



### GALLERY OF DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS INDUCTEE 1987

**BERNICE C. JOHNSON** was born in Birmingham and educated in Birmingham public schools. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education at the Alabama State Teacher's College in Montgomery and a Master of Arts Degree in Child Development from the University of Michigan.

She taught Social Studies for 19 years at Effie J. McCaw Elementary School. She worked in areas of voter registration, voter education and voter participation in Jefferson County and throughout the State of Alabama. From 1963 to 1965, she traveled throughout the state organizing blacks for voter registration. She worked with Attorney Orzell Billingsley, Judge Peter Hall, Reverend Abraham L. Woods, Jr., James Johnson, W.C. Patton, Emory O. Jackson and many others documenting evidence which was sent to the Federal Justice Department during President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration. This data was useful in laying the ground work for the need of federal examiners in the State of Alabama.

She was the first black woman to serve on the Alabama State Textbook Committee, the first black woman to run for the Jefferson County Board of Education and the first black woman to serve on the Birmingham Planning and Zoning Board.

With the assistance of Joan Cushin of Huntsville, she organized the Democratic Women's Activities Committee of the Alabama Democratic Conference. In 1963, after the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church, she founded the Metropolitan Democratic Women's Club of Jefferson County.

Bernice Johnson was a member of the NAACP, President's Club of the Alabama Democratic Party and a member of the Tuxedo Heights Civic League. During its most active days in the City of Birmingham, she participated in the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. She worked in many political campaigns. She helped organize the presidential election campaign of Lyndon B. Johnson and served as coordinator for Jefferson County in 1976 in the Get Out the Vote Campaign for President Jimmy Carter.

She was a member of the Deaconess Board at Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, where she served on many committees.

She passed away in 2000.