

Jeremiah Cameron

Teacher

1919-2008

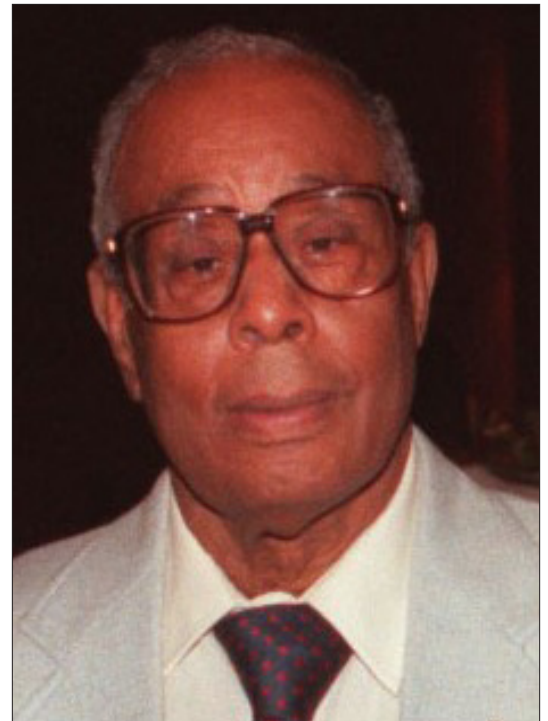
By Mary I. Beveridge

In a long and distinguished career as a social critic and educator, Dr. Jeremiah Cameron truly earned a place as “the dean of Kansas City’s black intellectuals.”

Jeremiah Cameron was born in Kansas City on December 1, 1919, the son of Blanche Bogle and Will Cameron. He studied at Penn School in Westport, a two-room school founded in 1868 to educate the children of former slaves. He graduated from Lincoln High School and went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in English from Indiana University and a master’s degree from The University of Chicago and returned to Lincoln High School to teach English. He received his Ph.D. in English from Michigan State University in 1957 where his dissertation topic was *Multiple Negation in Written English*. Dr. Cameron went on to a distinguished teaching career at the University of Missouri – Kansas City and the Metropolitan Community Colleges, retiring in 1990. He loved language and literature and stimulating conversation. Classically educated, he had little use for educational fads or experiments, believing that children must be educated to read and to communicate in proper English to succeed in the world.

Jeremiah Cameron was also a champion of his people and a tireless advocate for civil rights and educational opportunities for all. He wrote a regular column for the *Kansas City Call*, *Call to Action*, and guest editorials for *The Kansas City Star*, in which he highlighted injustices and explained current issues. Working with Julia Hill, the president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, he fought not only City Hall, but the police and fire departments, schools, and businesses to gain equal treatment under the law for all and to correct abuses. In one case, he went all the way to the top, writing a letter to President Richard Nixon on behalf of striking workers at the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant. In 1996, the chapter of the NAACP awarded him its Harold L. Holliday Award for his many contributions in fighting discrimination.

Cameron also served as a Commissioner on the Board of Parks and



Recreation from 1972 to 1979. Shortly before his death on July 29, 2008, the Board issued a resolution to name park land at 43rd and Broadway, his old neighborhood, The Jeremiah Cameron Park.

Above all, Dr. Cameron was a teacher. Although he had no biological children, his heritage lives on in the hundreds of students and those around him whom he educated.

Sources

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