freedom in Northern cities between 1910 and 1970. Though the South was the only home they had known, African Americans could no longer endure the hardships. They were escaping commonplace rampant violence against them for the promise of economic opportunities and better education for their children.⁶⁷

Firsthand accounts obtained much of the documented information about the migration. Letters to the editor of the *Chicago Defender*, which as stated above, was widely circulated in the South, recounted numerous stories of the migrants. Once safely

⁶⁵ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*: 134

⁶⁶ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

⁶⁷ Ira Berlin. *The Making of African America; the Four Great Migrations*. (New York: Penguin Group Inc., 2010).

in the North, the former Southerners could speak their minds freely without fear of retribution. Comments expressed from those who left were strikingly similar, to include wanting to “contribute to the betterment of the race.”⁶⁸

Quite a bit has been written to explain the exodus of African Americans from the South. The reasons range from the lack of jobs and economic opportunities to the boll weevil infestation and the industrialization of farming.⁶⁹ However, it is clear that escaping violence was possibly the most significant motivating factor for African-Americans.⁷⁰ African Americans lived in constant fear of random violence inflicted upon them by Whites. This type of violence was designed to keep the South’s White supremacist hierarchy intact with the Whites firmly seated at the top.⁷¹

The reliance on the cotton industry that required slave labor remained the staple of the Southern economy after slavery ended. A sharecropping system evolved to sustain the industry. On the surface, African Americans gained independence and freedom to farm the crop in exchange for payments to the former slave owners. Unfortunately, the sharecroppers ended up owing more to landowners than they earned. The newly freed were required to buy or rent all of the tools and supplies required to grow crops. Conditions were horrendous, and the sharecroppers were frequently persuaded, through violence, to agree to terms that locked them into impossible situations.⁷²

⁶⁸ Griffin, F.J. *“Who Set You Flowin’?” The African American Migration Narrative.* (New York: Oxford Press, 1995).

⁶⁹ Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration.*

⁷⁰ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History.*

⁷¹ Anthony L. Brown and Keffrelyn D. Brown. “Strange Fruit Indeed: Interrogating Contemporary Textbook Representatives of Racial Violence Toward African Americans,” *Teachers College Record* 112(1) (2010): 31-67.

⁷² A and E History. *Rise of the Sharecropping System.* <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/sharecropping>. Accessed June 10, 2015.

The federal government provided only lip service to freed Blacks. While Blacks were given their rights on paper, there was no way for them to navigate the complex system of land ownership because they had no exposure and lacked any formal education. Taking advantage of the newly freed Blacks' lack of knowledge, the landowners cajoled them into sharecropping arrangements in large measure. In less than a decade, sharecropping effectively kept the function of slave labor in place for the cotton industry.⁷³

Whatever the reasons, African Americans were, in fact, migrating to the North. Education was a big draw. Students came from St. Louis County, other counties in the state and still other locations outside the state of Missouri to benefit from educational opportunities and attend Missouri schools such as Sumner. A Missouri state law established in 1889 required school districts without local African American schools to pay tuition to send students to neighboring districts where they could attend segregated schools. The requirement was to provide facilities and instruction when there were twenty or more Black school age children. After the opening of the new Sumner High School in 1911, African American residents of the county enrolled in the school, some paying their tuition. These tuition students along with the Southern migrants caused the enrollment numbers to swell beyond Sumner's capacity.⁷⁴

Enrollment citywide was increasing for all public schools and Sumner was no different. In 1900, there had been 2,349 children enrolled in grades nine through twelve;

⁷³ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

⁷⁴ G.W. Heaney and Susan Uchitelle. *Unending Struggle: The Long Road to An Equal Education In St. Louis*. (St Louis: Reedy Press, 2004).

by 1910, there were 6,255, and by 1920, there were 11,393.⁷⁵ At the start of 1918, Sumner High School, initially designed to hold 750 students had enrolled nearly 900 students.⁷⁶

The St. Louis Board of Education tried to deny the overcrowding by attributing it to migrant families who were in St. Louis for the warm weather, but would return home during the winter. While the city's population evolution accounted for substantial growth, it soon became apparent that proportionally, more students were continuing to high school. The subject of this study, Washington, his attendance, and later, his employment at Sumner, are part of the St. Louis African American story.

Evolution of the Project

I entered the teaching field after a successful 20-year career in the military. I was drawn to education because I believed it would be a smooth transition due to the similar cultures of discipline and order. I was involved in the Troops to Teachers Program. The program required that I work in an at-risks school (designed to house students who are considered to have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school). At the same time, the program offered a monetary incentive to the school district.

Initially, I worked with the alternative school in North St. Louis County, involved with at-risk students, but when an opportunity presented, I was eager to go into the traditional classroom. I taught Social Studies, including African American History, for

⁷⁵ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

⁷⁶ "Attendance has been high during cold weather. Figures prove growth is normal and not due to unsettled migration of families from the South as claimed by the Board of Education." St Louis: St. Louis Argus, February 8, 1918. Accessed July 15, 2015.

more than twelve years and coached Softball. With my military experience, living in a diverse microcosm of society, it quickly became clear to me that in my new community, an urban setting in transition, there were obvious influences at play. This community was clearly disadvantaged and its student outcomes directly negatively influenced by race, environment, politics, teacher unions, teacher education,

Late in the summer of 2014, when the neighboring city of Ferguson, Missouri, erupted in violence and protests, I pondered the situation with consideration for the components of Critical Race Theory (CRT) which will be defined later in this work. I recalled that in the course of my career as an educator, I had encountered the young man who had been gunned down in the street. The media retelling of the story and the constant flashing of his bright smile was captivating. I knew Michael Brown as a youngster, as his fellow students, who were at risk, primarily due to attendance and academics. I immediately recognized that I would never know the full and complete story. I believe those who protested Michael Brown's death, shared a similar background, lived in his community, and possibly knew him.

I work in a community that is adjacent to Ferguson to the southeast, with a very comparable demographic. I also understood the mentality of those who would staunchly support the police officer who fired the fatal shot. And while I didn't personally know Police Officer Darren Wilson; had never met him, I do know well his colleagues who served with him in the Jennings Police Department and understand how, collectively, they think and how that culture works. It does not surprise me that locally and nationally, there is also substantial support for the officer. The Jennings Police Department had its share of problems, similar to those mentioned by the United States Justice Department

when referencing Ferguson. The Jennings Police Department was ultimately replaced by the St. Louis County Police Department. The passage of time will determine what changes will result with the Ferguson Police Department. So far, the changes have been symbolic in the resignation of the Chief of Police and the Officer Wilson. Though the composition of the police department has not yet changed, the interim chief is an African American.

I have firsthand knowledge of White males who grew up in small North County communities, rode the waves of change and then fled to live and raise their families elsewhere. By day, they return to the landscape they are most familiar with to earn their living. It is clear that this personality will address a subordinate Michael Brown in a different manner than someone such as myself or my study subject, Washington. This persistent personality has no respect for persons of color and still harbors, although concealed, the core beliefs of Jim Crow and the Black Codes.

Though years separate my experiences from those of Washington, we both expended substantial energy dealing with delinquent behavior. I was surprised to learn that Washington had dealt with marijuana use among the students. I hadn't expected that marijuana would have been a student issue of concern during Washington's tenure, but discovered in The Washington Papers, a number of references to concerns of discipline with students and their use of marijuana. Washington also addressed this concern to parents in his role working with the Parent Teachers Association. Half a century later, marijuana use among students continues to be a major concern in the St. Louis Metropolitan area schools.

After my career in public education, I plan to remain in this underserved area and continue to research and teach, possibly in a university setting. I will be aided by a better understanding of the social, political, and economic issues of education in the St. Louis metropolitan area. While searching for a research project, my advisor, familiar with my background, suggested I consider a project on Washington.

In many ways, Washington's story and mine run parallel. We were both in the military and had careers working in urban education in the St. Louis metropolitan area. I was immediately fascinated by Washington's story and wanted to know more about him. I contacted his family to gain accessibility to his private papers and learn as much about him as possible. The more I learned, the more intrigued I became. It was easy to immerse myself in Washington's life story because I could relate to his military experiences, as well as, his teaching, coaching, and administrative responsibilities.

Though I did not go to school in St. Louis, I am quite familiar with the history of Sumner High School and that facet of Washington's life, simply added another layer of interest. Working on the project has been much more than an academic assignment, it has provided me another perspective and additional insight into the evolution of urban education.

Education is improving the lives of others and leaving your community and world better than you found it.

- Marian Wright Edelman

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is found in the layers of the rich tradition of Sumner High School. The first African American high school west of the Mississippi is full of history. While the story of Sumner is bigger than any individual, it is comprised of the

collection of those individuals who devoted their time, energy, and actions into a rich textured tapestry. Stories like Washington's help to shed light on the success stories of many African Americans who passed through the Sumner High School doors as students or educators. Many students who interacted or were influenced by Washington went on to conquer numerous obstacles and make great strides and further enrich this history.

To understand Washington's story, it is imperative you understand he was not one-dimensional. This research brings to life a story about a veteran of World War II and his legacy in the segregated army of that time. It is a story not yet told/published about a singular man, an unsung hero, one among many of extraordinary men and women who collectively comprise the *Greatest Generation*. Tom Brokaw coined *The Greatest Generation* when he wrote a book by that title in 1999. The subjects of the book are the World War II veterans. After Washington's military stint, he continued his contributions in the education arena. This study addresses all the components of a life well lived.

The problem undertaken by this researcher is to prepare a written study of the important aspects of the life, professional career, and contributions of Washington as an educator and change agent at Sumner High School. The purpose of the study is to discover and to report information on the life and professional career of Washington, focusing on his 43 years at Sumner High School. The study also presents information on Washington's life outside of his tenure at Sumner High School to include his life-long civic contributions to the community.

When the PHL incorporated Sumner, Washington also played a substantial role. At the time, he was Athletic Director and continued in that capacity for more than a decade. He helped the students and the institution as a whole, evolve and integrate. The

PHL offered African American students the opportunity to play competitive sports in a way they had not previously experienced since segregation had not allowed them to compete with greater local and regional sports programs.

Significance of the Study

Washington's story is told in keeping with the counter-storytelling aspect of CRT, Much is written about Sumner High School, and indeed it is an extraordinary story. On the other hand, little has been written about Washington whose story must also introduce Sumner High School. It is time to tell the life story of Arthur L. Washington.

Washington was merely a man, not required to overcome tremendous obstacles and doing nothing to bring himself to the attention of the world's authors. Washington was striking in appearance and sported an extremely athletic build. As a gymnast, he had strong arms and legs, mostly muscle, and he moved with grace through the hallways. He was a formidable figure whether in the classroom, in the hallways or on the sidelines. Washington was light skinned with dark, wavy hair. Some of his portraits look as if ripped from a movie poster of the time. He was, however, an ordinary man, a family man, a moral man whose dreams were to make the world a better place for his children, and the next generation as a whole.

Counter-storytelling is routinely used to tell the stories of people whose experiences are infrequently told. Counter-storytelling shows another side of the story from another perspective. It forces the reader to consider the humanity of those who may have been mistreated or disregarded in historical accounts. It takes the reader inside

stories or perspectives not widely known. In this way, counter-storytelling expands the horizons of the readers by requiring them to ponder minority opinions and experiences.⁷⁷

Washington was one of the millions of African American people who were willing to do their small part to effect change by devoting themselves to a cause. Washington was a deeply religious man, a dedicated educator, and coach and committed to his community. Washington, received his formative education from Sumner High School, and was inclined to return to that setting and perpetuate the notion of citizenship instilled in him. During his tenure as teacher, mentor, coach, Washington undoubtedly influenced a number of students who went on to be nationally known, such as Richard Claxton “Dick” Gregory, comedian, social activist, writer, conspiracy theorist, and entrepreneur; Chuck Berry, musician; Opera’s Grace Bumbry; and Arthur Ashe, who moved from Richmond VA to live with the tennis coach at Sumner after he was not allowed to compete in his hometown. Ashe was a trailblazer in the tennis world, becoming the first number one ranked Black American and won both Wimbledon and the U.S. Open.⁷⁸ It is only speculation to consider how much direct influence Washington had on these young men, but it is clear that they were representative of the caliber of the student body. Ron Gregory, the younger brother of “Dick” who also ran track for Washington, shares his recollections regarding time spent by his brother and himself with Washington in chapter four.

⁷⁷ D.G. Solorzano and T.J. Yosso. “Critical race methodology: Counter Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research.” *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1) (2002): 12-44.

⁷⁸ Erica Allen Hall, *Arthur Ashe, Tennis and Justice in the Civil Rights Era*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2014).

Washington and the other teachers and administrators at the school were role models. Washington was always on the move, never idle. If he was not working at a school or volunteering in the community, he was working odd jobs to ensure his family security. To make ends meet, on weekends, in the evenings, and much of the summer, Washington worked at a St. Louis Country Club. In this role, he frequently attempted to secure employment for many of his student-athletes. His intent was to help students develop a good work ethic and also provide opportunities to keep them off the streets and put a little money in their pockets.

During Washington's tenure, students revered the teachers and the administrators because it was required. The professional men and women who worked with Washington insisted on proper etiquette and manners. To reinforce the requirement, Washington sponsored a Mr. and Miss Posture contest. Selection factors for students included presence and dress and they were required to address adults as "Sir" and "Ma'am" or "Mr." and "Mrs."⁷⁹ Washington also sponsored the Recreation Club of Sumner in 1947 and was affiliated with the St. Louis Athletic Association, serving as vice-president in 1966 and president in 1967-68.

Mrs. Dorothy Johnson was Washington's secretary when he retired from Sumner High School. She worked closely with him for nearly a decade. She too shares her memories of Washington in Chapter four and provides insight into his character as an administrator. Today's technology and social media also provide multiple opportunities to learn about Washington from those who knew him. There is a Facebook Page dedicated to Sumner Alumni where former students and staff share memories. Many

⁷⁹ Washington Papers 1961

recollections are shared referencing Washington. Though Washington was well traveled, to include his overseas military tours and living as a student in Harlem, New York, his legacy was established within a few mile radius of his boyhood home. As the country continues to struggle with issues of racial inequality, this study also contributes to the knowledge of African American educational advocacy. This study will continue to show that African Americans have consistently played an active role in advocating for educational parity. Blacks did not wait for White society to give them the tools required for advancement. African Americans have always been involved in organizations and associations to take control of their destinies by fighting for the future of their communities.

Washington's story adds to the rich narrative of African Americans contributions to Missouri educational history. When considering the work of John B. Meacham, Milton M Clark and George Stevens, who worked tirelessly to gain access and control of their children's education, Washington's efforts, and accomplishments are an important addendum.

Definition of Terms

Within this study, several references will be made to terminology unique to the military and the St. Louis area. Those terms are defined as follows:

African American, Black, Colored, Negro: these terms are used by the period and refer to race and ethnicity.

Critical Race Theory (CRT): the set of beliefs that contends that behaviors, institutions and relationships are affected by race. There are five components of CRT;

counter-storytelling, the permanence of racism, Whiteness as property, interest convergence, and critique of liberalism.

The Greatest Generation: this term coined by Tom Brokaw (1999) refers to men and women who served their country in various capacities during World War II.

Ferguson, MO: A city in St. Louis County, which gained national prominence in 2014 after a White Police Officer, killed an unarmed Black man. The community rose in non-violent protest as well as some rioting and looting that resulted in significant destruction of property.

Foreman Labor: this term refers to the job Mr. Washington held while in the military. In today's army, a soldier's skill is called their Military Occupational Skill (MOS). The majority of African American soldiers during World War II were noncombatants. They performed manual labor from digging latrines to cleaning up the beaches of Normandy after the invasion.

Illinois – Missouri Conference (ILL-MO Conference): this term refers to the basketball conference Black schools such as Sumner belonged to prior to the mandated federal integration in 1955.

Jim Crow: a set of laws that evolved after slavery ended which restricted the rights of Blacks and undermined their ability to gain full citizenship. The laws were inclusive and covered all aspects of public life and authorized separate facilities.

Two Year Normal School: a school created to train high school students to become teachers.

Public High League (PHL): this term refers to the once all White public high school basketball league where Black schools were not allowed to play until 1955.

Race: a socially and historically constructed ideological system that permeates all social, cultural, economic, and political domains, and thus a major determinant of power.

Racism: Systems, structures, and customs that uphold and sustain oppressive group relationships, status, income, and educational attainment

White Privilege: a set of advantages that are believed offered to White people simply because of their inclusion in the racial group.

“The Ville” Elleardsville: a neighborhood located northwest of downtown St. Louis that became a thriving African-American community in the early 1900s. The neighborhood boundaries were St. Louis Avenue on the North, Easton Avenue (now M.L. King Drive) on the South, Sarah Avenue on the East, and Taylor Avenue on the West.

Summary

The remainder of the study is organized into five chapters. The second chapter provides an overview of the history of African American education in St. Louis and the introduction of Black schools into the Public High League. While Washington played a role in integrating the sports program, there were many others who also made substantial contributions.

To that end, this chapter will familiarize the reader with three other African American coaches in the Midwest and their contributions to their communities. This chapter familiarizes the reader with Washington’s life, beginning with his formative years as a student and soldier and continuing to trace his life as an educator and civic leader.

Finally, the chapter ends by introducing Critical Race Theory, a concept that helps to explain that race is a persistent undercurrent.

The third chapter begins with an introduction and the researcher's role. It outlines the methodology and research design utilized to examine the purpose and objectives of the study. The fourth chapter includes the voices of those who have firsthand knowledge of Washington, his community, and his contributions to Sumner High School. Chapter five provides an overall summary, final conclusions and recommendations for future study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

History of African American Education in St. Louis

It is clear that before the Civil War, the enslaved were rarely taught to read or write.⁸⁰ According to the Missouri State Archives timeline of Missouri's African American History, legislation was enacted in 1847 that made it illegal for Blacks to be educated.⁸¹ It was not until 1865 when the constitution was changed to require education for children of color. The 1865 legislation mandated that leaders ensure provisions for African American education. The requirement was to provide facilities and instruction when there were twenty or more Black school age children. Those in charge were to seek equality in education, with provisions on par with those provided for White children. In instances where there were not enough students for a quorum, local leaders and boards could determine how best to provide the requisite education.⁸²

Although there was a legal requirement to provide the education opportunities, keeping education separate for Blacks and Whites was a paramount concern for the White leadership. The 1865 law did not specifically address the issue of integration or segregation. The 1875 legislation was specific, stating that it was against the law to educate Colored children and White children together.⁸³ Later, in the mid-twentieth century, the 1945 Missouri constitution maintained the status quo and reiterated and

⁸⁰ J.D. Anderson. *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860 – 1935*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988).

⁸¹ Missouri State Archives timeline of Missouri's African American History, (<https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/africanamerican/timeline/timeline2.asp>). Accessed May 6, 2015.

⁸² Elinor Mondale Gersman. "The Development Of Public Education For Blacks In Nineteenth Century St. Louis, Missouri." *The Journal of Negro Education*, 41(1) (1972): 35-47.

⁸³ Ibid.

prohibited White and Black children from attending the same schools. However, the amended constitution also allowed for latitude if the leadership was so inclined. The constitution stated that “Separate schools would provide for White and Colored children, except in cases otherwise provided by law.”⁸⁴

With Jim Crow law deeply ingrained in the culture, Missouri’s premier city established an elementary school for African American children in 1867 and Sumner High School eight years later. The secondary school was the first high school for African-Americans west of the Mississippi River. When Charles E. Sumner High School opened, it was a combination elementary and high school, and nearly half of all African-American students in St. Louis attended there.⁸⁵ It was not an ideal situation in St. Louis; however, “In comparison to other former slave-holding cities, St. Louis provided a better education than most.”⁸⁶

The legacy of inequality in the facilities of the Saint Louis Public School (SLPS) district’s dual system of education continued through the first half of the twentieth century. The district’s schools designated “Negro Schools” for African Americans were older buildings in the district’s inventory of school building facilities. This trend started with the opening of Washington’s alma mater.

“The twelve-room building that housed Sumner High was formerly Washington Elementary School for White students. The building had been unsuitable for White students and abandoned.”⁸⁷ In 1880, African Americans represented 22,000 of the

⁸⁴ M. Billington. “Public School Integration in Missouri: 1954 to 1964. *The Journal of Negro Education* 35(3) (1996): Pg. 252.

⁸⁵ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*:.127

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

approximate 350,000 residents in St. Louis.⁸⁸ The legal requirement of racially separate schools and the increases in the numbers of African American students perpetuated a dilemma for school leaders required to provide equality for the next 70 years.⁸⁹

Education's decision makers were outspoken and made no effort to conceal their sense of frustration associated with providing equal education. SLPS's Superintendent of Instruction, Phillip J. Hickey commented to a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* newspaper reporter, "If we get any more Negro pupils, I will tell you frankly I simply don't know where I am going to put them."⁹⁰

In 1948, The St. Louis Board of Education (SLBOE) President, Elmer Putney, was quoted in the same paper, stating, "Completely equal facilities for Negro pupils cannot be afforded because we will not have the money to provide them with more modern buildings, equipment, and a more numerous teaching staff."⁹¹

Even so, more and more African Americans were drawn from the South. During the years following the end of World War II (1945), African Americans moving from the South to St. Louis, must have resembled a Negro invasion.⁹² The path of migrant African Americans from the rural South to the urban North is well-documented by historians of education and the urban environment.⁹³ Though Missouri was a former slave state, St.

⁸⁸ C. Lang. *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-75*. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009).

⁸⁹ R.R. Freeman. *The St. Louis Public Schools, 1938-1956, With Emphasis on Phillip J. Hickey, Superintendent, 1942-1956: A Study Of The School Board-Superintendent Relationship*. (St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1972).

⁹⁰ "Enrollment swells for coloreds." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 14, 1945, 3A. Accessed July 1, 2015.

⁹¹ "Education" *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 14, 1948, 7A. Accessed July 1, 2015.

⁹² Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

⁹³ J. Heathcott, J. and Maire A. Murphy. "Corridors of Flight, Zones of Renewal: Industry, Planning, and Policy in the Making of Metropolitan St. Louis, 1940-1980." *Journal of Urban History*, 31 (2005): 151 – 181.

Louis was viewed by African Americans as a place with opportunities far greater than those existing in the South.

History of Sumner High School

Sumner was established in 1875, by the Board of Education in their October 12 proceedings. The High School for Colored Children became Charles Sumner High School and was ranked as a first class school. The Board's decisions put the high school in the same category as similar White high schools of the time.⁹⁴

As the first African American High School west of the Mississippi, the first class rating was instrumental to ensure the school would provide the classical curriculum. Traditionally, most African American institutions focused more on technical or trade programs.⁹⁵ While trade classes were still offered, these students could now pursue opportunities and careers beyond manual labor.

Sumner had gained a reputation for being a school for the elite. It was this classical curriculum that fostered the belief and implied the school was for the upper echelon of the African American community. While Sumner did educate African Americans of wealth, it also served students whose parents were common laborers. As reported in the census and school data, in later 1800s and early 1900s, it is clear parents of the children educated at Sumner were as many professional as were laborers.⁹⁶

In the first couple of years of its existence, Sumner High School was staffed solely by White teachers and administrators. However, in 1877 the Board of Education, along with the community, invited African Americans from the Northeast to come to St.

⁹⁴ St. Louis Public Schools, *Board of Education Minutes 1875*.

⁹⁵ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Louis to teach. This shift created an integrated teaching environment in Sumner that lasted well into the 1920s. The recruitment of African American teachers created a group of middle-class professionals that added to the quality of life in the school and the community alike.⁹⁷ The classical curriculum paired with the influx of African American professionals contributed significantly to the development of the students and ensuing culture.⁹⁸

Sumner High School Moves to the “Ville.”

While it is true that Sumner was the premiere African American school in the Midwest, its location caused it to be less than ideal as African-American parents viewed it.⁹⁹ So, in 1907, the Colored Citizens of St. Louis presented a formal written report to the Board of Education concerning the conditions and location of Sumner High School. This report reflected the importance African Americans placed on education as well as the importance of building community in a segregated society. The report also included many illustrations that helped tell the story of despair and decay that greeted students and teachers each day.

The first argument made in the complaint addressed the desired location for a new building. In this case, the opposition used the population growth and “drift” to determine that in five years, the African-American population would be mostly west of Grand Avenue in “Ellardsville (The Ville).” The Board believed the forecast was justified

⁹⁷ Buckner, Crutcher and Williams. *A Brief History of the Charles Sumner High School*. (St. Louis Public Schools, 1965).

⁹⁸ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South 1860 – 1935*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988).

⁹⁹ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

because Simmons School, already located there, was experiencing rapid growth.¹⁰⁰

Further evidence finds the existence of the many residential restrictions in the city that prevented African Americans from freely moving into certain neighborhoods.¹⁰¹ The racial restrictions created pockets of African American communities or “archipelagos,” African American islands surrounded by Whiteness.¹⁰²

Beginning in about 1910 and continuing through 1940, the Elleardsville (The Ville) neighborhood took on an urban Black image associated with the development of social and cultural institutions, and social networks for African Americans. The Ville became the home to Sumner High School.¹⁰³ The Ville was destined to become a thriving African American community that not only housed a new Sumner High School, but many other African American institutions such as Poro College in 1918 and Homer G. Phillips Hospital in 1937.

Because of these institutions and the persistent residential housing restrictions, the Ville became home to many of the St. Louis African American middle-class professionals. Doctors, nurses, and teachers lived in the Ville to be close to their employment, which in turn stabilized the community and allowed it to flourish.¹⁰⁴

The second argument presented in the complaint focused on the undesirable location of the existing edifice. The environment around the original location of Sumner

¹⁰⁰ “54th Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of St. Louis,” St. Louis Public Schools Board of Education, 1908).

¹⁰¹ Jack, *The St. Louis African American Community and the Exodusters*.

¹⁰² Heathcott and Murphy. “Corridors of Flight, Zones of Renewal: Industry, Planning, and Policy in the Making of Metropolitan St. Louis, 1940-1980.” (2005): 151 – 181.

¹⁰³ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

High School was unsatisfactory. The framers of the complaint believed that the environment surrounding the school was just as important as the school building. In this case, the environment around Sumner did little to “refine manners, exalt the imagination, and fill the youthful mind with the true, the beautiful and the good.”¹⁰⁵ Instead of seeing beauty and possibility, the students saw grated prison cells; lumber yards, the execution setups, and sometimes, even dead bodies awaiting identification. Regardless of the good work being done inside the building, the surroundings helped to remind the students of their subservient, second-class place in society’s racial hierarchy.¹⁰⁶ The Board of Education’s decision to not build an addition to the school, but instead, provide portable classrooms inadvertently supported the objection concerning the neighborhood surrounding the intolerable location of Sumner High School. The use of portable classrooms was standard for the African American student population. In the case of Sumner High School, the board decided not to build permanent structures because of the condition of the neighborhood.¹⁰⁷

The complaint further challenged the Board of Education on issues of equality based on race. There was ample evidence of inequality and the report questioned why McKinley High School, which served White students, was “spacious, well-kept, and modern.” all things Sumner High School was not. Additionally, while African Americans continued to argue for a new high school, the School Board approved a new White high school at a cost of \$650,000. Add to that, a board member responded to the request for a new Sumner High School by saying, “To change the site of Sumner now would be a

¹⁰⁵ “A Complaint to the Board of Education from Colored Citizens. (St. Louis, 1907).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ “53rd Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of St. Louis.” (St. Louis., 1907).

waste of energy.”¹⁰⁸ The fact that a Board Member spoke so frankly shows the larger society held little regard for African American education.

When Sumner finally moved to its new location in 1910, it was preceded by a fast growing positive reputation. Sumner High School had become one the cornerstones of the African-American community. The community as a whole held up the employees of the school as role models who helped guide African Americans to full participation in society. This outside of the classroom education or counter-education took the form of civic organization meetings and politically related activities designed to advance the race.¹⁰⁹

Segregation continued through the 1950s until the United States Supreme Court decision mandated change. On June 22, 1954, about five weeks after the United States Supreme Court acted, the city board adopted a phased program of integration that would merge its teachers colleges and special education classes that fall; integrate all regular high schools and adult education classes in January 1955; and integrate technical high schools and elementary schools in September 1955.¹¹⁰

Though the aforementioned information is taken from local newspaper archives and is also documented in other sources, many would dispute its validity to include Dr. Lynn Beckwith Jr., a 1957 graduate of Sumner and a distinguished professor at the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

¹⁰⁸ “A Complaint to the Board of Education from Colored Citizens. (St. Louis, 1907).

¹⁰⁹ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

¹¹⁰ “Decision Raised Hopes for Millions Series: Brown V. Board Of Education 50 Years Later,” St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 19, 2004. Accessed June 1, 2015.

I was a student at Sumner High in 1955 and there was no integration of faculty or staff, not that year, and not for many years after that. I believe the same was true for Vashon High and Washington Tech. Situations like this ultimately led to the St. Louis Board of Education being taken to trial and declared as a United States Constitutional Violator.¹¹¹

It was true that behind the public praise of the 1954 plan, the reality was the St. Louis Board only made slight changes. A few Black students attended White elementary schools but for many others, no changes were made. The board also made adjustments to the way boundaries were determined to ensure that Black children would attend Sumner or Vashon as opposed to Southwest.¹¹²

A review of the Sumner yearbooks validates Beckwith's observation. Yet, the misinformation is perpetuated by the fact that the St. Louis Board reported that six of its seven previously all-White high schools and 50 of the district's 123 elementary schools initially desegregated. *Time* magazine hailed the St. Louis plan as a model. Comments from the period paint a picture of a successful transition. Principal W.G. Mosley of Vashon High School, whose enrollment dropped to 1,800 from 2,100, said that "for the first time, we have room to turn around in."¹¹³

In the 1950s, more than 31,000 Black children lived in the St. Louis area and required education.¹¹⁴ During this time frame, the St. Louis Board implemented a policy

¹¹¹ Comments from Dr. Beckwith on 28 September 2015 at Dissertation Pre-Defense.

¹¹² Amy Stuart Wells and Robert L. Crain. *Stepping Over the Color Line: African-American Students in White Suburban Schools*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997): 85-86.

¹¹³ "Decision Raised Hopes for Millions Series: Brown V. Board Of Education 50 Years Later," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 19, 2004. Accessed June 1, 2015.

¹¹⁴ Ibid

that permitted students to transfer to schools they preferred after the initial assignment to neighborhood schools. So, those White students assigned to the Black schools were essentially allowed to bypass the assignment and negate the effort to integrate.¹¹⁵ I

In an article written by George Dennis Brantley, long time Sumner principal, titled *Desegregation in Missouri*, published in *The Journal of Negro Education*, the statistics are clear. Table one in the article indicates that some change was apparent but it was negligible. It indicates that after integration there were some Black students who attended the formerly all-White schools, but no White students attended the Black schools. The article also states that some Black faculty were transferred but it does not provide specific numbers. It does however show numbers of student transfers; one hundred Black students attended Beaumont; one hundred fifty attended Central; a mere seven attended Cleveland; two hundred forty attended McKinley; only twenty-seven attended Roosevelt; and 425 attended Soldan-Blewett. At the same time, Southwest received no Black students, remaining 100 percent White and both Vashon and Sumner received no White students, remaining all Black. There is no mention in the article of Washington Tech.¹¹⁶

As a result, real problems surfaced over the next several years, further validating that integration and desegregation was sluggish. Black parents complained that the burden of desegregation fell too heavily on the shoulders of their children. Though classroom space was available in both north and south St. Louis, the Black parents

¹¹⁵ Stuart Wells and Crain. *Stepping Over the Color Line: African-American Students in White Suburban Schools*. (1997): Pg. 85-86.

¹¹⁶ George Brantley. "Desegregation in Missouri, Present Status of Integration in the Public Schools of Missouri," *The Journal of Negro Education*. U.S News and World Report, April 22, 1955.

contended that buses generally traveled only from north to south, putting Black students into White schools, not the other way. Even when Black students went to schools on the city's South Side, the Black students did not mix with the White students. Instead, as part of a program called *intact busing*, entire classes of Black students, including their teachers, were kept separate, with their times for lunch, recess, and dismissal. So the Black students never actually mixed with Whites at all. School officials said the practice helped maintain class cohesion and avoid administrative confusion.¹¹⁷

“According to William Russell, lawyer for the Black plaintiffs, the Board of Education’s post-Brown transfer policy meant that ‘Blacks who wanted to transfer had a difficult time doing it, but there was no problem for White families to transfer their children to schools that were practically all White’.”¹¹⁸

Nevertheless, Sumner High School thrived and remains, to this day, a revered institution in the community. As is appropriate, the Sumner High School building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.¹¹⁹

George Dennis Brantley

In telling Washington’s story, Sumner High School’s history is required; to tell the Sumner story, its forty plus year Principal Brantley is included. Brantley was principal at Sumner High School from 1929-68. Prior to that, he served as Assistant Principal for two years. During his tenure, at one time, enrollment reached more than

¹¹⁷ “Decision Raised Hopes for Millions Series: Brown V. Board Of Education 50 Years Later,” St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 19, 2004).

¹¹⁸ Stuart Wells and Crain. *Stepping Over the Color Line: African-American Students in White Suburban Schools*. (1997): 86.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

2,400, making it the largest high school in the state and one of the largest in the North Central Association Region.¹²⁰

Brantley regarded Sumner as “his school,” and served in that capacity while Washington was both student and administrator. Brantley was principal when Washington was a student and then later hired him as a science, health, and physical education teacher.¹²¹

Brantley is remembered fondly by his former students and associates to include the University of Missouri-St. Louis E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor of Urban Education, Dr. Lynn Beckwith Jr., also a 1957 graduate of Sumner High School, who says that Brantley left a lasting impression on those with whom he came in contact. “I always remember him in the auditorium sessions saying, “Young people, you can do anything you want to do if you work hard and strive for excellence. And, he was right.”

¹²² Another alum, Rosemarie Hauck, commented on how others responded to Brantley in an auditorium setting, “It would be noisy at first but when Mr. Brantley stepped into the room, there was a hush, no signal or nothing, but we knew to be quiet.”¹²³

It is not a far stretch to assume that Washington modeled his career on Brantley because when a student failed to show for class, Brantley became “truancy officer” and paid a visit to the student’s home.¹²⁴ Washington was also known to perform these type of actions.

¹²⁰ The Washington Papers

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² “Lynn Beckwith Jr., 2013 Lifetime Achiever in Education,” *St. Louis American*, (August 1, 2013) A-5. Accessed March 5, 2015.

¹²³ “Sumner High School Summons Historic Legacy,” *St. Louis American*, (February 26 – March 3, 2004) A6. Accessed March 5, 2015.

¹²⁴ Dan Dillon. *So, Where’d You Go to High School? Vol.2: The Baby Boomer Years: 1950s-1960s*. (Virginia Publishing, 2005): 224.

Though Brantley was not a native to St. Louis, he adopted his community and wove himself into its fiber. He lived in the community and everyone knew he walked to and from school recalled former alum, Arnold J. Sams, who later returned to Sumner as athletic director. Sams said the proximity circumstances made it hard to find trouble, “Living in the Ville, you couldn’t get into too much trouble because your people would know about it before you got home.”¹²⁵

An Alabama native, Brantley was a graduate of Talladega College with a master’s degree from Teachers College-Columbia University with additional training at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Chicago. Before his arrival in St. Louis, he served the State Department of Education in Alabama as inspector of its Negro schools. His contacts at Columbia with noted educators, lecturers and writers influenced his formulation of progressive ideas in education and school administration.¹²⁶

While Brantley was at the Sumner helm, he implemented new and various educational theories. He insisted that teachers appear as professionals and adopted a philosophy of progressive education mingled with and based on newer trends and procedures. Brantley instituted professional faculty meetings, and regular advisory groups became part of the daily schedule. He also established an extensive extra-curricular program. Under the direction of Brantley, the Assembly Program gained significance and became the heart of the school. Perhaps the emphasis Brantley put on assemblies explains why so many former students have memories of him in the auditorium. The achievement stimulated Honor Roll Assembly, Awards Day, Certificates

¹²⁵ “Sumner High School Summons Historic Legacy,” *St. Louis American*, (February 26 – March 3, 2004) A6. Accessed May 10, 2015.

¹²⁶ The Washington Papers.

and personal letters to parents. Brantley provided oversight for an organized guidance program which included Administration, Parents, Counselors, Advisors, and Students. Field Trips and the use of audio-visual aids were encouraged by the new leader. A Foreign Language Laboratory, Communications Center and Health Center were all established under Brantley's leadership.¹²⁷

Before the Board of Education authorized the Major Learning Program and Tracking System, Sumner had begun to identify the above average achievers and had made provisions for guidance and instruction of this group. While Brantley was in charge, the student government was implemented. Because of the philosophy of Progressive Education, Sumner High School had been chosen by the Board of Education to serve in numerous pilot programs. Some programs were adopted city-wide.¹²⁸

Brantley's long tenure was characterized by building "school spirit" and the creation of the "Sumner family" atmosphere among the staff, students, auxiliary personnel, and parents. Brantley served during the great social transition years when, in 1945, the new Missouri Constitution did not remove the segregation of public schools but did begin the process of change. In 1948 when the Missouri State Teachers Association (MSTA) and the Missouri State Association of Negro Teachers merged into one united organization, Brantley was elected Vice President of the MSTA.¹²⁹

In 1954, after the United States Supreme Court decision, Brantley was diligent in preparing his staff, students and parents for the transition years. He was determined not to lose any of the long held Sumner traditions or its pursuit of excellence. Brantley adapted

¹²⁷ The Washington Papers.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

his philosophy to the needs of the school and community. In the Commemorative Centennial Booklet, he was referred to as “the man of these times.”¹³⁰

Brantley established and perpetuated the Sumner culture, tone and atmosphere that persists with Sumner staff, students, auxiliary personnel and parents, as well as former associates to this day. No matter how high their subsequent achievements take them, Sumnerites routinely return to the Alma Mater when in St. Louis. While Brantley had inherited a great school and a scholarly tradition, he added luster to its brilliance and pre-eminence to its shining stars. Brantley cherished Sumner High School, and all who came in contact with him could not help but absorb and exude his ardor for this school and its legacy.¹³¹

During the Brantley years, students lied about their residency to gain admission, shined their shoes, and pressed the pants they wore to school each day.¹³² Brantley saw rewards for the labor of his toils in the many success stories of hundreds of former Sumner students and graduates. He signed more than 12,000 Sumner diplomas. *The Diploma Signing Principal* highlighted this accomplishment in the June 1963 edition of *Ebony Magazine*.¹³³

Though entirely dedicated to Sumner, Brantley, like Washington, did not limit his activities to the school. He participated in a number of civic and religious activities of the St. Louis community. He was a leader in the Berea Presbyterian Church and later, Street

¹³⁰ The Washington Papers.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² “Sumner High School Summons Historic Legacy,” *St. Louis American*, (February 26 – March 3, 2004) A7. Accessed July 15, 2015.

¹³³ The Washington Papers.

Branch YMCA, the Group Hospital Service, the Mullanphy Travelers Aid Society, the Human Relations Council and the Social Planning Council.¹³⁴

In education circles, Brantley served for years as secretary of the Association of Secondary School Principals and was a life member of the American Teachers Association, the National Education Association, and the Missouri State Teachers Association. He was a long-time member of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the American Association of School Administrators.¹³⁵ During Brantley's tenure as principal of Sumner High School, the school blazed a trail with a number of firsts. Sumner was the first secondary school in the area to use Kiel Auditorium for a coronation of a queen and a gala coronation ball, and graduation exercises. Sumner had the first a Capella choir in area secondary schools, and the first Allied Youth Chapter, the first Christmas Vespers Program, and the first interracial athletic contest in the Public Schools Stadium, a football game between Sumner and St. Mary's.

Black Schools Join the Public High League (PHL)

With the passage of federal legislation in 1954 the foundation was laid for integration.¹³⁶ Integrating the sports arena proved itself a practicality. As the schools struggled to integrate, there was a parallel effort to integrate sports activities. During the preceding decades though segregation was prevalent in the 1930s and 1940s, athletics was important in both communities. Until integration, Black schools and White schools were prohibited from playing each other on the basketball court. However, in the

¹³⁴ The Washington Papers.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Richard Kluger. *Simple Justice: "The History of *Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality.*"* (New York: First Vintage Books Edition, April 2004.)

Brantley article, it is noted that Sumner High School played a football game against St. Mary's Catholic High School in 1949.

Student opportunities expanded to allow for engagement in friendly rivalry in athletics and activities such as debate. These types of competitions had been prohibited. The integration enabled all-Black schools such as Sumner, Vashon and Washington Tech to join the Public High League. With the new additions to the PHL, everyone was anxious to see how these top Black teams could match up with those traditional "White" PHL power players such as Beaumont and Cleveland. The answer came when the 1956 Sumner Bulldogs won the PHL championship in their first year of competing in the league.¹³⁷ Washington, as Athletic Director (AD), played a critical role in the smooth transition.

At the time, the Sumner Bulldogs were led by Coach James Tandy Price and they went on to win the league title and were undefeated in all of their PHL games. It was a huge statement made by Sumner and the start of a new era in PHL athletics. The Bulldogs finished 20-3, with two victories coming against Beaumont though Beaumont won the state championship that season. The Bulldogs also won the inaugural PHL Christmas Tournament with a 55-51 victory over Beaumont.¹³⁸ As AD, Washington provided the oversight that enabled the team to shoot to victory.

The integration mandates of 1954 and 1955 fueled the greatest activity of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States which continued through 1968. Nonviolent civil protest were employed in great measure to get the attention of the government and the

¹³⁷ Austin, *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*: 119

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

American people. It is true that the government cannot regulate everything. Perhaps integration fits this category. Integration laws were in place, but no real change occurred. The real change required a mass movement of protest from people, almost a revolution.¹³⁹ The change came after substantial instances of civil disobedience and protest. The movement employed boycotts such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott sparked by Rosa Parks as well as mass marches such as the one in Selma, recently depicted in a movie by the same title. Another form of protest called sit-ins involved participants taking seats at lunch counters and establishments prohibited to them. It was a time of social unrest across the nation.¹⁴⁰

Black Coaches and the African American Community

Civil rights events, protests, demonstrations, sit-ins, and boycotts, were the newspaper headlines of the day, but men like Washington, sportsmen, and athletes, while not directly involved in the movement, participated in a much more subtle fashion. Victories in the sporting arena ushered in the acceptance of integration on the sidelines and the endzones. Their actions made headlines on the sports pages and in the record books and arguably had as much effect on the movement of the orchestrated events covered in the daily newspapers and on the nightly news shows. Negro leaders were fully reliant on the political arena to influence change. However, working with Caucasian leaders did not provide the desired results. Given the times, negotiations between the two unequal groups yielded only a modicum of results. Historian Richard B. Pierce called it

¹³⁹ Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror; A History of Multi-Cultural America*. (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1993).

¹⁴⁰ Gates, *Life upon these Shores: Looking at African American History*.

“polite protest” and indicated that it created positive outcomes because cities were eager to show in the best light.¹⁴¹

To further the cause, community leaders seized on any issue or event available to them. In the Negro community, high school sports, its athletes, and coaches provided fodder and considerably influenced the civil rights movement in America, both intentionally and consequentially. The proof of this is substantiated but not documented, and in many cases, long forgotten.

Prior to integration, instead of competing against Public High League foes in St. Louis, Black city schools such as Vashon, Sumner and Washington Tech competed only against other Black schools in the Illinois-Missouri Interscholastic League, a.k.a. The “ILL-MO League.” Also in the league were schools such as East St. Louis, Lincoln, Madison-Dunbar, Venice, and Douglass.¹⁴² These schools also participated in a separate state tournament in Jefferson City. Each spring, the top Black schools in the state would compete in the Missouri Negro Interscholastic Athletic Association (MNIAA) State Championship at Lincoln University.¹⁴³

Prior to competing in the PHL, Vashon and Sumner basketball programs had already established a legacy beginning in the ILL-MO League when they were the two most successful programs.¹⁴⁴ When they competed locally, they frequently played their games at local community venues such as the Tandy Recreational Center or the Pine Street YMCA. They were fierce competitors. Although Vashon dominated with five ILL-

¹⁴¹ Richard B. Pierce, *Polite Protest: The Political Economy of Race in Indianapolis, 1920-1970* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

¹⁴² Austin, *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

MO League championships and six MNIAA state championships, the Sumner Bulldogs enjoyed their share of success as well, with three ILL-MO League titles and three MINIAA state championships.¹⁴⁵

In spite of the lack of documentation, it is still possible to look at various African American communities, at their accomplishments, their legacies, at those that came out of the communities, and visualize the individual and collective strides that fueled a movement. Washington was one of the figures that empowered and influenced; he was a person who was a part of something larger than himself. He was part of a group of coaches, teachers, and mentors who devoted themselves to the betterment of the race.

Among them was Indiana's Ray Crowe. As head coach of the Crispus Attucks basketball team in the 1950s, he led his all-Negro team to win consecutive state championships in 1955 - 56. Closer to home, are the legendary St. Louis Coach Jodie Bailey, who made an indelible mark in local history; teaching, coaching and mentoring, and Coach Price, who led the 1956 Sumner Bulldogs to win the PHL championship in the first year of competing in the league.¹⁴⁶

As AD from 1950 forward, Washington was directly involved with the PHL from the time it integrated in until he moved into a position of Administrative Assistant in the late 1960s.¹⁴⁷ Though these men's accomplishments are undeniable, they are not rightfully captured historically and when compared to the deeds of their White counterparts, often only appear as sidebars or footnotes. Such is the case with Crowe and his championship teams. When Hollywood sought to tell the world about Indiana High

¹⁴⁵ Austin, *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ The Washington Papers.

School basketball, it settled on the now renowned story of Milan High School, better known as the “Milan Miracle,” the basis for the movie *Hoosiers*.¹⁴⁸

A little-known fact is that it was Crowe and his Crispus Attucks team that was on the losing end of that famed story in 1954. Crowe appears in a small cameo shot in the movie, but clearly his story is largely overlooked. Crowe’s record credits him with three state championships. This fact escaped the movie producers as there is no mention made of his teams’ later momentous accomplishments. Despite his successes, Crowe did not receive immediate public recognition in the newly integrated arena. He was not recognized with a key to the city or named *Coach of The Year*. Nevertheless, Crowe remained confident, believing progress was attained in small steps.¹⁴⁹ As a student, Crowe was one of only a few Blacks on the front lines of integration, both as a student in high school and college. Indiana passed a state law outlawing segregation in 1949 but little changed. According to an article on the University of Indianapolis website, Crowe, was committed to change based on his own experiences. He believed integration was the only way to attain parity. When he started his career, he elected to teach and coach at the segregated Crispus Attucks, named for the African-American believed to be the first martyr of the American Revolution. As Sumner was the first Black school in St. Louis, so too was Attucks in Indianapolis in 1927. Though the 1949 state law existed, segregation persisted.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Pierce, *Polite Protest: The Political Economy of Race in Indianapolis, 1920-1970*.

¹⁴⁹ Kerry Marshall. *The Ray Crowe Story, A Legend in High School Basketball*. (High School Basketball Cards of American, Inc.: First Trade Publication, 1992).

¹⁵⁰ Pierce, *Polite Protest: The Political Economy of Race in Indianapolis, 1920-1970*.

Moving into the high school arena, Crowe coached with his unique style. His first season in 1951, he employed players he knew. Crowe coached his players to be forceful, and that became a legacy of his style.¹⁵¹ Their record of winning all but one of their games permitted them to go to the state championship. The team won a sectional victory and became another arena for the civil rights struggle. Throughout his career as a coach, Crowe emphasized the importance of good sportsmanship through his coaching style was winning aggressively, a seemingly averse position.¹⁵²

During his inaugural season in 1951, Attucks played a tournament game against an all-White team, Anderson High in Madison County. According to the newspaper articles that followed the sport, the fans at the game cheered according to their own racial identity. The perception was that officials unfairly penalized Black team members, and the opposing team gained a substantial lead with less than five minutes left in the game.¹⁵³ According to the article, the Anderson players received favorable calls from the White referees. Despite any unfair calls, the Tigers overcame any obstacles and triumphed, winning the game by one point, 81-80. The article also indicated that the level of intensity and exhilaration of the tournament was sure to land it the annals of tournament history.¹⁵⁴

Crowe continued coaching the Tigers until 1957, at which time he assumed the position of athletic director. In this capacity, he hired Bill Garret as head coach. Garret

¹⁵¹ Marshall. *The Ray Crowe Story, A Legend in High School Basketball*.

¹⁵² Pierce, *Polite Protest: The Political Economy of Race in Indianapolis, 1920-1970*.

¹⁵³ Marshall. *The Ray Crowe Story, A Legend in High School Basketball*.

¹⁵⁴ Pierce, *Polite Protest: The Political Economy of Race in Indianapolis, 1920-1970*.

had been the first Black basketball player for the Indiana University. Under Garret's direction, the Attucks team won its third state championship in 1960.¹⁵⁵

Whether there was a strategy to use these type of activities and accomplishments to further the Civil Rights Movement or whether it was coincidental, its influence is undeniable. While men like Bailey, Crowe, Price, and Washington were sportsmen first, their very presence put them at the political forefront, and they were well aware of their influence on society as a whole. Activists and media outlets used their participation and successes to sway public opinion. The city's leading Black newspaper, *The Indianapolis Recorder*, was no different. It frequently used the high basketball court to promote civil rights.¹⁵⁶

African American leaders took advantage of the winning streak to surface concerns about race relations and segregation.¹⁵⁷ There is a mantra that runs through the Black community that each one is a representative of the entire race. Crowe reinforced this mantra with his players. As such, the players were always well behaved and disciplined even in difficult situations or intimidating environments. The coaches, whether in St. Louis, Indianapolis, or any other location throughout the country, carried the weight of their communities and had a strong desire to accomplish the goals and lay the groundwork to have a positive effect on civil rights.¹⁵⁸

In St. Louis, standout baller and 1933 graduate of Vashon High School, Bailey started his coaching career in 1942 at his alma mater. He led teams to victory more than

¹⁵⁵ Marshall. *The Ray Crowe Story, A Legend in High School Basketball*.

¹⁵⁶ James Brunnermer, *Distinction without Pretension: The Little School That Did*. (Nineveh: First Book Library, 2003).

¹⁵⁷ Marshall. *The Ray Crowe Story, A Legend in High School Basketball*.

¹⁵⁸ Brunnermer *Distinction without Pretension: The Little School That Did*.

800 times over the next 42 years at Vashon, O'Fallon Tech, and Northwest High. Bailey was a fixture on the sidelines in the PHL during its glory days. He was also one of the "bellwethers of the old all-Black ILL-MO League, the conference comprised of African American high schools during the days of segregation."¹⁵⁹ Bailey's crowning achievement came in 1968 when he led the O'Fallon Tech Hornets to the Class L State Championship, becoming the first all-Black team from the PHL to win the state title. Bailey is credited with developing a number of accomplished professional ballers. Bailey's Vashon teams dominated the ILL-MO League in the 1940s, winning league titles in 1943, '45, '47 and '48. He also led the Wolverines to the MNIAA State Championship in 1944, '47, '48 and '49. St. Louis honored Bailey by naming the Jennings Branch United States Post Office in his memory.

When the Sumner Bulldogs won the PHL title in their first year competing, Washington was the AD, and the head coach was Price. "Price made a huge statement in 1956 when he guided the Bulldogs to the PHL championship."¹⁶⁰ In 1960, Price also led the team to their first regional championship, another first for an all-Black team. Price led the Bulldogs to three PHL titles and three regional titles. Concerning the PHL Christmas Tournament, under Prices' direction, the team won four championships in seven years.¹⁶¹

According to former Sumner standout Marvin Neals, "Price was the architect of the Sumner High School basketball dynasty."¹⁶² A native of Southern Illinois, Price had been a track and field competitive athlete. Price led the Ballers at Douglass High in

¹⁵⁹ Austin, *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* Pg. 139.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.* Pg. 139.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

Carbondale to three district championships prior to coming to Sumner. Price was known to instill winning into players wherever he went.¹⁶³

These four men shared similar life experiences with similar outcomes, not unlike most ambitious Negro men of the time. At Sumner, Washington coached track, gymnastics, and cross- country. Having been a competitive athlete throughout his life, it stood to reason that he would be a good fit as the Sumner Athletic Director. He had made significant contributions in this role before he moved into administration. As assistant principal, he remained faithful to his athletes, and he was always willing to do whatever was necessary to ensure that all things ran smoothly. Additionally, Washington worked during summers as an assistant principal for other area schools to include Vashon, Beaumont, Roosevelt, Soldan, and Northwest High Schools.

The life stories of Crowe, Bailey, Price and Washington are reflective of Negro men in society as a whole and are examples of the Critical Race Theory Concept of counter-storytelling. While the next few examples come from Crowe's life experiences, they are generic experiences of the times. He remembered being "roughed" up on the court and called out of his name. He remembered being "refused service in a southern Indiana restaurant, "while traveling with his team and how the team packed up and drove to a restaurant that would serve him."¹⁶⁴

These were not uncommon occurrences, nor were they unique to the men's lives chronicled in this study. These similar experiences are easily explained in the lives of men of this era to include Bailey, Price, Washington and Crowe. Because of societal

¹⁶³ Austin, *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*.

¹⁶⁴ Brunner *Distinction without Pretension: The Little School That Did*.

norms, their career opportunities were limited, and education was one of the most welcoming career fields. All three were educators and coaches whose career accomplishments extended beyond the academic and sports arena.

Later in his life, Crowe entered the political arena. He was elected to the state legislature in 1966. Serving as Chair on the Education Committee, he continued to work towards ensuring school integration.¹⁶⁵ He was instrumental in seeing that integration laws on the books were enforced. It took several years to attain integration. The first White students did not attend until 1971.¹⁶⁶

Crowe was among a generation of advocates for civil rights. He worked within the law and the racists' environment to effect change. Crowe and others like him established individual relationships that sustained them and eroded away bigotry.

Washington

From humble beginnings, he was the son of Alice Hackworth James and Arthur L. Washington of Starkville, Mississippi. Washington was one of the four children.¹⁶⁷ As an adult, Washington and his wife of 55 years, Rita raised a family of seven; twins Michael and Rita, Robert, Rodney, Susan, Richard, and Ronald. His children remember him as an amazing family patriarch. Washington is affectionately remembered as *Art*, *Peepop*, or *Unclelot*, by those in his lineage.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Austin, *The PHL in the STL: The Public High League: A St. Louis Basketball Legacy*. 2007: 139.

¹⁶⁶ Marshall. *The Ray Crowe Story, A Legend in High School Basketball*.

¹⁶⁷ The Washington Papers.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

Student

As Washington entered his formative years, the country fell into the *Great Depression*. The Washington family persisted. As a youth, Washington attended West Belle until 1927 when the school was destroyed by a tornado. At age 10, he went to Sumner Elementary School, graduating from Sumner High School in 1935. An accomplished athlete, Washington excelled in gymnastics. He obtained his B.Ed. from Southern Illinois Normal University in 1941.¹⁶⁹

Educator

During the next ten years, Washington served in the military and secured his post-secondary education. In 1945, he returned to the school where his love for education began. Washington went to work for the same school where he spent his formative years. He did everything from teaching, to coaching, to administrating. He spent nearly half of his life at the school. Some said he was 110 percent, Sumner.¹⁷⁰

Between 1935 and 1950, African-American students were denied enrollment to the University of Missouri system because the Missouri Constitution compelled segregated education. Lincoln University in Jefferson City was established to meet the requirements of the law to educate Blacks.¹⁷¹ Beyond that, under certain circumstances, the state of Missouri paid tuition for Black applicants to attend college in other states. Washington obtained a graduate degree in physical education from New York University in 1948.

¹⁶⁹ The Washington Papers.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ (University of Missouri. *The Multicultural-Mizzou Diversity*. <http://diversity.missouri.edu/timeline/>). Accessed April 1, 2015.

With his new found knowledge and education, Washington, not singularly focused, returned to his alma mater and proceeded to spread his footprints all over Sumner history. He served as athletic director, track coach and founded the girls drill team. He authored the “Communicator,” a weekly publication of Black History, current events, quotations and Sumner High School events. An active member of the Sumner High School PTA, Washington served as the treasurer for more than 30 years. There are countless examples of his attained accomplishments. Washington retired from Sumner High School as Assistant Principal on March 4, 1988.¹⁷²

Civic Leader

Converting to Catholicism when he married his wife, like everything he endeavored, he embraced it wholeheartedly and remained a devoted and active member of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. Washington was very involved in church and served in numerous capacities. One of his proudest moments was when Pope John Paul II visited the Basilica 1999.¹⁷³

Additionally, he was actively involved in several civic affairs. He was a friend of Dr. Julia Davis who attended Sumner at the initial site and graduated from the new Sumner in 1911. Washington later served as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Julia Davis Library. Like Washington, Davis sought to ensure educational opportunities for African American children. An African American woman and Sumner graduate, she was a teaching force in St. Louis for more than sixty years. She taught in the SLPS from 1913 until her retirement in 1961. Ms. Davis made local history when the St. Louis

¹⁷² The Washington Papers.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

Public Library broke with tradition and dedicated a Branch honoring a living person.

Washington worked tirelessly to get the library named for her. The Julia Davis Branch of the public library system opened in 1993.¹⁷⁴

Washington, a life member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., an Intercollegiate Greek-Lettered organization that is credited with being the first of many African American fraternal and service organizations and is considered the model used by many Black Greek Letter Organizations. It is a service organization involved in social and political issues.¹⁷⁵

Washington was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the historic civil rights organization, and the YMCA Olde Tymers. He was affiliated with the Greater St. Louis Athletic Association and the American Federation of Police.

So substantial were his accomplishments, that he received significant accolades throughout his lifetime. One of the most notable was in the form of having an *Arthur L. Washington Day* designated to honor him.¹⁷⁶ On October 20, 1991, Mayor Clarence Harmon of St. Louis proclaimed Washington “had established an outstanding record of achievement.”¹⁷⁷ The then Governor of Missouri, John Ashcroft, recognized Washington “for outstanding contributions to the State and Community.” United States Congressman Williams L. Clay lauded his accomplishments, “for dedicating over 43 years to the education and betterment of our youth, and for being a positive influence in his

¹⁷⁴ The Washington Papers.

¹⁷⁵ Alpha Phi Alpha flashcards Quizlet, <http://quizlet.com/15157778/alpha-phi-alpha-flash-cards/>). Accessed February 18, 2015.

¹⁷⁶ The Washington Papers.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

community and church, and having demonstrated genuine concern for those whose lives he touched.¹⁷⁸

Washington worked energetically for causes he deemed worthy. This researcher believes this biography, which delves into the life and works of Washington, will illuminate his many accomplishments and also provide insight into his inner workings.

Y Circus

As the research progressed into the interview stage, the YMCA Circus (Y Circus) surfaced as a recurring memory. I selected the people to interview because of their teen and adult interactions with Washington, but it was apparent they had experienced the person of Washington as children, and many of their fondest memories were from those early childhood memories. They met him long before Sumner High School through what was called the Y Circus. The Y Circus was an annual stage show to benefit the Pine Street Branch YMCA in St. Louis and help pay for children to attend summer camp. It was started by the Reverend James E. Cook a civic leader and pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in the Ville. Cook was the pastor of Antioch Baptist Church from 1946 until his death in 1961 and the Executive Secretary of the Pine Street YMCA from 1941 – 1946. The YMCA Boosters, of which Washington was a part, were the fund-raising arm. The Y Circus was an annual event put on at the Kiel Auditorium to raise money to provide scholarships to youngsters who could not afford to attend Camp River Cliff. Camp River Cliff was located in Bourbon Missouri, approximately 70 miles south-east of St. Louis.

¹⁷⁸ The Washington Papers.

Youngsters learned life skills to include values, swimming, personal hygiene, and housekeeping.¹⁷⁹

In her book *At The Elbows Of My Elders: One Family's Journey Toward Civil Rights*, Author Gail Milissa Grant recounts the memories of Attorney Ira Young in that attending the camp was a rewarding experience in which he learned about basic things, nature, camping out, living together, getting along, and communicating.¹⁸⁰ George Elliot Jr. expressed similar sentiments in Vida “Sister” Goldman Prince’s book, *That’s the Way it Was: Stories of Struggle, Survival and Self-Respect in Twentieth Century Black St. Louis*. He said that the camps taught values, how to treat people and personal hygiene.¹⁸¹ The circus lasted three or four nights. The kids would show off their gymnastic skills, for instance, as part of the show, and all of their families would come along with others in the community. The greatest draw would be the professional bands.¹⁸²

The Y Circus was started on a very small scale in the gym at the Pine Street Y around 1924. The physical education department would prepare a show for the parents. The shows included clowns and acrobatic performances. As the show grew in popularity, it was moved to Vashon High School and ultimately to the Kiel Auditorium.¹⁸³

As the show grew, it added local talent as opening acts to include the Vashon and Sumner high schools bands, girl’s dance groups, choirs, and other amateur acts. The

¹⁷⁹ Vida “Sister” Goldman Prince, *That’s the Way it Was: Stories of Struggle, Survival and Self-Respect in Twentieth Century Black St. Louis*, (Charleston: History Press, 2013).

¹⁸⁰ Gail Milissa Grant, *At The Elbows Of My Elders: One Family's Journey Toward Civil Rights*. (St Louis: Missouri History Museum 2008).

¹⁸¹ Prince, *That’s the Way it Was: Stories of Struggle, Survival and Self-Respect in Twentieth Century Black St. Louis*.

¹⁸² Grant, *At The Elbows Of My Elders: One Family's Journey Toward Civil Rights*.

¹⁸³ Prince, *That’s the Way it Was: Stories of Struggle, Survival and Self-Respect in Twentieth Century Black St. Louis*.

Stowe Teacher's College Choir would also participate. The second half of the Y Circus featured professional entertainers such as Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Lionel Hampton, the Nat King Cole Trio and Count Basie.¹⁸⁴

The Y Circus staff would organize the event, and the Y Boosters would raise money through program ads and donations from individuals and local businesses. The Y Circus continued for approximately twenty years. The YMCA Olde Tymers, of which Washington was a member persists today and evolved with former YMCA members involved in the Y Circus to honor Cook's legacy and continue his work.¹⁸⁵

Former student Lawrence Walls, whom I interviewed over breakfast at Bob Evan's Restaurant in Florissant, returned to Sumner where he was one of its winningest football coaches. He has graphic memories of Washington's affiliation with the Y Circus.

It was during the time when we had what was called the Y Circus, and the Y Circus was a big event where local people performed and then you had a couple of major stars that performed. It was affiliated with the YMCA. When Mr. Washington was in charge of putting on the act at Sumner high school I can remember being a part of that and it was just outstanding the way Wash would work with the young people and you know we were not exceptionally talented kids but Wash would put together something for us to do. It may be a tumbling act or whatever. Whatever he put together he would work with us, and he was such a calm person and he was always quiet but he was firm. Wash was over that,

¹⁸⁴ Prince, *That's the Way it Was: Stories of Struggle, Survival and Self-Respect in Twentieth Century Black St. Louis*.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

and we looked forward to that and when they cut it out, it was something that we really missed.¹⁸⁶

The Greatest Generation Soldier World War II

This study also explores and sheds light on Washington's contributions as a member of the greatest generation. The greatest generation was a phrase coined by newscaster Tom Brokaw, who wrote a book in 1999 of the same title, about World War II veterans. In the segregated Army, African Americans were relegated to little more than menial labor, one could surmise that African Americans were not part of this generation. However, in his book, Brokaw includes contributions made by African Americans and proclaims that members of this generation, having grown up in America during the depression era, were selfless and motivated by doing the right thing.

When Washington reached majority age, the country was in World War II and "acts of discrimination and oppression were officially sanctioned by the highest officials in the land."¹⁸⁷ Washington enlisted in 1943 and during a stint in the segregated army in World War II, earned the rank of sergeant.¹⁸⁸ Washington was exposed to the military initially when he reported to the Civilian Military Training Camp (CMTC) at Fort Riley Kansas in 1937. The CMTC permitted citizens to attend basic training during the summer with no real obligation to serve in the military. Nevertheless, he elected to enlist and did so on January 9, 1943. Washington began his military career as a Labor Foreman at Fort

¹⁸⁶ Lawrence Walls, (former student and peer) Interviewed at Bob Evan's Restaurant, July 2015. (Walls 41-50).

¹⁸⁷ Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*. (New York: Random House, 1998): 183.

¹⁸⁸ The Washington Papers.

Dix, NJ. Since the Army was segregated, African American soldiers were overwhelmingly assigned to labor positions, nearly 85 percent.¹⁸⁹

Washington was a member of the 3203 Quartermaster Service Company, and many of his duty assignments were less than desirable. Black soldiers like Washington fought the war on two fronts; racism, Jim Crow and segregation at home; and then they fought with the military status quo for the opportunity to literally fight for their country.¹⁹⁰

Washington told his children that while stationed in California, he was required to perform the unpleasant duty of rounding up Asian Americans for confinement to concentration camps. Another of his duty assignments included the gruesome tasks of picking up the dead bodies of slaughtered White American soldiers on the beaches of Normandy. He told his children that African Americans were not allowed the right to invade because of the anticipated glory associated with victory.¹⁹¹

In spite of the seemingly second-rate role relegated to the Negro soldier, according to his Department of Defense Form DD214 (Report of Separation) Washington was a decorated soldier with numerous awards to include Bronze Stars for heroic or meritorious achievement for service during military campaigns in Normandy, Rhineland, Central Europe and Northern France. He was awarded three overseas bars, as well as a victory ribbon, a good conduct medal and a special citation for shooting down an enemy plane over Holland, which was initially denied because the authorities were reluctant to acknowledge such an accomplishment. While stationed at a camp in Holland, he later

¹⁸⁹ Kai Wright, *Soldiers of Freedom, An Illustrated History of African Americans in the Armed Forces*. (New York; Black Dog and Leventhal Publishers, 2002): 190.

¹⁹⁰ Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*.

¹⁹¹ The Washington Papers

told his children that he took it upon himself to man a large gun and shoot down an enemy aircraft. He told them initially, authorities refused to give him credit or believe he accomplished the feat. He said he was placed in the military jail for the activity because, as an African-American and laborer, he was not allowed to man weapons. His son said he was later exonerated and ultimately credited with saving the installation though there is no substantiating documentation. This incident demonstrated the tenacity of the character of Washington and how he conducted himself throughout his life. He met challenges head-on and always stood up for what he believed to be right.¹⁹²

Critical Race Theory

The racism that influenced the legal system is at the root of what has become known as CRT in the latter quarter of the twentieth century.¹⁹³ CRT seeks to study opinions of the minority community to ascertain if there is credence in many of their long-held perceptions. Since modern society is infused with racists attitudes and customs, CRT provides a prism to see differences without judging people as superior or inferior.¹⁹⁴

CRT is prominent in the writings of legal scholars as a way of uncovering the hidden consequence of race in a society that believes it has solved its racial problems. In its definition, racism is not an individual performing a singular act, but a system of White privilege derived from unequal distributions of both tangible and intangible resources.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² The Washington Papers.

¹⁹³ J.T. DeCuir and Adrienne D. Dixon. "So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There': Using Critical Race Theory As A Tool Of Analysis Of Race And Racism In Education." *Educational Researcher*. (2004): 26-37.

¹⁹⁴ G. Ladson-Billings, and William F. Tate, "Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education." *Teachers College Record*, 97(1) (1995): 47 – 68.

¹⁹⁵ A.D. Dixon and C.K. Rousseau. "And We Are Still Not Saved: Critical Race Theory in Education Ten Years Later." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8(1) (2005): 7 – 28

More specifically, critical race theory acknowledges that people experience differences in treatment based on the way they look. In fact, “racism is endemic in U.S. society. It is deeply ingrained legally, culturally, and psychologically and reinforces traditional ways of thinking and being, which omit the experiences of people of color.”¹⁹⁶

CRT is categorized into five categories.

-- Permanence of Racism addresses the fact that racism is so pervasive that it has become ordinary and normal.

-- Whiteness as property considers that being White entitles persons to privilege or benefits withheld from others. This tenant is tied to the sense of superiority and dates back to times of slavery.

-- Critique of Liberalism contends that the fight for civil rights most closely aligns with liberal politics. However, liberal politics relies strongly on the slow and methodical progress of the court system. The critique proposes that fast and sweeping changes are required as opposed to those which are incremental.

-- Interest convergence makes the case that the majority group will never simply seek to improve a situation or circumstance in an altruistic manner. The minority group must find a way to make the situation or circumstance have an effect on the majority group. In that way, the issue is addressed when their interest intersect.

-- Counter-storytelling is reversing the long-told story that is ingrained and believed by the masses to be the truth. The initial stories often reinforce erroneous

¹⁹⁶ R. Delgado and Jean Stefanie. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. (New York: University Press, 2001).

stereotypes and untruths. By telling individual stories, some of the wrongs can be righted, and those who have been marginalized are vindicated.¹⁹⁷

The first tenant explains that racism is permeant because it weaves into the fabric of society. It is embedded; it is virtually invisible. By keeping racism unrecognizable, it is easier to allow the racial status quo to continue unchallenged. Society has become used to racism to the point that it is the acceptable standard. CRT recognizes racism and brings it to light for others to see, whether or not they chose to act on it.¹⁹⁸ This aspect of CRT acknowledges that racism is deep-rooted in American society.¹⁹⁹

Since the founding of the United States, Whiteness and property have been inexplicably linked together to erect an impermeable barrier between Whites and non-Whites. This tenant of CRT explores the idea of property. Whiteness became a form of property that allows for unlimited and unchallenged access to resources. Whether it is education, real estate, or employment, Whiteness is an intangible asset that supports the current racial hierarchy that permits Whites to remain at the top.²⁰⁰ Similar to the permanence of racism, Whiteness as a property is transferable through generations, so it continues to perpetuate itself in every subsequent generation. Beyond that, CRT goes even deeper by explaining that Whiteness allows for not only right to property but the right to positive unearned reputations and the right to exclude others. Joined with

¹⁹⁷ Delgado and Stefanic. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*.

¹⁹⁸ Derrick Bell. *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism*. (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

¹⁹⁹ DeCuir and Dixon, "So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There': Using Critical Race Theory As A Tool Of Analysis Of Race And Racism In Education."

²⁰⁰ Jessica T. DeCuir-Gunby, "Proving Your Skin Is White, You Can Have Everything': Race, Racial Identity, and Property Rights in Whiteness in the Supreme Court Case of Josephine DeCuir." *In Critical Race Theory in Education: All God's Children Got a Song*. Edited by Adrienne D. Dixon and Celia K. Rousseau, 89-111. New York: Routledge, 2006.

transference, Whiteness becomes a valuable piece of property, the intangible power that Whites go to any lengths to protect from losing.²⁰¹

The next tenant of CRT is a critique of liberalism and the legal system. Many people believe that dramatic strides have been made in the country's racial climate because of court cases and the passing of equal rights legislation. Instead of propelling the country forward in terms of race relations, the legal system serves to slow it down. Focusing purely on the laws, critical race theorists believe the legal system did not allow for the quick and immediate change required for the eradication of racism. Aimed at both liberals and conservatives, this argument challenges the legal system's ability to create real and lasting change to the embedded racial hierarchy.²⁰²

Even when an action has a positive effect on alleviating racism, according to CRT, it is usually due to the interest convergence tenant. In other words, Whites promote racial remedies if they receive some benefit from the deal. This idea is best described by legal scholar Derrick Bell when he explains the "interest of Blacks in achieving racial equality is accommodated only when that interest converges with the interest of Whites in policy making decisions."²⁰³ In other words, Whites will not give, and Blacks will not win their rights because it is the right thing to do or because of moral and ethical issues. For Whites to give in, they must receive substantial compensation in some form. The final tenant of CRT provides an opportunity for the voice of others to be heard and recognized

²⁰¹ DeCuir-Gunby, "'Proving Your Skin Is White, You Can Have Everything': Race, Racial Identity, and Property Rights in Whiteness in the Supreme Court Case of Josephine DeCuir."

²⁰² Dixon and Rousseau. "And We Are Still Not Saved: Critical Race Theory in Education Ten Years Later." 7-28.

²⁰³ Derrick Bell, *Silent covenants: Brown v. Board of Education and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004): 69.

as a credible base of knowledge. Counter-storytelling serves as a vehicle for the oppressed to tell their experiences and act as experts in their lives. This alternative reality is in direct conflict with the idea of Whiteness being the normative factor from which all things were judged right or wrong.²⁰⁴ The experiences of people of color are neither abnormal nor deficient and should be viewed as a way of understanding the world through a different lens and the first step on the road to a more just society for all.²⁰⁵

Counter-storytelling gives credence to stories that were previously marginalized or ignored altogether.²⁰⁶ Essentially, counter-storytelling gives the minority group a mechanism to share its humanity that is often stripped away when the majority group tells the story.²⁰⁷ Individual stories shared from a personal perspective, give life to the other side of the story.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ D.G (Solorzano and T. J. Yosso, "Critical race methodology: Counter Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research." *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1) (2002): 12-44.

²⁰⁵ L.D. Delpit, "The Silenced Dialogue: Power And Pedagogy In Educating Other People's Children." *Harvard Educational Review* 58(3) (1988): 280-299.

²⁰⁶ DeCuir and Dixson, "'So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There': Using Critical Race Theory As A Tool Of Analysis Of Race And Racism In Education."

²⁰⁷ Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*.

²⁰⁸ DeCuir and Dixson, "'So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There': Using Critical Race Theory As A Tool Of Analysis Of Race And Racism In Education."

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative study that uses biographical and historical methodologies.

This chapter provides the overall details of the how the study progresses. It includes the researcher's role, research design, data sources, collection, and analysis.

The research introduces the reader to Arthur L Washington, student, teacher, soldier, parent, and civic leader whose life was inextricably linked to a St. Louis institution, Sumner High School. Washington received his education from Sumner and then returned to devote the rest of his life to the institution. He worked at the institution for more than 43 years. This chapter is organized into several sections to include research design. The general purpose of the study is basic as opposed to applied research and is designed to inform the reader about the life and professional career of Washington. The research is qualitative because it relies on words as opposed to numbers.²⁰⁹

Researcher's Role

According to Merriam the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis.²¹⁰ As such, my intent is to capture as much of the essence of Washington as possible. Though he was a soldier like myself and also an athlete, teacher, administrator, also like myself, his story is unique. I cannot apply my experiences to understanding his, but I can, and do, look at three other gentlemen who shared similar life experiences and were similarly effective.

I provide some background on these three gentlemen; Ray Crowe, James Price, and Jodie Bailey. I delve as deeply as possible into Washington's life work by

²⁰⁹ Victoria Braun and Victoria Clarke, *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications Ltd. 2013).

²¹⁰ Sharon B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: 2015).

interviewing a cross sections of persons who knew him and those whose lives he influenced. I also provide a brief history of the African American educational institution in the St. Louis area and have thoroughly reviewed The Washington Papers to derive insight into his personality.

As mentioned throughout this study, Washington's story cannot be told without telling the Sumner High School story, where he worked for more than four decades. It is also important to touch on the contributions of long-time Principal Brantley and winning PHL Coach Price.

Research Design

This study is intended to explore the life, work and legacy of Arthur L. Washington, a St. Louis native who devoted his energy to education and athletic opportunity for African Americans. Washington was a long-time educator in the St. Louis Public School System and also was committed to improve his community. This educational biography study utilizes a qualitative research design. The research design employed is biography, specifically educational biography which is an exploration of the life of a person who chooses to devote themselves to the institution of learning, making it their life's work, their legacy, their purpose for existing.²¹¹ In-depth, individual interviews with family, friends, and co-workers of the subject, are consolidated for the finished project. The final product is a comprehensive story that offers a glimpse of the life of Washington; student, soldier, teacher, administrator, and civic leaders.

²¹¹ Craig Kridel, Editor. *Writing Educational Biography: Explorations in Qualitative Research*. (New York, Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998).

Additionally, firsthand information was reviewed to derive personal insight into the psyche of Washington. The firsthand knowledge came from primary sources which included Washington's professional papers, letters, and diaries. The researcher is fascinated with the subject since, in many ways, he has similar interest. The researcher, though born in St. Louis, had few formative experiences in St. Louis because his father, a career Air Force member, took his family around the world as he performed his duties. Following in his own father's steps, the researcher joined the Army after high school and served more than 20 years before returning to St. Louis where his family resettled. The researcher began a second career as an educator. Also he began working with athletes as a referee, and a coach and taught Social Studies to include African American History. He has since learned that Washington was an important player in St. Louis' African American history. This study is a collection of archival documents, interviews, writings, and pictures.

Data Sources

The researcher's intent was to study the life of Washington, his surroundings and become familiar with events and circumstances that influenced his life. Tremendous insight is gained by looking at his life as a student at Sumner High School who later returned to Sumner and acted in multiple capacities, to include teacher, AD, and administrator. Regardless of his position or title, Washington continually served as a role model. The study also covers the time that Washington served his country in World War II and his volunteer work as a civic leader, as well as, his devotion as a family man.

The three primary sources used are (1) The Washington Papers which are housed at the Historical Society on the campus of the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

Washington's son kept all of his father records, memorabilia, and artifacts and subsequently donated them to the Historical Society.

(2) Archival information and existing literature on information relating to Washington's life and the significant events occurring during his lifetime and (3) knowledge gained from interview participants who knew Washington personally.

Participants

The people interviewed have information and provide insight regarding the subject of the study. Washington's son assisted in locating many of the participants. Because of the length of time elapsed, few who knew Washington are living, and those who are, are advanced in age. Washington's secretary for the last ten years of his career was a young woman when she first went to work for him. Now, retired herself, she remembers Washington fondly. She lives in St. Louis and agreed to an interview. A guidance counselor, also retired and living in St. Louis, shares stories of working alongside Washington for more than ten years.

Washington graduated from the first African American high school west of the Mississippi, Sumner High School. He later spent the bulk of his career at that historical school. His son, also a graduate of Sumner attended there while his father was an administrator, has archived much of his father's life works in the form of professional papers and memorabilia. He recently donated the collection to the University of Missouri Historical Society. A University of Missouri-St. Louis professor in the Educational Leadership Department, also a student at Sumner, will be interviewed. An interview protocol and a list of questions were developed, but participants were encouraged to add any additional information.

Data Collection

Data collection began after gaining University approval. The data collected sheds light on different aspects of Washington's life. Primary and secondary documents obtained from one of his five sons are analyzed. The main instrument used during the interview will be the researcher and a tape recorder to ensure the accuracy of data collection. These interviews provided details that provided extended depth into the life of Washington. The following procedures were utilized to collect the data necessary for this study. The researcher conducted the interviews at places of the interviewees choosing. Questions were scripted and opened ended to allow participants to elaborate as deemed necessary to develop a compelling study. The researcher used primary and secondary documents.

Primary data is composed of information collected through interviews with people who knew Washington and the collection of papers his son maintained, which will be referred to from this point forward, as *The Washington Papers*. Additionally, Sumner High School yearbooks dating back to when Washington was a student and those from his time as a teacher, coach, athletic director, and administrator were referenced.

Data Analysis

To begin data analysis, the tape recordings were transcribed. Next, the interviews were organized and sorted by theme and category. This data was reviewed along with all other written documentation and further categorized. Finally, data derived themes were validated to ensure all were consistent with recordings and documents.

Conclusion

This study sheds light on how men like Washington were important to their times, how their vital contributions made a difference. Utilizing counter-storytelling, it shows their contributions were substantial and a significant part of the African-American story. It also adds to the layers of the rich history associated with the remarkable institution that is Sumner High School. The data for the study is collected from primary and secondary sources to allow for a rich, well-researched narrative. Since, so often, the stories of African Americans have been neglected, this study and others like it, will help to fill in the gaps and tell the ordinary stories of extraordinary people. This study addresses all the components of a life as recollected by St. Louis residents, all Sumner alumni.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

■ Martin Luther King Jr.

Introduction

Critical Race Theory’s (CRT) Counter Story-telling is utilized to present this research. CRT began around the mid-1970s.²¹² Employing counter-storytelling permits *“telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told.”*²¹³ So, counter-stories can be used to challenge deeply-entrenched narratives and characterizations grounded in misconceptions about race, gender, and sexual preferences. In this sense, counter-stories can help promote social justice by putting a human face on the experiences of often marginalized groups.²¹⁴

For the purpose of this research, the specific recollections concerning Washington are offered simply to share the views and experiences of those outside the dominant culture. In doing so, Washington’s story contributes to the creation of a new narrative.²¹⁵ The narrative that follows adds depth and structure to understanding the contributions of many like Washington, whether his teachers, his peers or his students.

The significance of this study rolls back the layers of the rich tradition of the first African American high school west of the Mississippi, Sumner High School. Inside the historic walls of this institution, countless individuals worked tirelessly to weave collectively the rich tapestry of the iconic Sumner High School. Stories like

²¹² DeCuir and Dixon, *“So When It Comes Out, They Aren’t That Surprised That It Is There’: Using Critical Race Theory As A Tool Of Analysis Of Race And Racism In Education.”*

²¹³ Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction.*

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

Washington's help shed light on the success stories of many African Americans who passed through the Sumner High School doors as students or educators. Washington and other Sumner educators and administrators interactions influenced students to conquer numerous obstacles and make great strides and further enrich this history.

To visit Sumner's Hall of Fame is to get a glimpse into the caliber of those who walked its historic halls. Washington was instrumental in initiating the recognition as one of his many inspirational gems. Then after his retirement, he was elected to the hallowed halls. To understand Washington's story, it is imperative to comprehend that he was not one-dimensional. Washington lived within the laws and the morays of the society that he inherited. At the same time, Washington worked within allowable parameters to change things in the name of equity and justice.

Change Agent

This research results in a written study that captures snippets of the important aspects of Washington's life; professional career, and educational contributions. It demonstrates how he functioned as a change agent at Sumner High School. The study seeks to discover and report information on the life and professional career of Washington, focusing on his 43 years at Sumner High School. During this period, Washington, and his peers dealt with legal racism yet they persevered. They solved problems as they encountered them, and they were determined to make change by being good citizens involved in their communities and society as a whole. The study also presents information on Washington's life outside of his tenure at Sumner High School to include his life-long civic contributions to the community.

Throughout his 43-year history at Sumner High School, Washington undoubtedly witnessed voluminous change. Washington, himself a catalyst for change, affected much of it, little by little, one person at a time, and behind the scenes. Living and working in the Ville, Washington was among the growing class of the St. Louis African American middle-class professional. Doctors, nurses, and teachers lived in the Ville to be close to their places of employment, which in turn stabilized the community and allowed it to flourish.²¹⁶

Widely-known comedian/activist Dick Gregory grew up on North Taylor and attended Sumner early in Washington's career. In Gregory's autobiography, he explains that his mother was a single parent, and that resulted in him and his brothers often being referred to as recipients of relief.²¹⁷ There are several instances in his book where he refers to attending school with students whose fathers were doctors or otherwise well to do. As part of the growing African-American middle class during a time that racism was overt and prevalent, Washington was one of many who worked to eliminate inequities and change society within the restrictions placed upon them.

Racism

The pervasive restrictions that clustered African-Americans into segregated neighborhoods and schools, Jim Crow and prejudice attitudes traceable to the time of African enslavement, firmly embedded racism into the larger society. The societal norms of overt racism were an everyday fact of life, deeply entrenched in the psyche and

²¹⁶ Dowden-White, *Groping Towards Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis*.

²¹⁷ Dick Gregory with Robert Lipsyte, *nigger: An Autobiography*. (New York: Buccaneer Books, 1964).

systems. Citizens of the time lived within those rules while steadily chipping away at the core of the problem.

Nina P. Lewis, former student and mentee of Washington, and a 1948 Sumner graduate, whom I interviewed in her very nice, newer Ranch style home in North St. Louis, recalled that Black students had three options for attending high school.

We could attend Sumner, Vashon or Washington Technical High School.

Although I had to ride the street car to get to school at Sumner, Vashon and Washington Tech were much further from my childhood home on Belt Avenue; so, the distance made it impractical to consider any school other than Sumner.²¹⁸

Former student, standout athlete, and younger brother of Dick Gregory, Ronald Gregory, also interviewed in his spacious Central West End of St. Louis home, said Washington set the tone for his athletes amid visible inequalities.

He ensured we did not lose sight of what we were trying to accomplish.²¹⁹ Gregory, a 1957 graduate, is a large brown skin man in his seventies, who still has the physical prowess of an athlete. He stands nearly six feet tall and speaks passionately. He said that Washington knew the cards were stacked against them.

Mr. Washington was determined not to allow his student-athletes to succumb to the injustices and become discouraged. He lived in a world where Blacks was stepped on, and that was the way it was. He was not going to give up, and he excelled under a system that would have devastated others.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Nina P. Lewis, (former student/retired counselor) interviewed by researcher, June 2015. (Lewis 106-108).

²¹⁹ Ronald Gregory, (former student and peer) interviewed by researcher, June 2015. (Gregory 14-15).

²²⁰ Gregory 10-12.

The younger Gregory, who sits casually in a lounge chair in his living room, occasionally glances over the top of his glasses at his wife of many years. Sitting with one of his lanky legs draped across the side of the chair, he comments that it must have been difficult for Washington to deal with the exclusive mentality of the time.

He had to deal with the ‘Your kind cannot be part of this group’ mentality concerning the Public High League which permitted the eight White high schools to compete but excluded the three Black ones.²²¹

When the Brown Decision cleared the way for the three Black schools to enter the competition, Sumner, and the other Black schools dominated. It is reasonable that Washington was working behind the scenes of the transition all along. Using his many professional connections, he was instrumental in assuring an uneventful integration process.

Perseverance

Change does not happen overnight and to have sustainable change that is meaningful one must be patient and persevere. Beckwith, a distinguished professor at the University met with me between his classes in a multi-purpose room in the technology lab at the University. He chuckled at the thought that he was now being referred to “advanced in age.” Beckwith is a brown skin man with a full head of salt and pepper hair. Always extremely well groomed and pleasant, Beckwith said he knew Washington for nearly four decades and observed that perseverance was an attribute befitting him.

Youth today could learn perseverance from Mr. Washington. Things don’t always come easy, but if you stay with it, you realize that learning has a purpose. The

²²¹ Gregory 8-9.

more you learn, the more you grow; the more you grow, the more you know that there is a reward at the end of the journey if you stick to it.²²²

Gregory agrees, adding that Washington was tenacious with his PHL work.

Gregory credits Washington with diligently working to have cross-country classified as a varsity sport.

He recognized how hard students worked at the sport, and he worked to get it changed. It took a heck of a push to get it changed from a club to a varsity sport, but he persisted.²²³

Washington also taught perseverance according to Lewis, who knew Washington for more than forty years as teacher, mentor and peer. She is a demure lady recovering from a recent illness, garbed in a housecoat and house shoes. It is clear that in her younger years she was and energetic and involved counselor though she now moves a little slow and walks with a cane. She maintains a great wit and humor and speaks fondly of the students she served at Sumner calling them her children. In her immaculate sitting room, she pauses occasionally to humor her small black Chihuahua, Bae-Bae, who was extremely curious about my tape recorder and me. Lewis worked alongside Washington for twenty-five years. She said Washington informally taught survival skills.

He taught us the things to do if we wanted to be successful. Times were difficult and very hard, but Mr. Washington, and others served to encourage others to keep on going to be successful. That whole generation pushed the youth to persevere.

²²² Dr. Lynn Beckwith (former student, peer, UMSL professor) interviewed by researcher May, 2015. (Beckwith 47-50).

²²³ Gregory 7-8.

For example, my mother made me go to summer school every year, and it paid off because I graduated from high school when I was only 15.²²⁴

Along the same lines of perseverance is consistency and Richard Perry, a 1961 graduate of Sumner who returned to teach and coach at Sumner said consistency was the most memorable attribute he would assign to Washington. I interviewed Perry at my place of employment, the Jennings Educational and Training School for at-risk youth in the Jennings School District.

I just keep saying that over and over again, because the man was consistent about what he stood for.²²⁵

Perry first met Washington when he was nine or ten years old during summer activities at the YMCA; he reacquainted with him as his student in high school; and later Washington was his mentor when he returned to Sumner as teacher and coach. Perry served as the assistant football coach to Walls until Walls retired and then he became a head, coach. Working together for nearly thirty years, the two coaches had an incredible record and both are quick to credit Washington with spurring them on, and encouraging them to persevere.

Prior to us becoming the coaches, Sumner had been losing in football. We told the kids we were going to turn this around and become winners. That year I had just won a little league championship, and quite a few of the players came to Sumner High School. We made our minds up that we were not going to be losers then and at Sumner High School.²²⁶

²²⁴ Lewis 22-42.

²²⁵ Richard Perry (former student and peer) interviewed by researcher, July 2015, (Perry 85-86).

²²⁶ Walls

Washington was 100 percent behind the coaches and the team and possibly their biggest cheerleader. Washington consistently encouraged the coaches to persevere, and they did.

That first year I was coach at Sumner we missed going to state by one game. The next year we went to state and won it all, in 1972. Before we did that, we contacted Coach Eddie Robinson at Grambling. Sumner was a Black High School since 1875, and we wanted to be like a black college. I contacted Coach Robinson, and he had Coach Perry and our entire coaching staff come down. They taught us everything they knew: they didn't hold back nothing. It was amazing how they embraced us and after one year down there we came back and won a state championship, it took us ten years to win another one. We won another one in 1982, and we won back-to-back state championships in 1990 and 1991. We finished second more times than we finished first. We got to the state finals more than ten times. We only had two coaches on varsity; I coached offense, and Coach Perry coached the defense. Our biggest battles were on Tandy field on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, where we practiced against each other. We had a drill called goal line at the end of practice. We would put the ball on the ten and try to score, and Coach Perry's defense would try to stop us. That was some intensive football and the drive and determination in that drill would spill over into the game. For twenty-eight years, it was just great. Coach Perry and I had a great relationship, even though he was ten years younger than me. We

both grew up on Evans Avenue five houses apart. After I retired he took over as head coach.²²⁷

Another former student, Michael Williams, a 1962 graduate, who later served with Washington on civic committees, said Washington excelled in the face of racism when he was in the military.

Williams added that Washington's works of perseverance were self-evident.

When he set his mind to do something, like a fundraiser or helping people in the community; he would just get it done.²²⁸

Problem Solver

Change is constant and more often than not, results in a solution to an identified problem. Discussions with those who knew Washington reveal that he employed unique and successful problem-solving skills.

Mr. Washington never had to use violence or anything like that. He did it in a manly way. He didn't do it in an embarrassing way, and he didn't put you down.

He treated you with respect, but you knew he meant what he said.²²⁹

Whether the problems were big and universal or small and personal, Washington employed a unique and valuable skill set. With regard to affecting change in the sports arena, Gregory credits him with a substantial change in track and field.

²²⁷ Walls 102-108.

²²⁸ Michael Williams (former student and civic leader) Interviewed telephonically June 2015, (Williams 28-29).

²²⁹ Beckwith 58-60.

He did a lot of work in the background. He worked in this horrible system that existed, full of injustices, but never let his dissatisfaction show and instead continuously worked to change it.²³⁰

Harold Thompson, a 1955 Sumner graduate, whom I interviewed telephonically, returned to Sumner as track coach expressed similar sentiments.

When I returned to Sumner and became the track coach, we did not have a track. However, Mr. Washington always made accommodations for the team to practice. Washington was a peacemaker who was able to resolve problems with ease. He was friendly and very encouraging. Mr. Washington was always able to resolve situations he tackled.²³¹

Dorothy Johnson, also a 1955 graduate of Sumner High, was Washington's secretary for more than 15 years leading up to his retirement. I interviewed Johnson telephonically but based on her high-pitched voice and her thoughtful responses, I imagine her as a petite lady, perfectly coiffed with cat framed eyeglasses. I also imagine, many years ago, that she was a perfect side-kick for her boss, whom she said was a nonsense administrator.

He would get his point across, but he would get it across being helpful. He would do it with kindness. He was not stern or hostile. He used the other side of the stick.²³²

Lewis expressed a similar sentiment.

²³⁰ Gregory 21-22.

²³¹ Thompson 19-35.

²³² Dorothy Johnson, interviewed telephonically by researcher June 2015 (Johnson, 53-54).

Washington tried to resolve situations at the lowest level and used them as teaching tools in the learning experience.²³³

Williams described Washington as smooth and said he didn't consider situations as difficult or problematic, he simply saw the situation and resolved it before it got out of hand.²³⁴

Perry added that Washington's intent was to get others to see what was right when confronted with a problematic situation. Perry said when students didn't follow established guidelines, Washington would do all in his power to encourage them to abide by the guidelines and avoid making it a disciplinary issue.

He would attempt to get them to understand why it was necessary to follow guidelines. When students encountered problems in the community, possibly with the police, the effort was to try and resolve it. I think that was good for all of us.²³⁵

Walls expressed a similar sentiment.

Whatever the situation, Wash was always the calm one, he was not a screamer or a yeller. Before a situation could get out of hand, Washington would diffuse it and ultimately resolve it. His philosophy was to observe and talk things out rather than engage in a physical confrontation. I would see him working with students by taking them aside and reasoning with them to get them to understand that what they were doing was really detrimental and not positive.²³⁶

²³³ Lewis 32.

²³⁴ Williams 19-21.

²³⁵ Perry 97-99.

²³⁶ Walls 31-32 and 78-79

Civic Involvement

For change to be effective and long lasting, it has to be multi-faceted and cross multiple disciplines. Washington's accomplishments include a virtually endless list of civic contributions. In addition to numerous responsibilities and accomplishments associated with his employment, Washington's footprints are found throughout St. Louis. Washington converted to Catholicism when he married his wife Ruth, and as was his style, he was devoted. He was on the Board of the Cathedral Basilica of the St. Louis Parish Council and served as Chairman of the Usher and Greeter Committees.²³⁷

He was a good Christian person, very involved with the Basilica.²³⁸ Washington was a Eucharistic Minister and the Cathedral fete Cooking Chairman. He worked with the Archdiocesan Development Appeal and on the finance committee. Washington served as President of the Cathedral Parent Teachers Association and chaired the Volunteer for Cathedral Booths at Strassen fest. He also worked on the Fish and Liturgy committees.²³⁹

Being a man of Christian faith, he showed more in his actions, than his words.²⁴⁰

He stayed in contact with all of the former students whom he had personal relationships with as well as the PTA parents even after the students graduated.²⁴¹

Lewis said Washington was very involved, more so than others. He influenced her involvement in the PTA where he served as the Sumner PTA treasurer for more than thirty years.²⁴² The PTA that Washington worked with was a force to be reckoned with,

²³⁷ The Washington Papers

²³⁸ Johnson 40.

²³⁹ The Washington Papers

²⁴⁰ Beckwith 50-51.

²⁴¹ Johnson 40-41.

²⁴² The Washington Papers.

active and efficient. In his autobiography, Dick Gregory discussed the integration of the cross-country program and recalled that it resulted in the PTA negotiating the change with the Board of Education one week after a demonstration in 1951.²⁴³

Perry recalled that Washington was very civic minded, listing a number of his affiliations to include the YMCA, Police Department, and Boy Scouts.

Mr. Washington was instrumental in the YMCA. I guess, I met him indirectly when I was roughly nine maybe ten years old. We had church and summer activities at the YMCA when the Y was still located on Pine Street. Along with Mr. Jodi Bailey and Mr. Granberry they were all involved in the Camp River Cliff program and the YMCA program. As I got older, our churches did a retreat to Camp River Cliff every summer. That was more reinforcement. He was always involved in the community. He did not take it for granted. He had his hands in so many activities. I have to truly say he was definitely a consistent individual with his involvement in those programs. He was very sincere in what he was doing.²⁴⁴

Thompson identified Washington as a mentor and said he was always encouraging when he was track coach at Sumner from 1967-1980. Thompson, who was inducted into the Missouri Track Coaches Hall of Fame in 1983, coached six high school All-Americans during his tenure at Sumner. He also took multiple teams to state competitions, repeatedly winning first, second, and third place awards. He remembers meeting Washington initially as a youngster in the Y Circus.

²⁴³ Gregory with Lipsyte, *nigger; An Autobiography*

²⁴⁴ Perry, 21- 34.

An accomplishment that Washington worked tirelessly on, and one in which he took great pride, was the work he did leading up to the inception of the Julia Davis Library Branch and then serving on the board. Although Williams initially met Washington as his gym student, he got to know him as a peer when they served on the Board of Directors for the library for more than ten years.

He worked diligently to see the Julia Davis Library come to fruition.²⁴⁵

Reputation

Reputation is intangible but invaluable. Its existence either benefits or damages one's standing. Reputation is usually comprised of a number of factors and perspectives. With regard to Washington's reputation, he was a disciplined person in the discipline business. He was a strong advocate of people and principles and respected all humanity. His good deeds were proof of his humanitarianism. Without exception, participants of the study validate that Washington possessed a reputation above reproach.

Disciplinarian

Washington concluded his career as a high school administrator, by design a job that requires significant disciplinary skills. However, dating back to his time in the military, Washington, often described as a man of discipline, was also a disciplinarian. This research brings to life a story about a decorated veteran of World War II and his legacy in the segregated army of that time. It is a story not yet told/published about a singular man, an unsung hero, one among many extraordinary men and women who collectively comprised the *Greatest Generation*. There is not much to tell of Washington's heroic efforts except for what the government documented in his official

²⁴⁵ Williams 12-13

records. Mostly, like many of that generation, stories of his adventures were shared sparingly with family and close friends.

Washington's war experiences were not common knowledge; few were aware of his war record. Williams said Washington excelled in the face of racism when he was in the military. Williams, who had taken Physical Education classes from Washington, later as a graduate/alum worked alongside him on civic projects to include the Julia Davis Library Committee. Williams, the editor of the *St. Louis Sentinel*, spoke with me on the phone from his office and said Washington shared with him a little-known fact about his military career.

He didn't share this with too many people, but he told me one time when we were waiting around for a meeting to start that he had been asked to be General Patton's driver. Imagine that? He was a Black man who they wouldn't even let carry a gun, but they trusted him enough to drive this powerful man down to the front lines. Personal driver for General Patton in WWII. He didn't tell too many people that. The only reason he told me is that something was in the news about Patton, and we were sitting there waiting for a meeting and he told me. If it had been anyone else, they would have told everyone that in a braggadocios manner, and repeatedly.²⁴⁶

Perry said he knew Washington had been in the military but not much more than that. He said that he thought the military experience was common in those days.

As far as his military record, I knew he was in the military. I can't remember him boasting about what he had done in the military, his success or anything of that

²⁴⁶ Williams, 5-8.

nature. Many of those guys at that time had been in the military. They started college, went in the military and after the military they went back to college.²⁴⁷

Although Johnson, was Washington's secretary for nearly two decades, she said though they shared many conversations about a variety of topics, he never discussed his military time with her.

I knew that he had been in the military because he had a military bearing, but he never talked about his military experiences.²⁴⁸

Beckwith knew Washington professionally as administrator and peer for more than fifty years and said that though Washington carried himself in a well-ordered and disciplined type manner, he was not aware of his military career.

I never knew about Mr. Washington's war record, and most of us never knew it.

For some reason, the teachers didn't talk at that time about their personal life.

Beckwith elaborated, stating that another teacher, Olivia Perkins, his tenth-grade adviser, married a soldier at a time that teachers were not supposed to be married.

No one knew until he was later killed in action. He later learned that it only became common knowledge when she insisted on using her married name. "You didn't know a lot about their personal lives" Beckwith never took classes from Washington while at Sumner, but Washington served as an administrator while he attended. Later Beckwith worked closely with Washington but he indicated that their personal lives remained private. At one point, both Beckwith and Washington lived on the same block, the 4100 block of San Francisco. Beckwith

²⁴⁷ Perry, 99-102.

²⁴⁸ Johnson 34-36.

was newly married, and he would wave to Washington and occasionally talk, but not much about personal matters. Mr. Washington was always cool, calm, and collected.²⁴⁹

Another participant said that Washington's well-ordered nature made him a self-starter throughout his career.

He was a natural leader whom people were inclined to follow. He didn't wait for others to tell him what to do, and once he started something, he completed it. His disciplined characteristic served him well as a disciplinarian.²⁵⁰

Perry, Social Studies Teacher and assistant football coach to Walls, lamented about the consistency that flowed from school to the community. He said when students got into trouble at home, the similar punishment would await them at home.

I had a role model at home with my father. When I went to school, I had a person like Mr. Washington, who was a reinforcement of what I had at home in my father. Same thing with the other instructors. They were reinforcement to what I learned at home. So if I stepped out of line at school, I knew it would get back to my home, and I did not want it to get back to my home. They knew how to handle it at school. They were very similar to what you had at home. They were consistent with what a young person should be about.²⁵¹

Washington was reserved and serious. Lewis said he was soft-spoken and never raised his voice or yelled, yet he was quick to provide the correction. Johnson thought

²⁴⁹ Beckwith 76-78.

²⁵⁰ Williams, 35-36.

²⁵¹ Perry, 48-52.

that sometimes people would mistake Washington's demeanor for something that it was not.

They would always say he was an easy person. The other administrative people and some of the children. But, most everybody wanted to please him.²⁵²

Lewis also described Washington as calm and added that it served him well in that he would not let a situation get out of hand. He didn't raise his voice according to Beckwith.

The boys knew when he said something he meant it. He provided correction it in a manly way but didn't do it in an embarrassing way, and he didn't put you down.

He treated you with respect, he meant what he said. It was obvious that Mr.

Washington had been an athlete. We were growing boys and no match for him.²⁵³

According to Perry, Washington wanted the students to know that nobody was against them, and the rules were in place for the overall climate and betterment of the individual and the collective. He recalled a story about students throwing dice or playing "bones."

Mr. Washington was compassionate in his attempts to solve problems between students. First of all, he would show love to let them know he was not against them, that he was against the act. He employed positive discipline. Some young men at one point were in the hallways insisting on playing with the Roman dominos, and he just told the young people that were involved, 'You know you don't have to do that, but if you throw them one more time I got to write you.'

²⁵² Johnson, 33-34.

²⁵³ Beckwith, 56-60.

The young man said that is the most money he'd ever seen and in his life and told Washington, he had to do it. Afterward, Washington wrote him up and disciplined him. What I am saying is he was a man of his word. He was fair. That speaks for itself. He gave you an opportunity to make a choice but he also told you the consequences of those choices, and he had to enforce what he said.²⁵⁴

Walls shares similar sentiments.

He was fair with the kids. His demeanor was on such a level plane. I never saw him get excited and scream and yell; it was always that calmness. Like I said, I think that kind of rubbed off on the students. They reacted to him the same way.

You could see a student very upset, and Wash would talk to them and you could see the student calm down. He had that special something about dealing with young people.²⁵⁵

ADVOCATE

Washington was a man who knew what he believed and was willing to speak for or against issues, ideas or persons. He was an advocate for just causes and also for his students. It is clear that Washington played a significant role in the incorporation of the Black schools into the PHL, and also in making cross country a varsity sport according to Ron Gregory. Beyond that, there are several examples of how he advocated for students.

Washington was always encouraging to the school children. Whenever they would get .into things, he would bring them aside and do a lot of talking, trying to give them some assistance. Mr. Washington was always determined not to simply

²⁵⁴ Perry, 12-19.

²⁵⁵ Walls, 59-63.

reprimand and turn students away, but instead to help them get on the right track and try to keep them moving forward.²⁵⁶

Perry said Washington was very in tuned with law enforcement and used his connections to assure that issues were handled at school to the degree possible as not to become criminal issues.

He knew policemen and policemen knew him. He realized it was very important. He involved the police department in a positive way. Not like what you see today (referencing the recent circumstances occurring in the Ferguson area). There was constant communication between Washington, and the Police Department was a crucial element to keeping things in check. The police were aware of what was going on in the school because Washington kept them informed and in turn, the police made him aware of items of interest in the community. He always knew every policeman in the district. He worked closely with them to help keep the climate around the school and the community at the right level. I think that was a plus for all of us. If there was a problem with some of the students in the school itself. They tried to resolve it to the best of their ability before it got out of hand. I think that was good for all of us.²⁵⁷

Thompson said Washington would step into situations like an advocate to ensure relationships between students and police were appropriate.

²⁵⁶ Johnson 8-10

²⁵⁷ Perry, 91-99.

As athletic director, Mr. Washington constantly strived to improve the athletic programs at Sumner. I remember him always trying to get better equipment for the programs.²⁵⁸

Walls said there was tremendous interest in the sports program and that the students were enthusiastic and willing, so they were always scrambling to ensure they could accommodate them. He added that Washington worked diligently and relentlessly to ensure they had what they needed.

When I came to Sumner, we had over 3,000 students if you got 3,000 students you should be able to find 30 – 40 football players. When we came there, we had about 55 kids on the varsity and about 90 kids on the JV (junior varsity). We shared the philosophy of Mr. Washington to keep the kids engaged so we did not want to turn any kids away so we would go into the equipment room and put together miss matched equipment. The kids were so happy to get the equipment because they just wanted to be on the team.²⁵⁹

Their strategies worked and not only were they able to keep a larger number of athletes engaged, but they also went on to win numerous championships.

Lewis recalled that Washington made sure that students had streetcar passes and lunch passes and said that Washington was such an advocate of students that he bent the rules when it was for their benefit.

Some might say what was done was not professional, but we worked with them to get it done. We worked through the situation. Sometimes it might have been

²⁵⁸ Thompson, 9-11.

²⁵⁹ Walls, 98-103

illegal, sometimes we knew children were living in abandoned homes but if they were trying to do the right thing, we tried to help them.²⁶⁰

Further evidence of Washington's advocacy is found in the role he played in getting the library named for Julia Davis. The library was named for her while she was still alive and Williams, who worked alongside him in the venture, said it was an unprecedented fete.

Respect

One of the most prevalent and recurring themes throughout this study has been respecting of person. Without exception, Washington was respectful and everyone who knew Washington respected him. Gregory said that both Brantley and Washington commanded respect by their very presence.

When Mr. Brantley and Mr. Washington were in charge, they were in charge.

When they walked down the halls, students were quiet and respectful. There were occasional fights, but fighting stopped when either of them arrived.²⁶¹

According to Beckwith, Washington netted the respect of the students with his actions. He said that Washington found a balance that commanded student respect.

Mr. Washington earned student respect by being friendly with them, but not being a friend, being approachable, but carrying himself in a well-ordered and disciplined type manner. He looked like an educator: he talked like an educator, and he walked like an educator.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Lewis, 87-90.

²⁶¹ Gregory, 59-61.

²⁶² Beckwith 64-66.

Gregory said that Washington, in his mannerisms and the type of guy he was, he made it a point to teach about respect, respecting self and respecting others.

He made sure that we knew, no matter how good we were, we needed to remain level headed. Just because you excelled in one thing or another, don't think you are better than others.²⁶³

Johnson attributed the tremendous respect shown to Washington to his strong interpersonal skills. She said he was always respectful.

Everybody who he encountered respected him. It didn't make any difference who you where or from whence you came, he respected you as a person. He wouldn't meet with you if your pants were sagging. He was quite distinguished and always well groomed.²⁶⁴

Lewis said that Washington respected himself, and others respected him. She said Washington would have handled a student with sagging pants discretely and speculated that conversation would resolve the issue.

He would have said to him, 'Son, I see you don't have a belt on. Let me take you to the office so we can find you a belt to hold your pants up.'²⁶⁵

Perry said Washington showed real empathy. He would always show you that he cared about the person, even in a disciplinary situation.

His caring attitude helped students to accept him as an administrator and one in authority. He'd actually say to students in disciplinary situations, I am a person first just as you are a person, and we are going to respect each other as such.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Gregory 42-45.

²⁶⁴ Johnson 45-46.

²⁶⁵ Lewis, 76-77.

²⁶⁶ Perry, 77-79.

Thompson described Washington as a very nice person.

He was congenial, sincere and fair. He was well respected. He was a peacemaker.

He was friendly and able to resolve problems with ease.²⁶⁷

Williams added that if everyone understood Washington's sense of respect.

He had tremendous respect for the African American. He worked diligently to ensure that the Julia Davis Library came to pass.²⁶⁸

Walls said Washington made every student feel they were special and valued.

He was the kind of person. There was nothing negative about Mr. Washington. He was always a positive person. He could find something good in everybody.²⁶⁹

Humanitarian

In interviewing people who knew Washington, a humanitarian theme is persistent. Many of the participants told of stories where he helped them, or they knew of others whom he helped. The younger Gregory told stories of Washington coming to his rescue on numerous occasions.

He really cared and made arrangements for me. I was a nationally known athlete; state championship in the mile. The school was grooming me in my sophomore year to win the national championship and part of my training included eating right. My mother had died; together with a custodial organization which had a slush fund Mr. Washington made arrangements for me to eat healthy meals at a local restaurant. In another incident, Mr. Washington paid for some sneakers I got at the Bob Russell store. The clerk thought Sumner had an arrangement with store

²⁶⁷ Thompson, 5 and 31.

²⁶⁸ Williams, 12-13.

²⁶⁹ Walls, 12-13.

like the other schools, and I didn't know that they didn't so I took the shoes home.

When the bill came to the school, Mr. Washington approached me and asked about the shoes, explaining that the school had received a bill and had no way to pay it. He knew I didn't have any money but he didn't make me give the shoes back. Mr. Washington told me to keep the shoes and said it would be handled, nothing required of me. I didn't have to work for it and he didn't make me take the shoes back. I set the national high school record in those shoes.²⁷⁰

Working alongside Washington, Johnson observed his humanitarian efforts first hand. She said there were many students who were underprivileged and at risk.

He was not boisterous. He was able to make people think they were doing him a favor when he was really doing them a favor. Mr. Washington took a student, Keith, under his wing who had been getting in trouble. And he took him along with him as he walked the halls and would tell him to follow him. He told him he wanted him to be on the student council and help him to get the young people to clean up the lunchroom. Because he was with Mr. Washington, he felt empowered, and it turned him around.

He would always encourage the school, children. They would get into things, he would bring them aside and do a lot of talking and trying to give them some assistance. He would try to show them they could attain more by doing good as opposed to doing something bad.²⁷¹

Williams said Washington took every student under his wing.

²⁷⁰ Gregory, 116-120 and 226-230.

²⁷¹ Johnson, 15-19 and 44-45.

He cared about the students. He was very tactful. If he knew the student, he knew the family. Educator, mentor, individual who helped everyone. He wouldn't turn anyone away. He was a mentor, a smooth individual. Kids had a lot of problems, and he was interested in students, inspiring them to do the right thing. He made sure they didn't cut class and he worked with them to get them to appreciate their educational opportunities.²⁷²

Lewis said you didn't have to look far if you had a humanitarian spirit such as the one displayed by Washington because some students were without parents and others lived in a local orphanage. She recalled that one student was sleeping in a nearby White Castle Restaurant.

Many students came from less than ideal situations. They lived in the Annie Malone home or were emancipated students. Some were homeless; one student slept in the White Castle at night, yet no matter what the circumstance Mr. Washington would treat every student the same.²⁷³

Perry said Washington believed it took the whole community and community activities to help keep young people to be well rounded.

He knew it was going to take the whole village to raise the children around here.²⁷⁴

Thompson said Mr. Washington and other men from Sumner did things for the good of Sumner and the Ville. Williams added that Washington was an individual who helped everyone.

²⁷² Williams, 52-53.

²⁷³ Lewis, 72-77.

²⁷⁴ Perry, 94-95.

He wouldn't turn anyone away.²⁷⁵

Walls tells a story about a student with polio whom Washington took under his wing. He said the student, Valiente Taylor, now deceased, walked with a limp because the disease had adversely affected his legs. He remarked that the typical person would look past him and certainly not see an athlete, but he said Washington saw his potential and was determined to build the young man's esteem.

Wash was different; he was always looking for ways to build a student's esteem. He was always trying to build them up rather than tear them down. He convinced Valiente to become part of the gymnastics team. Not only did he become a part of the gymnastics team, but he also excelled. He also got involved in swimming. He went to one of the Southern schools as a swimmer and when he graduated he came back and started working at one of the elementary schools as a physical education teacher.²⁷⁶

Role Model

Washington and many of his generation led by example. They were very devoted, humble and tolerant people. They willingly mentored others and in doing so, were inspirational. They carried themselves in a manner that made those who came behind want to emulate them. They wanted to make the elders proud. They wanted to continue the good works started by those who taught them. A testament to this is the large number of students who returned to Sumner to work, teach and coach.

²⁷⁵ Williams, 14.

²⁷⁶ Walls, 16-25.

Humility

Washington was selfless, giving of himself with no expectation of reward. As an example, I recently spoke with Washington's son Ric, who attended Sumner and was coached by the adult Vallianti Taylor. Though the father mentored Taylor, the son had never heard the story.

While his actions were larger, he remained a very humble man. Much of that may be indicative of the times. In his autobiography, Dick Gregory talks a great deal about being treated one way on the track field, especially as a star athlete, and entirely different on the streets and the shops of St. Louis or nearby Carbondale IL.²⁷⁷ The times didn't allow Blacks to assimilate into communities outside those in which they lived. Therefore, when professionals such as Washington ventured outside their neighborhoods, they had to leave their professional persona behind and revert to an acceptable subordinate posture. While Beckwith said that this was not insight offered to many since teachers didn't talk about their personal lives, the younger Gregory experienced this side of Washington when he worked alongside him at a local country club. Gregory worked with Washington as a waiter.

I witnessed a very dignified Washington, decked out in his tuxedo, serving people with less education, yet they felt it was okay to call him by his first name, even the kids.²⁷⁸

Though he was a person in authority, he didn't use the authority to intimidate others, and he wasn't a *know-it-all*, according to Johnson.

²⁷⁷ Gregory with Lipsyte, *nigger; An Autobiography*.

²⁷⁸ Gregory, 31-32.

He was an all-around guy. If he didn't know the answer, he would scout around to find someone who did.²⁷⁹

Perry added that Washington was not the type of person who dominated because of his position.

He used the position that he was in to help dominant the problems and situations. In other words (his philosophy was), I am going to use this position I am in to help you because if you continue this way, you are the one that is going to destroy yourself. To me, he was just a caring person. I really do feel that way, and I enjoyed working with him. I could depend on him.²⁸⁰

Williams said that Washington wasn't the type to sing his own praises or brag about his accomplishments or experiences.

He was a very private man. His accomplishments speak for themselves. He took pride in what he did.²⁸¹

Mentor

In this study, there are numerous stories of Washington serving as a mentor to his students and his peers. This study is only a small sampling of those influenced by Washington. Walls who first met Washington in 1950 described him as a genuine person who loved young people. Beckwith described him as an enthusiastic educator who was student friendly.

²⁷⁹ Johnson, 49-50.

²⁸⁰ Perry, 60-68.

²⁸¹ Williams, 59.

His appeal and his mentorship spanned generations. Many of the students to include Gregory and Walls both had siblings who attended Sumner, and his reputation was shared at home.

I heard his name prior to attending Sumner through my brother (Dick). Before I ever attended Sumner I knew him through my brother. I met him in 1953 when I first attended Sumner until the year he died. I had heard stories about him from my brother prior to attending. Everybody was crazy about him. I don't know of any kid that came in contact with him who didn't think of him as a sincere, caring person.²⁸²

Washington, widely known and respected by present and past students and viewed as a father figure according to Lewis. Perry attests to that saying that Washington was a father figure to him.

He had those leadership qualities that a lot of us learned and we were able to use those same qualities when we became educators. I had a role model at home with my father. When I went to school, I had a person like Mr. Washington, who was a reinforcement of what I had at home in my father. Same thing with the other instructors. They were reinforcement to what I learned at home. I should say in my early years because when I returned, I had people there, once again, that I could depend on to guide me as a young instructor. Coming in at the secondary level as a young coach, they were showing me the ups and downs making sure I did not make crazy mistakes. They made sure I could see how the system did certain things; they gave us a blueprint. When I say they, I am talking about all

²⁸² Gregory, 6 and 44-45.

those men that were in the physical education department and that were coaches at Sumner when I attended Sumner. So, it was just good to be around them because you knew you had that support system. They were very proud to see us coming back to work where they had already been all those years, and it was just good man; it was just good. I was a student under Mr. Washington for two years in his gym class. I had an opportunity to work under him and alongside of him when he was an administrator at Sumner high school. What I miss the most about Mr. Washington is that he was a positive role model throughout my life. It was not something that just started in high school. I knew him before, during, and after high school.²⁸³

DEVOTED

Many of the respondents in this study described Washington as loyal and devoted to Sumner as well as other people and things to which he committed. Beckwith was one of those who commented.

Even after he retired, he remained a loyal Sumnerite. He was just as proud of Sumner then as the days when he taught there.²⁸⁴

Johnson explained Washington sense of loyalty and said that he never forgot the people with whom he affiliated. .

He shared genuine relationships with people and stayed in contact with all of the former students whom he had relationships with as well as the PTA parents even after the students graduated.

²⁸³ Perry, 6-9 and 63-72.

²⁸⁴ Beckwith, 7-10.

Lewis remarked that it was natural that Washington would be so devoted to Sumner since he served his entire career at Sumner High School.

Perry added that devotion was simply part of his character mentioning that he was also very devoted to his family.

Williams remembered that Washington worked diligently to see the Julia Davis Library come to pass.

Tolerant

Washington worked side by side with many people with whom he had obvious differences. He was always able to find common ground and accomplish the desired goals. He was able to set aside any differences for the greater good due his tolerant nature. He accepted people and situations at face value and then when practical worked to change them. Much of his tolerance is attributed to his religious beliefs. Johnson attributed his kind heart to his Christian faith.

He was a good Christian person, very involved with the Basilica. He never spoke badly or talked down about other religions.²⁸⁵

Gregory said Washington deployed his tolerance when working with Whites in a racist system and Lewis discussed that Washington employed that same tolerant nature when dealing with students who had opposing views or found themselves in situations that went against the norm.

If students were a few minutes late because they had problems with the streetcar or some other excuse, he would write them passes.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Johnson, 41-42.

²⁸⁶ Lewis, 78 and 89-90.

Perry, who had known Washington as both student and peer, said that his sense of tolerance was consistent.

I never saw him get mad about anything. He was easy to work with. He was consistent. He was like ‘You do your job and what you are supposed to do and we will be fine’ (in our youth). We were taught what we were supposed to do before we even got to Sumner. All you had to do was your job. He was an even-keeled individual. I never knew Mr. Washington to go off the deep end about something. You knew what he was going to be about every day. He was the same person every day, no matter what the chaos he was the same. He kept a level head. He did a good job of handling it. I saw Mr. Washington several times, deal with young men, where he would always let them know, I am a person first, okay, I have a job to do but there are rules, regulations, and guidelines that we all have to adhere to. I am not going to let you break these rules and guidelines and then tell you I am trying to help you. I am trying to get you to understand that rules are made that we have to follow, and guidelines are there for a purpose. If someone could not follow those guidelines, he would do all in his power to get them to understand why you need to follow these guidelines. It is not because someone is against you. This is here to help you and the overall climate of the school.²⁸⁷

When Walls attended Sumner, Washington was one of the Physical Education instructors. He taught freshman students coming into to Sumner and looking back that may have been because Mr. Washington was such a genuine person;

²⁸⁷ Perry, 79-86.

He treated everyone the same way. He had no favorites, we all were his favorite.

He never seemed to get excited. I never saw Wash get real upset. He had that even keel. I think that rubbed off on the kids he touched. Like I said the calmness, that's what was so unique about Wash. He was always so calm. Whatever situation he was in, he didn't get upset and just explode. Like I said it was just his calmness and how he talked to people. He didn't have a favorite. Most of the time you look at a teacher and say that was their favorite. I think all the kids were his favorites. He cared about all the students at Sumner high school and just not a few.²⁸⁸

Perry said Washington was very forgiving, understanding that mistakes could be made by students. He'd tell them,

I am here to help you through this problem. Help you to identify the problem and how it affected you as well as others. He laid that down up front to you.²⁸⁹

Inspirational

Inspiration is one of those intangible things that can be fleeting and elusive. One can never be sure where it will come from. In the case of Washington, there are several real occurrences where he inspired others to be successful. The student with polio, Taylor, whom Washington had mentored, went on to college as a swimmer and when he graduated he came back and started working at one of the elementary schools as a physical education teacher.

²⁸⁸ Walls, 8-9 and 58-63.

²⁸⁹ Perry, 81 and 84.

He moved from physical education teacher at the elementary school to the swimming teacher at Sumner High School. When he came in he coached the swim, team. By the time they cut swimming out in the PHL, Valiente had turned that around and made a PHL champion. So, this is just one example of how Wash could affect students.²⁹⁰

Gregory said Washington was determined to be inspirational for those following in his footsteps and did all that he could to shield them from injustices so they would not become discouraged. Beckwith said that working with Washington was refreshing.

After I became a principal in SLPS, and Mr. Washington was an assistant principal at Sumner High School, it was a joy working with him. At principal's meeting where assistant principals would come, even though he was older than I, he treated me as a colleague, he always had something wise to say, something jovial, it was just a pleasure working with him.²⁹¹

Gregory told of another instance where Washington inspired him to do the right thing and possibly didn't even realize it.

There was an incident when I considered keeping some of my equipment, and he made a comment that prodded my conscious and I turned the equipment in. I don't even think he realized that he had said something to me that would have that effect on me. He would have had no way of knowing what I was thinking about keeping the equipment. It was his manner, his constant communication that made you want to do the right thing.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Walls, 20-25.

²⁹¹ Beckwith, 35-39.

²⁹² Gregory, 65-69.

Johnson, who frequently overheard Washington's conversations due to her proximity to his office, said Washington had a way to say something jokingly while he was moving around and doing his duties.

He started the Sumner Hall of Fame to recognize former Sumner students and faculty who made substantial contributions and further inspired those to follow. He was then inducted into it 1993.²⁹³

Not only did the program honor the recipients but Washington's creative thinking involved enlisting current students in the art department to paint the portraits of those honored. Walls summarized it best when asked how Washington would handle a pressing issue of today's youth, pants sagging.

He was all positive, and he would get you to see the positive side and motivate you. He was always about lifting someone up rather than bringing them down. He worked with you to help you to understand that you know, you don't have to be like everyone else, there is nothing wrong with being different. So, if everybody wants to wear their pants sagging, you don't have to wear your pants sagging. I think Wash would have, in fact, I know he would have, made a kid kind of look at what he was doing and inspired him to make a change.²⁹⁴

Conclusion

Without question, participants were eager to talk about the man they called a mentor and a friend. As the previous comments attest, he was genuinely concerned about people. Interviews were designed to take approximately forty minutes but in most cases,

²⁹³ Lewis, 17-18.

²⁹⁴ Walls. 12 and 24-25.

participants still recalled fond memories an hour later. Indeed, there is something special about the Sumner institution and its associated history and traditions. Washington's life and his legacy are emblematic of all things Sumner.

On the surface, Washington's 43-year career at Sumner High School and the lives he touched in his professional capacity is worthy of recognition on its own merits. Add to that, all of the extracurricular services he provided such as with the Y Circus, the Olde Tymers, and the Catholic Basilica and it is impressive. Washington's was certainly a life well lived.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**Summary**

In this study, people who knew Mr. Arthur L. Washington were interviewed and shared their recollections of how this honorable man lived his professional life and was a change agent at Sumner High School. This chapter provides a summary of the study, outlines the conclusions and gives recommendations for future research. The information in this chapter provides reflections on the data analysis presented in Chapter four.

The purpose of this study is to tell the story of Washington, a twentieth-century educator who was a change agent at Sumner High School. Mr. Washington's story is incomplete without including the history of Sumner High school, the first African-American High School west of the Mississippi and the institution where Washington received his primary and secondary education. He returned to Sumner after serving his country honorably during World War II and held several positions to include, teacher, coach, athletic director, and school administrator. Washington's story is one of many untold stories of educators who brought about change while making Sumner a premier institution. This study also highlights the accomplishments of three other men who were prominent around the same the time; Ray Crowe of Indiana and Jodi Bailey and James Price of St. Louis.

Washington's story is one of many stories about African Americans that needs telling. Numerous people devoted their professional lives to molding the lives of the students who passed through the halls of a great institution of learning. Many went on to achieve greatness as a result of the influence they received from Washington and his peers.

In this educational biographical study every person interviewed graduated from Sumner High School. Many are former students whom Washington mentored that later returned to Sumner as educators. One of the participants is the editor of the St. Louis Sentinel newspaper. Another just retired after working more than fifty four years in education, serving as teacher, principal, superintendent of schools, and university professor. Participants willingly agreed to interview and share knowledge of the man they identified as a role model.

The goal of this study is to tell Washington's story and how he was a twentieth-century educator and change agent at Sumner High School. The results are derived and presented after data is collected and analyzed. The two methods used in this study are biographical and historical. The biographical methodology was used to tell Washington's life story, in particular, his story as an educator and change agent at Sumner High School. Washington's story is incomplete without telling the history of past events that surrounded his life. The historical methodology was used to look critically at past events, to produce an accurate description and interpretation of those events.²⁹⁵ Critical race theory's, counter story-telling, telling the stories of those people whose experiences not often told, was used as the theoretical framework.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁵ W. Wiersma. *Research Methods in Education: An Introduction, 7th edn*, (Allyn and Bacon, 2000).

²⁹⁶ Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*

Conclusion

To be sure Washington was a change agent and the themes that emerged from the data analysis of this study substantiate this position. Washington was a change agent at Sumner High School. There were three overarching themes that emerged; change agent, reputation, and role model. The themes evolve from the data analysis of the interviews.

Each of the overarching themes is further refined into several subordinate themes. From change agent, subordinate themes were developed to include racism, perseverance, problem-solver, and civic involvement. From reputation subordinate themes; discipline, advocate, respect, and humanitarian. Subordinate themes that developed from role model include humility, mentor, devoted, tolerant and inspirational.

Throughout my research, these themes and subordinate themes were consistent. During the time I was doing my research Sumner celebrated its 140th anniversary at the Chase Park Plaza in St. Louis. More than 800 Sumner devotees attended the celebration. All whom I interviewed spoke fondly of Washington, affectionately known as “Wash.”

Recommendation for Further Research

The people in this study impacted the lives of students who passed through the halls of Sumner High School. Participants shared a sense of pride about their alma mater and each of them cherished their memories of Washington, the institution, and other staff members. There are many other personalities that could be studied to derive further understanding of the times. One such person is George Brantley, briefly introduced in this paper as principal at Sumner High School for several decades and a progressive leader. A study of Frank Williams, principal of Sumner in 1908 when construction of the new Sumner began, would undoubtedly be revealing. John Buckner’s life story would be

illuminating as he was the first Sumner graduate to become principal of Sumner High School. He was a native of St. Louis, and the son of historian and educator Julia Davis. Washington's story and the stories of many are worthy of being told to keep the rich history of African-Americans in St. Louis relevant.

Many who graduated from Sumner went on to achieve greatness, whether in their communities or the country. For example, Julia Davis, who initially attended the original Sumner High School, was a life-long educator who ensured children were exposed to African American history through her collection which was placed on display in libraries. As a tribute, a branch of the St. Louis library was named in her honor while she was still alive. Her papers are on file at the historical society on the campus of the University of Missouri – St. Louis. A study of Dr. Lynn Beckwith, a 1957 graduate who was a leader in education throughout the metropolitan area, would be an excellent subject.

The history of education in St. Louis is rich and there are many educators, past and present, who are a part of this history and it is important that their stories are told. This type of research should continue and I recommend that the artifacts of these educators and people from St. Louis donate their artifacts to the historical society so their stories and this legacy can be preserved. When I began my research on Washington, I found his son Rick was the keeper of his father's artifacts from World War II and memorabilia from his forty-three years as an educator. He had been uncertain as to what to do with his father's artifacts from education. When he learned I was doing a study on his father through the university, he decided to donate the papers to the historical society. Washington's personal papers were extremely beneficial in completing this study.

In the course of my research I found people who were intrigued by the study. While I focused on Washington and Sumner High School, many expressed a desire to have studies done on the institution and personalities associated with Vashon High School, another one of the three high schools that initially was established for Blacks. Several of the people I interviewed also mentioned Vashon and the rivalry between Vashon and Sumner. It would be fitting that the stories of these institutions be told as well as those of its heroes and heroines who walked its hall. These people should also be acknowledged and their contributions recognized. There are a wealth of stories of individuals that are worthy of this type study.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The purpose of this study is to tell the story of Mr. Washington. However, Mr. Washington's story can't be told without telling the story of Sumner High School. A total of eight people were interviewed for this study. The participants are all graduates of Sumner High School.

The responsibilities of the participants were to answer the interview questions and share their knowledge of Mr. Washington to the best of their ability. All recordings and transcriptions will be kept on a password protected storage device stored in a secure location for five years and then destroyed.

1. What was your overall impression of Mr. Washington? In other words if you were writing this biography what would you say about him to introduce him to the reader?
2. Please tell me about a particular incident in which you witnessed Mr. Washington handle a difficult situation.
3. How long did you know him? How well did you know him? What do you miss most about him?
4. What was it like working with Mr. Washington compared to others? What distinguished him from others?
5. What would the present generation learn from someone like Mr. Washington?
6. Can you share some of how he handled sticky situations or speculate on how he might have handled:
 - A troubled student with less than an ideal home life
 - Boys wearing their pants in a saggy manner
 - Gang or group fights
7. Disrespectful and general disobedience or defiance
8. Did he have a unique way of dealing with students and retaining their trust?
 1. Did he ever discuss his own bad or ill-advised decisions or regrets?
 - His war record
 - His civic duties
 - His family

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM



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Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

Arthur L. Washington Twentieth Century Educator and Change Agent at Sumner High School

Participant

Student Investigator (SI) Herman Harris SI's Phone Number 314.839.5796

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Matthew Davis, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Why am I being asked to participate?

You are invited to participate in a research study about Arthur L. Washington and his tenure as a teacher, coach, athletic director, and administrator at Sumner High School. Interviews will be conducted by Herman Harris for the purpose of doctoral research at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL). You are being asked to participate in the research because of your relationship to Mr. Washington during his life and or tenure at Sumner. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be involved in the research. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, and free to skip any questions you choose.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to interview former students of Mr. Washington and people who knew him during his tenure at Sumner in order to better understand his contributions to the institution.

What procedures are involved?

If you agree to participate in this research, you can expect:

- To be introduced to how the interview will be managed by the interviewer
- To be informed about how to end the interview
- The interview to include at least five main questions
- The interview to be focused on your knowledge of Mr. Washington and his contributions to Sumner High School
- The interview to be held in a quiet place away from other people
- The interview to be recorded with a voice recorder

- The interviewer to take notes during the interview

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Are there benefits to taking part in this research?

There are no monetary or other compensatory benefits of participation in this research, though it is hoped that participants will enjoy the interview discussion.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The participants will have a role in assisting with documenting the life story of Mr. Arthur Washington. Anecdotes and stories they share will be attributed to them and their names will be used. No other personal information such as contact information will be shared. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information other than the names of the participants and their relationship to Mr. Washington will be included.

All digital audio recordings as well as their subsequent transcripts and any transcripts notes will be password protected on a computer to prevent access by unauthorized personnel, stored in a secure location for 5 years then destroyed.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You also may refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so. If you decide to end your participation in this study, please complete the withdrawal letter found at <http://www.umsl.edu/services/ora/IRB.html>, or you may request that the SI send you a copy of the letter.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The researcher conducting this study is SI Herman Harris. If you have questions later, you may contact the researcher at 314.839.5796, or the committee chair who is the advisor for this research, Dr. Matthew Davis at 314.516.5953. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Chairperson of the IRB at 314.516.5897.

Remember: Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

**I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.
I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my
participation in the research described above.**

Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Printed Name

Signature of Investigator or Designee

Date

Investigator/Designee Printed Name

The charts that follow are a visual representation of the data analysis that resulted in the common categories/themes that emerged. The verbiage is taken directly from the transcripts of the interviewed participants.

APPENDIX C: CHANGE AGENT:

PARTICIPANT	RACISM	PERSERVERANCE	PROBLEM-SOLVER	CIVIC INVOLVEMENT
LYNN BECKWITH		I think they would learn perseverance from Mr. Washington, things don't always come easy, but you stay with it, that learning has a purpose, that the more you learn the more you grow the more you know, there is a reward at the end of the journey if you stick to it	Mr. Washington never had to use violence or anything like that, he did it in a manly way, but didn't do it in an embarrassing way and he didn't put you down, he threatened you with respect, he meant what he said.	Being a man of Christian faith, he showed more in his actions, than his words.
RON GREGORY	He lived in a world where Blacks was stepped on and that was the way it was. PHL: included 8 white schools and did not include the 3 black schools he dealt with the humiliation of the PHL being for the white schools. Your kind cannot be part of this group. Old sports equipment	He was instrumental in making cross country as varsity sport, he recognized how hard students worked at the sport. It took a heck of a push to get it changed from a club to a varsity sport. He never allowed the injustices to reach us so that we would not become discouraged. Though the system was	He did a lot of work in the background. He worked in the horrible system that existed, never letting on his dissatisfaction but yet working to change it all along.	

	<p>used at the white schools was refurbished and passed on to the black schools as new equipment. Washington never revealed to us that it bothered him for fear it would affect us negatively and we would not perform our best.</p> <p>Though the system was stacked against him, he was never going to give up and he excelled in circumstances that would have devastated others.</p>	<p>stacked against him, he was never going to give up and he excelled in circumstances that would have devastated others.</p>		
<p>DOROTHY JOHSON</p>			<p>He would get his point across but he would get it across being helpful, he would do it with kindness. He was not stern or hostile. He used the other side of the stick. They are set in their ways. Because he would try to show them they could attain more by doing good as opposed to doing something bad.</p>	<p>He was a good Christian person, very involved with the Basilica but he never spoke badly or talked down about other religions. He stayed in contact with all of the former students who he had personal relationships with as well as the PTA parents even after the</p>

				<p>students graduated. No not really, I know there was one young man Keith I don't know what problems he may have had. Mr. Washington took him under his wing and he would tell him come you follow me, I want you to be the student council and help me get the young people to clean up the lunchroom. Because he was at Mr. Washington's side, he felt empowered and it turned him around.</p>
<p>NINA P. LEWIS</p>	<p>Schools were completely separate. There were three high schools for Blacks, Sumner, Vashon and Washington Tech. Although we rode the streetcar to Sumner, Vashon and Washington Tech were much farther away.</p>	<p>Times were difficult and we had it very hard but Mr. Washington and others would encourage us to keep on going to be successful. That generation pushed us to preserve. My mother made me go to summer school every year and I graduated from high school when I was 15.</p>	<p>Try to resolve the situation and chalk it up to a learning experience</p>	<p>He was very involved, more so than others. He actually got me involved in the Parent Teachers Association.</p>

<p>RICHARD PERRY</p>		<p>Like I said it was just his consistency man. I just keep saying that over and over again, because the man was consistent about what he stood</p> <p>They knew what was going on in the school through him and he knew what was going on through the community through them.</p>	<p>If someone could not follow those guidelines, he would do all in his power to get them to understand why you need to follow these guidelines. It is not because someone is against you. This is here to help you and the overall climate of the school. First of all he would have shown love. Let them know I am not against you, I am against the act. You made a mistake. But, I am here to help you through this problem. Help you to identify the problem and how it affected you as well as others. He laid that down up front to you. If there was a problem with some of the students in the school itself. They tried to resolve it to the best of their ability, before it got out of hand. I think that was good for all of us.</p>	<p>He was very civic minded. He worked consistently with YMCA, Police department, and Boy Scouts. He was always involved in the community. He did not take it for granted. He had his hands in so many activities. I have to truly say he was definitely a consistent individual with his involvement in those programs. I think he was very sincere in what he was doing.</p>
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<p>HAROLD THOMPSON</p>			<p>When I returned to Sumner and became the track coach we did not have a track. However, Mr. Washington always made accommodations for the team to practice. He was a mentor to me, always very encouraging. I was inducted into the Missouri Track Coaches Hall of Fame in 1983. During my time at Sumner I coached six high school All-Americans. I was track coach from 1967-1980. Teams competed in state competition a number of times (1st 1973/2nd 3 yrs./3rd 3 yrs.).</p> <p>Like I said, he was very active in the community. I can remember he was very involved with the Y-Circus.</p> <p>He was a peacemaker. He was able to resolve problems with ease. He was friendly.</p> <p>He was very encouraging. A peacemaker and well known in the community.</p>	
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<p>LAWRENCE WALLS</p>		<p>The kids were so happy to get the equipment because they just wanted to be on the team and we did not want to turn any kids away. Prior to us becoming the coaches, Sumner had been losing in football. We told the kids we were going to turn this around and become winners.</p>	<p>Well, I don't recall Wash in many difficult situations. During my time at Sumner we didn't have that many difficult situations. Then when I came back to teach we may have had some situations, but I don't recall Wash being in. But, whatever situation there was, Wash was always the calm one, he was not a screamer or a yeller. He always talked to you in a calm voice. If the situation had the possibility of getting out of hand, Wash was the type person who could come in and resolve the situation or make the situation decrease rather than increase. He just always had that positive influence. That was his personality. I think the present generation would learn just how to interaction with each other. The kids today, the first thing they want to do is get into a physical confrontation you know. Wash was different, he felt that you could talk about your problems rather than react. So I</p>	
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			<p>think they can learn from him how to just sit back and observe or just talk things out rather than physically solve problems. I think Washington or I know he would have taken a student a side and tried to get him to understand that what he was doing was really detrimental and not positive and I think he would have always tried to show the student the positive side or how he can be motivated and bring himself up rather than putting himself down and he would make him understand that you know, you don't have to be like everyone else, there is nothing wrong with being different. So, if everybody wants to wear their pants sagging, you don't have to wear your pants sagging. I think Wash would have, in fact I know he would have, you know made a kid kind of look and what he was doing and maybe want to make a change</p>	

<p>MICHAEL WILLIAMS</p>	<p>Blacks were not permitted to fight and they were noncombatant .</p>	<p>When he set his mind to do something like a fund raiser or helping people in the community, he would get it done.</p>	<p>I don't believe he saw any situation as difficult. He always resolved any situation before it got out of hand.</p>	<p>Involved in community activities; served on the Board of Directors of Julia Davis Branch Library for more than 10 years. He had great respect for African Americans. He worked diligently to see the Julia Davis Library come to pass.</p>
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APPENDIX C: REPUTATION

PARTICIPANT	DISCIPLINE	ADVOCATE	RESPECT	HUMANITARIAN
LYNN BECKWITH	Carried himself in a well-ordered and disciplined type manner. he was always cool, calm, and collected, he didn't raise his voice, the boys knew when he said something he meant it, you could see he was a former athlete, we were growing boys and no match for him, he never had to use violence or anything like that, he did it in a manly way, but didn't do it in an embarrassing way and he didn't put you down, he threatened you with respect, he meant what he said.		He earned the student respect by being friendly with them, but not being a friend, being approachable, but carrying himself in a well-order and disciplined type manner, he looked like an educator, he talked like an educator, and he walked like an educator.	
RON GREGORY	When Mr. Brantley and Mr. Washington were in charge, they were in charge. When they walked down the	PHL included 8 white schools and did not include the 3 black schools. Mr. Washington dealt with the humiliation of the PHL being for the white schools. He	His mannerisms and the type of guy he was, he made it a point to tell you, no matter how good you were, remain level headed. Just because you excel, don't think	Mr. Washington really cared and made arrangements for me. I was a nationally known athlete; state

	<p>halls, students were quiet and respectful. They were occasional fights but fighting stopped when either of them arrived.</p>	<p>had to deal with the fact that "Your kind cannot be part of this group. "</p>	<p>you are better than others.</p>	<p>championship in the mile. School started grooming me in my sophomore year to win the national championship. Part of my training included eating right. My mother died; together with a custodial organization which had a slush fund made arrangements for me to eat healthy meals at a local restaurant. I looked at a pair of shoes from the Bob Russell store. When the bill came to the school, Mr. Washington explained that the school doesn't have an arrangement, yet he made arrangements for me to keep the shoes. I didn't have to work for it and he didn't make me take the shoes back. I set the national high school record in those shoes.</p>
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<p>DOROTHY JOHNSON</p>	<p>They would always say he was an easy person. The other administrative people and some of the children, then too, they would always try to bend to please him. I knew that he had been in the military because he had a military bearing but he never talked about his military experiences.</p>	<p>He was very outstanding. The school children he would always encourage, they would get into things he would bring them aside and do a lot of talking and trying to give them some assistance. That the thing he would do instead of turn them out, reprimand and turn them away. He would try and help them.</p>	<p>He had very good interpersonal skills and everybody who he encountered respected him. They are set in their ways. Because he would try to show them they could attain more by doing good as opposed to doing something bad.</p>	<p>He was not boisterous, he was able to make people think they were doing him a favor when he was really doing them a No not really, I know there was one young man Keith I don't know what problems he may have had. Mr. Washington took him under his wing and he would tell him come you follow me, I want you to be the student council and help me get the young people to clean up the lunchroom. Because he was at Mr. Washington's side, he felt empowered and it turned him around. favor.</p>
<p>NINA P. LEWIS</p>	<p>He was very calm and would not let the situation get out of hand.</p>	<p>He handed out street car passes and lunch passes. He would bend the rules to benefit the students</p>	<p>He was soft spoken and never raised his voice or yelled, yet he provided correction. It didn't make any difference who you where or</p>	<p>Many students came from less than ideal situations such as they lived in the Annie Malone home, or they were</p>

			<p>from whence you came, he respected you as a person. He wouldn't meet with you if your pants were sagging. He was quite distinguished and always well groomed. He respected himself and others and was likewise respected</p>	<p>emancipated students. Some were homeless, one student slept in the White Castle at night yet no matter what the circumstance Mr. Washington would treat every student the same. He gave students lunch tickets and street car passes.</p>
RICHARD PERRY	<p>All the time, going back even when I was in high school he was a positive disciplinary he was straight forward with it. Some young men at one point in the hallways insisted on playing with the roman dominos better known as dice and he just told the young people that were involved you know you don't have to do that, if you (we use to call them bones) throw them one more time I got to write</p>	<p>He knew policemen and policemen knew him. They knew what was going on in the school through him and he knew what was going on throughout the community through them. He always knew every policemen in the district. We always used to say, you know Mr. Washington, but we realized that was his connection with the police department, he worked closely with them to help keep the climate around school and the community at the right level. I think that was a plus</p>	<p>He would always show you, I care about you first. Which I think it made people accept Mr. Washington as an administrator, as well as an instructor and a person.</p> <p>I am a person first, like you are a person and I am going to give you the same respect.</p>	<p>He felt like it took the whole community and community activities to help keep young people well rounded.</p> <p>He knew it was going to take the whole village to raise the children around here.</p>

	<p>you. The young man said that is the most money I have seen in my life Mr. Washington, you know I got to throw them. He threw them and Mr. Washington wrote him up and disciplined him. What I am saying is he was a man of his word. He was fair. That speaks for itself. He gave you an opportunity to make a choice but he also told you the consequences of those choices and he had to enforce what he said.</p> <p>So if I stepped out of line at school I did not want it to get at home. They knew how to handle it at school. They were very similar to what you had at home. They were consistent with what a young person should be about.</p>	<p>for all of us. He realized it was very important. He involved the police department in a positive way. Not like what you see today. He knew policemen and policemen knew him. They knew what was going on in the school through him and he knew what was going on through the community through them. If there was a problem with some of the students in the school itself. They tried to resolve it to the best of their ability, before it got out of hand. I think that was good for all of us.</p>		
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	<p>As far as his military record, I knew he was in the military. I can't remember him boasting about what he had done in the military, his success or anything of that nature. Many of those guys at that time had been in the military. They started college, went in the military and after the military they went back to college.</p>			
HAROLD THOMPSON		<p>I can't remember a particular situation. However, as athletic director, Mr. Washington constantly strived to improve the athletic programs at Sumner. I remember him always trying to get better equipment for the programs.</p>		
LAWRENCE WALLS	<p>Like I said his calmness and how fair he</p>		<p>Mr. Washington had every student's interest</p>	<p>He was always a positive</p>

	<p>was with the kids. His demeanor was on such a level plane. I never saw him get excited and scream and yell it was always that calmness. Like I said I think that kind of rubbed off on the students. They reacted to him the same way. You could see a student very upset and Wash would talk to them and you could see the student calm down. He had that special something about dealing with young people.</p>		<p>at heart. He was the kind of person that, there was nothing negative about Mr. Washington. He was always a positive person. He could find something good in everybody.</p>	<p>person. He could find something good in everybody. I can remember when we were at Sumner and Mr. Washington was the coach of the gymnastics team. We had a student by the name of Vallianti Taylor who had polio as a young person, it had affected his legs and he walked with a limp. The average person looking at him would not see him as an athlete in anything. Wash was different, he was always looking for ways to build a student's esteem. He was always trying to build them up rather than tear them down. He convinced Vallianti to become part of the gymnastics team. Not only did he become a part of the gymnastics team, he excelled. He also got involved in swimming. He</p>
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				<p>went to one of the Southern schools as a swimmer and when he graduated he came back and started working at one of the elementary schools as a physical education teacher. He moved from physical education teacher at the elementary school to the swimming teacher at Sumner High School. When he came in he coached the swim team. By the time they cut swimming out in the PHL Vallianti had turned that around and made a PHL champion. So, this is just one example of how Wash could affect students. Just by his positive attitude and the positive that exhumed from himself that had an effect on most of us.</p>
MICHAEL WILLIAMS	He was a self-starter and he didn't wait for others to tell	Mr. Washington was instrumental in getting the library named for	He respected everyone. He had tremendous	Individual who helped everyone. He

	<p>him what to do. Once he started something, he completed it. Personal driver for General Patton in WW2. He didn't tell too many people that. The only reason he told me is that something was in the news about Patton and we were sitting waiting for a meeting and he told me that. If it had been anyone else, they would have told everyone that in a braggadocios manner.</p>	<p>her before her death, which is unprecedented.</p>	<p>respect for the African American. He worked diligently to ensure that the Julia Davis Library came to pass.</p>	<p>wouldn't turn anyone away. He took every student under his wing. He cared about the students. He was very tactful. If he knew the student he knew the family.</p>
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APPENDIX C: ROLE MODEL

PARTICIPANT	HUMILITY	MENTOR	DEVOTED	TOLERANT	INSPIRATIONAL
<p>LYNN BECKWITH</p>	<p>I never knew about Mr. Washington's war record, and most of us never knew it. For some reason the teachers didn't talk at that time about their personal life. Olivia Perkins was my 10th grade adviser, she had married a soldier at the time that teachers were not supposed to be married, he was killed in actions, she never told me about it, I read later, that she demanded that they call her by her married name. You didn't know a lot about their personal life. Mr. Washington lived in the 4100 block of San Francisco, so</p>	<p>He was an enthusiastic educator, he was student friendly.</p>	<p>Even after he retired, he remained a loyal Sumnerite. He was just as proud of Sumner then as the days when he taught there.</p>		<p>Okay, I would have to say that was after I became a principal in SLPS and Mr. Washington was an assistant principal at Sumner High School. It was a joy working with him. At principal's meeting where assistant principals would come, even though he was older than I, he treated me as a fellow colleague, he always had something wise to say, something jovial, it was just a pleasure working with him.</p>

	<p>did I after I got married, we would wave and talk with each other occasionally. I did not know a lot about his personal life.</p>				
<p>RON GREGORY</p>	<p>He worked as a waiter and he was very dignified in his tuxedo, serving people with less education yet they called him by his first name, even the kids.</p>	<p>I heard his name prior to attending Sumner through my brother (Dick)</p> <p>Before I ever attended Sumner I knew him through my brother.</p> <p>I met him in 1953 when I first attended Sumner until the year he died. I had heard stories about him from my brother prior to attending. Everybody was crazy about him. I don't know of any kid that came in contact with him that didn't think of him as a sincere caring person.</p>		<p>He dealt with the humiliation of being for the white school.</p>	<p>There was an incident when I considered keeping some of my equipment and he made a comment that prodded my conscious and I turned the equipment in. I don't even think he realized that he had said something to me to would have that effect on me. He didn't know that I was thinking of keeping the equipment. It was his manner, his constant communication that made you want to do the right thing.</p>

<p>DOROTHY JOHNSON</p>	<p>If he didn't know the answer, he would scout around to find someone who did.</p>	<p>Mr. Washington took him under his wing and he would tell him come you follow me, I want you to be the student council and help me get the young people to clean up the lunchroom. Because he was at Mr. Washington's side, he felt empowered and it turned him around. The school children he would always encourage, they would get into things he would bring them aside and do a lot of talking and trying to give them some assistance. He would try to show them they could attain more by doing good as opposed to doing something bad.</p>	<p>He shared genuine relationships with people and stayed in contact with all of the former students who he had personal relationships with as well as the PTA parents even after the students graduated.</p>	<p>He was a good Christian person, very involved with the Basilica. He never spoke badly or talked down about other religions.</p>	<p>He had a way to say something jokingly while he was moving around and doing his duties. He started the Hall of Fame to inspire others and then he was inducted in the Sumner Hall of Fame in 1993.</p>
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<p>NINA P. LEWIS</p>	<p>He taught us survival skills in an informal manner. He taught us what things we shouldn't do if we wanted to be successful.</p>	<p>On how Washington would handle a student sagging. Son, I see you don't have a belt on. Let me take you to the office to hold your pants up until we can find a belt. Well known by present and past students Very involved in athletics. Was like a father</p>	<p>He served his entire career at Sumner High School. He was very devoted to his family.</p>	<p>He would work with students if they were a few minutes late because they had problems with the streetcar, he would write them passes. Some might say what was done was not professional, but we worked with them to get it done. We worked though the situation. Sometimes it might have been illegal, sometimes we knew children were living in abandoned homes but if they were trying to do the right thing, we tried to help them.</p>	<p>He started the Hall of Fame at Sumner recognizing former Sumner who made substantial contributions. The pictures of the honorees are painted by current students.</p>
<p>RICHARD PERRY</p>	<p>He wasn't a person that was going to dominant because of his position. He used the position that he was in to</p>	<p>Leadership qualities that a lot of us learned and we were able to use those same qualities when we</p>	<p>I would say he was a positive role model, he was a dedicated educator Mr. Washngto</p>	<p>He was easy to work with. He was consistant. You do your job and what you are supposed to</p>	<p>Also, looking back at Mr. Washington, Mr. Algee, and all our instructors that were in physical education at that time, they</p>

	<p>help dominant the problems and situations. In other words I am going to use this position I am in to help you. Because if you continue this way, you are the one that is going to destroy yourself. To me he was just a caring person, I really do feel that way and I enjoyed working with him.</p>	<p>became educators I had a role model at home with my father. When I went to school I had a person like Mr. Washington who was a reinforcement of what I had at home in my father. Same thing with the other instructors. They were reinforcement to what I learned at home. I should say in my early years because when I returned, I had people there, once again, that I could depend on to guide me as a young instructor and coming in at the secondary level as a young coach. Showing me the ups and downs making sure I did not make crazy mistakes. That I may</p>	<p>n was instrumental in the YMCA. I guess, I met him indirectly when I was roughly 9 maybe 10 years old. We had church and summer activities with the YMCA when the Y was still located on Pine Street. Along with Mr. Jodi Bailey and Mr. Granberry they were all involved in the camp river cliff program and the YMCA program. As I got older our churches did a retreat to camp river cliff every summer. That was more reinforcement. I was a student under Mr. Washington for two years in his</p>	<p>do. We were taught what we were supposed to do before we even got to Sumner. All you had to do was your job. He was an even keeled individual. I never knew Mr. Washington to go off the deep end about something. You knew what he was going to be about every day. He was the same person every day, no matter what the chaos he was the same. He kept a level head. He did a good job of handling it. Like I said, I saw Mr. Washington several times, deal with young men, where he would always let them know, I am a person first, okay, I have a job to do</p>	<p>stressed physical education as being a part of growth as well as just everyday classroom instruction, something I think youngsters today are really missing.</p>
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		<p>see how the system did not see certain things, but they had already given us a blueprint. When I say they, I am talking about all those men that were in the physical education department and that were coaches at Sumner when I attended Sumner. So, it was just good to be around them because you knew you had that support system, still there. They were very proud to see us coming back to work where they had already been all those years and it was just good man, it was just good.</p>	<p>gym class. I had an opportunity to work under him and alongside of him when he was an administrator at Sumner high school. What I miss the most about Mr. Washington is that he was a positive role model throughout my life. It was not something that just started in high school. I knew him before, during, and after high school.</p>	<p>But, there are rules, regulations, and guide lines that we all have to adhere to. I am not going to let you break these rules and guidelines and then tell you I am trying to help you. I trying to get you to understand that rules are made that we have to follow and guide lines are there for a purpose. If someone could not follow those guide lines, he would do all in his power to get them to understand why you need to follow these guide lines. It is not because someone is against you. This is here to help you and the overall climate of the school.</p>	
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<p>HAROLD THOMPSON</p>		<p>He was a mentor to me, always very encouraging. I was inducted into the Missouri Track Coaches Hall of Fame in 1983. During my time at Sumner I coached six high school All-Americans. I was track coach from 1967-1980. Teams competed in state competition a number of times (1st 1973/2nd 3 yrs./3rd 3 yrs.).</p>			
<p>LAWRENCE WALLS</p>	<p>I knew Mr. Washington from 1950 until he passed and uh, I miss his genuineness . He was just a genuine person, who loved young people.</p>		<p>. I can remember when I first went to Sumner, it was during the time when we had what was called the y-circus, and the y-circus was a big event where uh, local people performed and then you had a couple of</p>	<p>When I first went to Sumner Mr. Washington was one of the Physical Education Instructors. He taught freshman students coming into to Sumner and looking back that may have been because Mr. Washington was such a genuine person, he</p>	<p>Well I know Mr. Washington had been married a long time and he and his wife seem to have a very genuine loving relationship. But as far as discussing his war record or anything like that, no. I was blessed to come to Sumner at the time I did. When I came to Sumner we had over 3,000 students, if you</p>

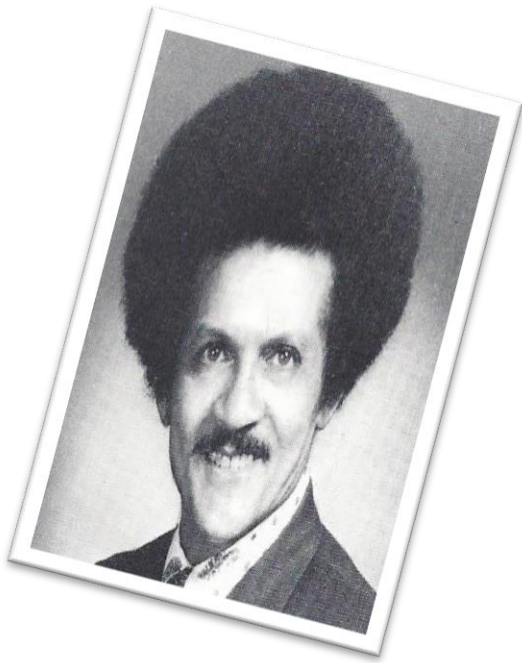
			<p>major stars that performed. It was affiliated with the YMCA. When Mr. Washington was in charge of putting on the act at Sumner high school I can remember being a part of that and it was just outstanding the way Wash would work with the young people and you know we were not exceptionally talented kids but you know Wash would put together something for us to do. It may be a tumbling act or whatever. Whatever he put together he would work with us and he was such a</p>	<p>treated everyone the same way. He had no favorites, we all were his favorite. He never seemed to get excited. I never saw Wash get real upset. He had that even keel. I think that rubbed off on the kids he touched.</p> <p>Yes he did, like I said the calmness, that's what was so unique about Wash. He was always so calm. Whatever situation he was in, he didn't get upset and just explode. Like I said it was just his calmness and how he talked to people. He didn't have a favorite. Most of the time you look at a teacher and say that was their favorite. I</p>	<p>got 3,000 students you should be able to find 30 – 40 football players. When we first came there we had about 55 kids on the varsity and about 90 kids on the JV. Coach Perry and I would go into the equipment room, we did not want to turn any kids away we would go into the equipment room and put together mismatched equipment. The kids were so happy to get the equipment because they just wanted to be on the team and we did not want to turn any kids away. Prior to us becoming the coaches, Sumner had been losing in football. We told the kids we were going to turn this around and become winners. That year I had just won a little league championship and quite a few of the players came to Sumner high school. We made our minds up that we were</p>
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			<p>calm person and he was always quiet but he was firm. We looked forward to that and when they cut it out, it was something that we really missed. Wash was over that and I remember him as a teacher and when he came back to Sumner as a mentor. He had a great effect on my life and I miss him now, because he was such a great person. Once I came back as a teacher he sat me down and told me the importance of seeing value in all the students, not just the students I coached in</p>	<p>think all the kids were his favorites. He cared about all the students at Sumner high school and just not a few.</p>	<p>not going to be losers then and at Sumner high school. That first I was a coach at Sumner we missed going to state by one game. The next year we went to state and won it all, in 1972. Before we did that we contacted Coach Eddie Robinson at Grambling. Sumner was a black high school since 1875 and we wanted to be like a black college. I contacted Coach Robinson and he had Coach Perry and our entire coaching staff come down. They taught us everything they knew, they didn't hold back nothing. It was amazing how they embraced us and after one year down there we came back and won a state championship, it took us ten years to win another one. We won another one in 1982 and we won back-to-back state championships in 1990 and 1991. We finished 2nd</p>
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			<p>football. He taught me to listen and not form an opinion and to be sympathetic to students who came to you with a problem, male or female. The greatest effect he had on my life was teaching me how to interact with young people</p>	<p>more times than we finished 1st. We got to the state finals more than ten times. We only had two coaches on varsity, I coached offense and Coach Perry coached the defense. Our biggest battles were on Tandy field on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, where we practiced. We had a drill called goal line at the end of practice. We would put the ball on the ten and try to score, and Coach Perry's defense would try to stop us. That was some intensive football and the drive and determination in that drill would spill over into the game. For twenty eight years it was just great. Coach Perry and I had a great relationship, even though he was ten years younger than me. We both grew up on Evans Avenue five houses apart. After I retired he took over as</p>
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<p>MICHAEL WILLIAMS</p>	<p>He was a very private man. His accomplishments speak for themselves. He took pride in what he did. Personal driver for General Patton in WW2. He didn't tell too many people that. The only reason he told me is that something was in the news about Patton and we were sitting waiting for a meeting and he told me that. If it had been anyone else, they would have told everyone that in a braggadocio's manner.</p>	<p>He took every student under his wing. He cared about the students. He was very tactful. If he knew the student he knew the family. Educator, mentor, individual who helped everyone. He wouldn't turn anyone away. He was a mentor, a smooth individual. Kids had a lot of problems and he was interested in students, inspiring them to do the right thing. He made sure they didn't cut class and he worked with them to get them to appreciate their educational opportunities</p>	<p>He worked diligently to see the Julia Davis Library come to pass.</p>	<p>He was a go getter. When he set his mind to do something like a fund raiser or helping people in the community, he would get it done.</p>
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PHOTOGRAPHS



Washington through the years



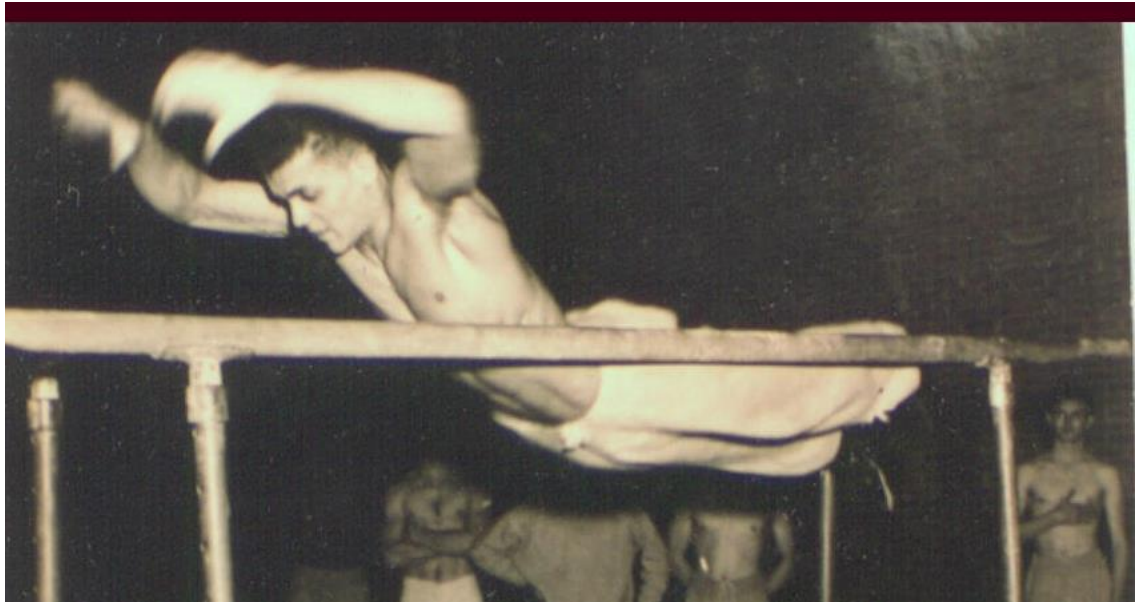
Washington attended Sumner as a lad and graduated from Sumner High

DONNIE MAE TUNSTELL
"Perpetual motion that never tires."
Girls' Gym Club, '31, '32.
Girls' Glee Club, '31, '32, '33.
Forensic Society, '33, '34.
A Cappella Choir, '34.

ARTHUR WASHINGTON
"A likeable fellow."
Chemistry Club, '33.
Usher Council, '33.
A Cappella Choir, '33, '34.
Junior Hi-Y, '32, '33.
Male Chorus, '34.

LOTTIE WASHINGTON
*"What's the use of learning an ancient history date,
When I can make a modern one at a quarter after eight?"*
Boosters, '31, '32, '33, '34.
Biology Club, '32, '33, '34.
Girls' Glee Club, '32, '33.
Social Service, '34.





Collegiate Gymnast



Service to his country in World War II







Dick Gregory pictured on track team

Varsity Basketball

Mr. James E. Price, Coach; Mr. John A. Algee, Ass't. Coach



Champions of the First Public High School Basketball Tournament.

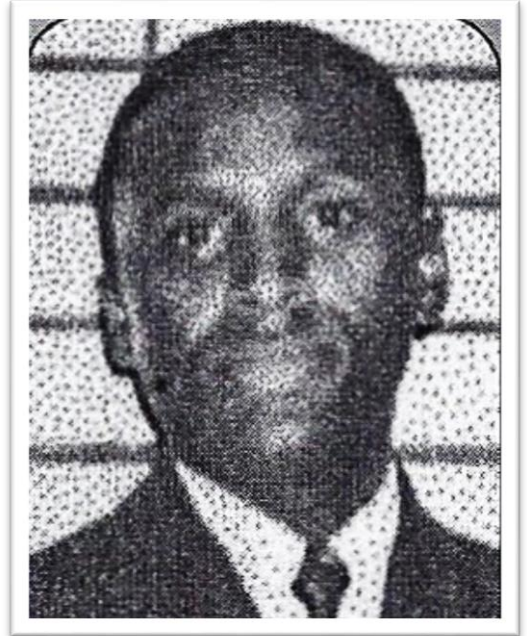
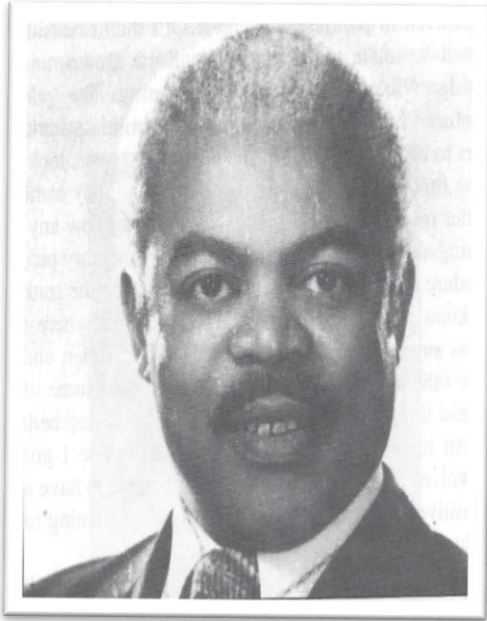
*First Row: Samuel Lewis, James Clark, Claude Blackmore, Thomas Weathersby, Alfred Abram, Joe Rycraw, Robert Coburn, Ronald Larkin.
Second Row: DeQuincy Dangerfield, Manager; John Sloan, Leo Thomas, Jackson Windom.*

Third Row: Coach James E. Price, Athletic Director, A. L. Washington, George Wilks, John Summers, Herbert Harmon, Joe Page, Thomas Haltom, John Smith, Ass't. Coach J. A. Algee.

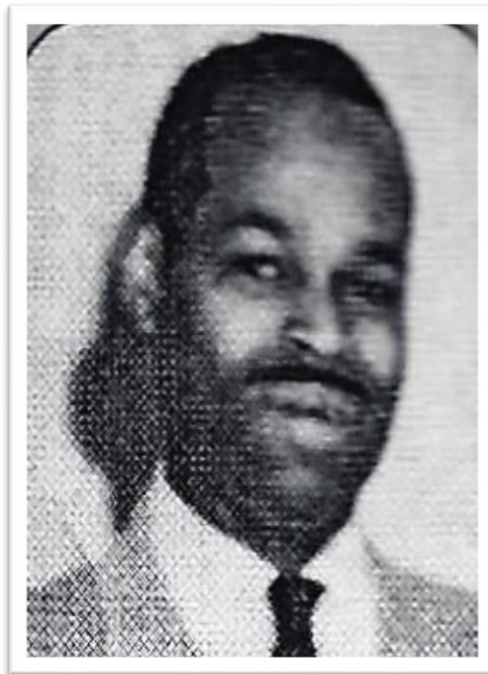


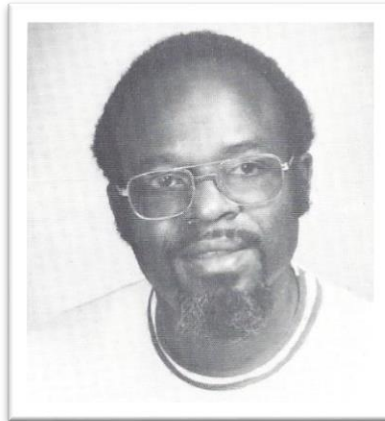
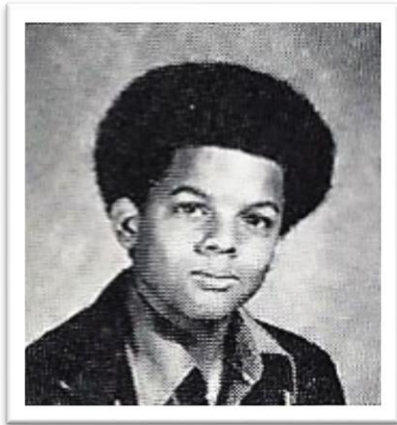
Civic Leader





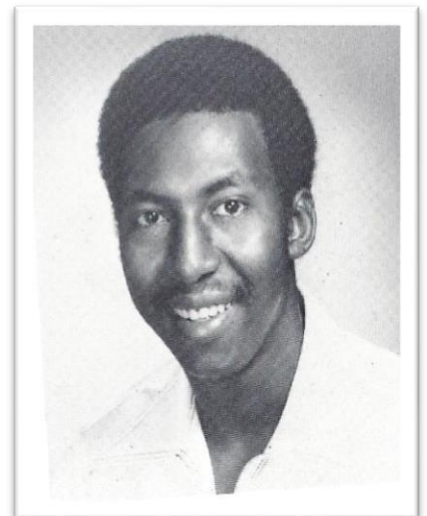
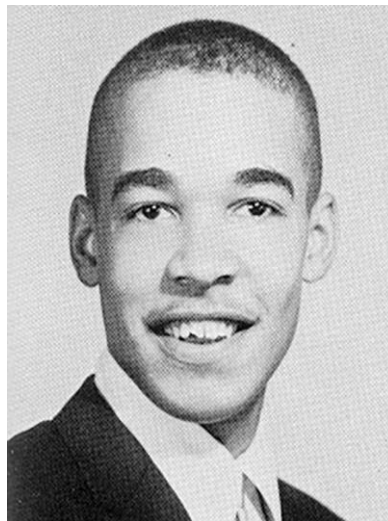
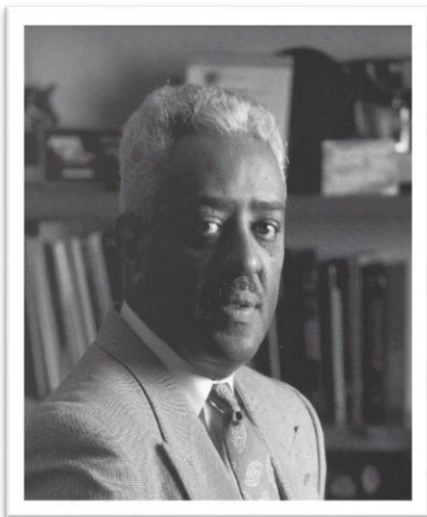
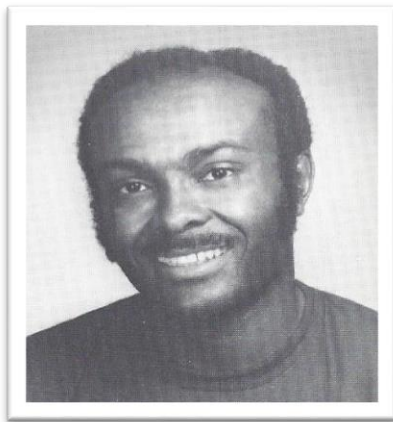
*Washington's Contemporaries
Clockwise, Ray Crowe, Jodi Bailey and James Price*



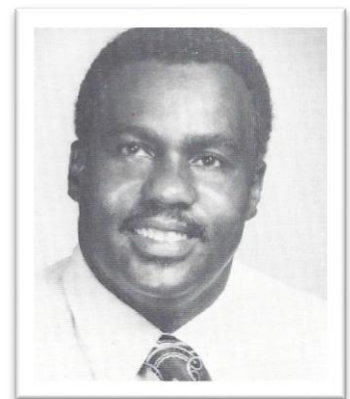
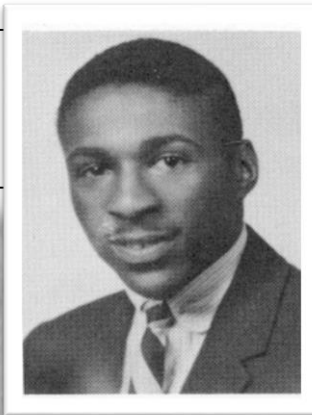


The Participants:

*Clockwise from top left:
Richard Washington,
Lawrence Walls, Nina P.
Lewis, Dorothy Johnson,
Richard Perry, Michael
Williams, Professor Lynn
Beckwith Jr. and Harold
Thompson.*

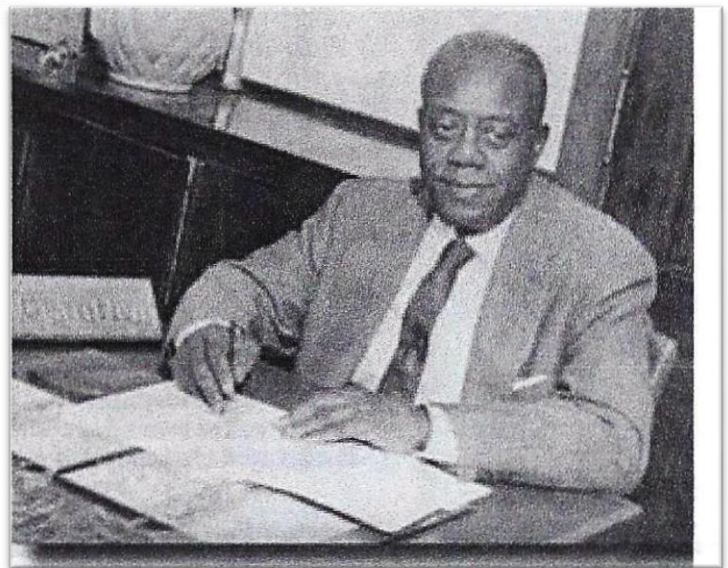


Ronald Gregory on the track field and as pictured in yearbook.



Vallianti Taylor , a Washington protégé.

Dennis Brantley was Sumner High School Principal 1929- 1968.



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The Washington Papers Box 2

The Washington Papers Box 3

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