



GALLERY OF DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS INDUCTEE 2003

DENISE MCNAIR was born and raised in Birmingham. A compassionate child, she had a big heart, big personality and an inquisitive mind.

Even though she was young, she was busy. She held tea parties, played the piano and baseball. She raised money to support muscular dystrophy by creating plays, dance routines and poetry readings. Her productions became an annual event. Audiences would gather in the yard to watch the show, staged in the family's carport. She asked her father if she could march with civil rights protestors. Told that she was too small, she precociously asked her parents why they were not marching since their adult sizes were not an issue.

Denise was a schoolmate and friend of a neighborhood girl who would grow up to become United States National Security Advisor and Secretary of State. That friend, Condoleezza Rice, attended the ceremony at which the Four Little Girls were inducted into the Gallery of Distinguished Citizens. Called Tragedy to Triumph, the event held on October 22, 2005 was hosted by the Birmingham City Council.

Born on November 17, 1951, she was just 11 years old when she died and was the youngest of the four girls killed by the bomb explosion at 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963.