

Obituary: Carl Oliver Clark

We celebrate the life journey of Dr. Carl Oliver Clark who transitioned on August 8, 2017-- a husband, father, brother, and an educator who touched the lives of many people in so many ways. He was 81 years old.

A long-time faculty member and Dean of Natural Sciences at South Carolina State University from 1959 to 1995, Dr. Clark also worked at Morgan State University from 1995 to 2000. He taught hundreds of students throughout his 41-year teaching career, always a trailblazer in education, becoming the first African American to graduate from the Baltimore Polytechnic School in 1955. He earned his bachelor's degree from Morgan State University in 1958. In 1976, he was the first African-American to receive a PhD degree in Physics from the University of South Carolina. In 1984, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the American Association of Physics Teachers.

Dr. Clark was a Life Member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and was initiated at Morgan State University in the Fall of 1956. Active for all of his 62 years in Alpha, he served as a long-time College Advisor for the Beta Delta Chapter at South Carolina State University while being a member of Delta Zeta Lambda Chapter in Orangeburg, South Carolina. In Delta Zeta Lambda, he served as Vice President, President, and various chairman of chapter efforts. In 2006, he was awarded the Alpha Living Legend Award by the South Carolina Chapters of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Dr. Clark was extremely active in other community and alumni organizations including being a Charter Member and the first president of the South Atlantic Chapter of the Morgan State University National Alumni Association. He was a Charter member of Phi Delta Kappa Honorary Society at South Carolina State University. He was inducted into the Polytechnic Hall of Fame in 2004 and named Polytechnic Distinguished Award Winner in 2005. Being a baptized catholic from birth, he held membership in the Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Orangeburg, South Carolina.

Dr. Clark was preceded in death by his parents, William E. and Susan Dowse Clark. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Barbara Randall Clark, their children: a son, Carl Robert "Bobby" Clark (Jennifer), a daughter, Angela Teresa Clark; two sisters: Anita C. Clayton and Frances C. Smith (William); three brothers: William "Billy" Clark (Louise), Johnny Clark (Betty), and James "Jimmy" Clark (Barbara); his devoted caretaker, Marquis Jones, and a host of family, colleagues, friends, and students.

His final wish to donate his body to science was honored by his family. Members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity will perform their Omega Service on Sunday, August 27th at 6:30 pm at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Auditorium on the campus of South Carolina State University (300 College Street NE, Orangeburg, South Carolina 29117). A memorial service celebrating the life of Dr. Clark will be held at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church (2202 Riverbank Drive, Orangeburg, SC 29118) on Monday, August 28th at 11 AM.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a donation in honor of Dr. Carl Oliver Clark to The March of Dimes (www.marchofdimes.org) or to the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute Foundation (www.bpi.edu)

