

In Memoriam

ALFRED D. DOTSON, SR.

President, The Children's Haven Association



"May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands."

Psalm 90:17

President Alfred Daniel Dotson, Sr, will be missed as spiritual guide and prayer leader of this historic community organization. A native Austinite, Alfred's early education began at Gregory School (now Blackshear Elementary); however, the education that would guide him most in life began at First Baptist Church where he was baptized at a young age. He attended Kealing Jr. High and graduated from the Original L.C. Anderson High School in Austin. Following high school, he enrolled in and subsequently graduated from Tillotson College.

The United States was at war, and Alfred registered for the draft just prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1943, he was drafted and joined the US Naval forces, serving in Okinawa and Guam before rejoining his wife and growing family in Washington DC. After the war, he served as chief of the Audio and Projection Section, Visual Aids Branch of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Department of the Army.

In 1977, Alfred returned to Austin and immediately assumed leadership of the historic Children's Haven Association (TCHA). He remained its staunch community-focused president until his death, always guiding with a spiritual hand. Under his leadership, TCHA underwrote early programming of the Sickle Cell Association's Marc Thomas Foundation which was recognized for special commendation by President Barack Obama. Also, under his direction, TCHA financially supported other nonprofits including the Ebenezer Child Development Center, as well as underserved youth and families in the community.

Alfred was instrumental in the development and expansion of the Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center where he taught Spanish until age 101 when classes were halted by the pandemic. He was president of the Center's Advisory Board, convincing a recalcitrant city projects division to invest in a construction addition that is still in use.

He enjoyed regularly picking up and distributing food to those in need. He was an ardent supporter of the Frederick Douglass Club of Austin, and in recognition of his robust support, Alfred was named its only honorary male member. He was a multi-term president of the Pecan Springs Neighborhood Association.

As one of the oldest World War II veterans in Austin he was selected in 2021 to travel to Washington D.C. on the Honor Flight to visit the memorials dedicated to those who served and sacrificed for our country. Unfortunately, his untimely demise prevented fulfillment of this honor.

We will always cherish his earnest and fervent prayers, his readiness to serenade us with his melodic tenor voice and his fond and humorous style in leadership. Favored by our Lord God, Alfred suffered no dementia or other ailments that are typical at such a golden age.

The remaining members of TCHA Board of Directors, its program partners and community leaders sadly mourn the loss of this stalwart public servant.