

# H.D. POPE FUNERAL HOME

Personal Service • Peace of Mind • Pleasant Memories



Photo: Wikipedia

## Dr. James E. Cheek

*Story contributed by Rodney D. Pierce*

Born on December 4, 1932 in Roanoke Rapids, James E. Cheek attended John Armstrong Chaloner School when it served as the Kindergarten-12th grade school for local African Americans during segregation. His family moved to the city of Greensboro when he was nine-years-old.

Despite suffering from severe cataracts, which required multiple operations from the age of 7 to the age of 15, Cheek was an honor student at Dudley High School. He served as the editor-in-chief of the school newspaper and captain of the debate team. After finishing his secondary education at Lutheran College High School, he served in the U.S. Air Force from 1950-1951 during the Korean War and was honorably discharged. He went on to earn degrees at Shaw University, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, and Drew University.

At the age of 30, Dr. Cheek returned to Shaw University as its president. The school was on the verge of bankruptcy, its student population was below 600, and its accreditation was in jeopardy. In his six year tenure, Cheek established remedial courses to help students graduate and implemented a \$22 million "renaissance" program that rescued the school from financial insolvency. Shaw's budget grew from \$700,000 to \$5.9 million while assets increased from \$2.6 million in 1963 to \$10 million by 1969.

Meanwhile, student enrollment doubled and faculty and staff received pay raises as teacher salaries surpassed the national average. Shaw boasted a student-operated FM-radio outlet and had plans for a television station. The James E. Cheek Learning Resources Center, the main library on the campus of Shaw University, is named in his honor.

In 1969, Dr. Cheek became the president of Howard University in Washington, DC. During the twenty years he was there, Howard gained over 3,000 students and the faculty quadrupled to nearly 2,000. Seventy-two new academic programs were established, including 16 doctoral programs. The school

## February

Black History Month

- 1 - Langston Hughes' birthday
- 2 - Groundhog Day
- 5 - Super Bowl
- 14 - Valentine's Day
- 20 - President's Day
- 21 - Malcolm X assassinated
- 28 - Mardi Gras



**520 Smith Church Rd.**  
Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870  
Phone: 252-535-1228  
Fax: 252-535-1344



**325 Nash St.**  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804  
Phone: 252-446-9696  
Fax: 252-446-9697

received one million library volumes as the book value of its endowment reached nearly \$60 million. Its federal appropriation went from \$29 million to \$178 million and its operating budget increased from \$43 million annually in 1969 to over \$400 million by 1989.

Under Dr. Cheek's leadership, Howard secured real estate holdings in D.C. and four states valued above \$3 billion. Eleven major research centers were established, including the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, the Center for Sickle Cell Disease, the Institute for Child Development and Family Life, and the Moorland-Springarn Research Center. New construction included the Howard Inn Hotel, Howard University Hospital, and a new undergraduate library. The Howard University Press, WHUT-FM, and WHUT-TV (the first Black-owned PBS station) were among Dr. Cheek's new initiatives.

Dr. Cheek became a special advisor on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to Presidents Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and George H.W. Bush. He served as chairman from 1990-1993 and was also a Presidential appointee to the Commission on Campus Unrest (the Scranton Commission).

A member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Dr. Cheek received numerous honors in addition to our nation's highest civilian honor—the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

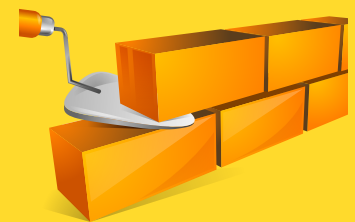
He died January 8, 2010, but his legacy remains.

Mr. Pope pictured with gift card & TV winners at the 15th Annual HD Pope Holiday Celebration.



## HCC'S BRICK BY BRICK CAMPAIGN

The Halifax Community College Foundation Inc. is offering a wonderful opportunity for you to support its students and show your commitment to educational excellence through its first-ever Brick-by-Brick Campaign: "Order Our Steps." Engraved bricks will be featured at the main entrance to The Centre—its premier multipurpose venue—and will be sold throughout the remainder of the year. Your brick will be visible for generations to come. Purchase of a brick is tax-deductible, according to applicable tax law. Proceeds will provide assistance to the Foundation to support scholarships, events, activities and operating expenses. To download and complete an order form, look for the brick image on the HD Pope Funeral Home website.



	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF DEATH
	William Watson	June 7, 1932	January 23, 2016
	Catherine Harrison	September 16, 1946	January 27, 2016
	Iola Johnson	October 15, 1926	January 30, 2016
	Cathy Wooten	January 25, 1957	February 8, 2016
	Joshua Outen	March 24, 1943	February 10, 2016
	Wallace Parham	July 11, 1928	February 15, 2016
	Elbert Barrett	January 1, 1940	February 16, 2016
	Jennie Odom	December 21, 1936	February 15, 2016
	Verdena Evans	November 2, 1965	February 25, 2016
	Horace Batchelor	September 17, 1946	March 17, 2016
	Milton Barnes	June 2, 1936	March 21, 2016