

April 14, 2021

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Robert Blouin
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
104 South Building
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

Dear Dr. Blouin and the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Naming University Facilities and Units,

It is with pleasure that the [National Association of Social Workers North Carolina Chapter \(NASW-NC\)](#) supports the renaming of one of the buildings on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Campus in honor of [Hortense King McClinton, MSW](#). NASW-NC is a chapter of the largest membership organization of professional social workers and we promote, develop, and protect the practice of social work and advance social policy at the state and national level.

Career Highlights

[Hortense King McClinton, MSW](#), was the [first African American professor hired in 1966](#) by UNC at the School of Social Work. She undoubtedly represents the values that define UNC Chapel Hill: excellence and an unwavering commitment to teaching, research, and public service. As a woman of color, Mrs. McClinton certainly fits into the category of an "underrepresented" demographic of "Names in Brick and Stone" on the UNC campus. Of the seven buildings on the UNC campus named solely after women, only one is named after a woman of color, the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History.

Mrs. McClinton has certainly demonstrated a positive impact on the UNC campus and within the community. She paved the way for African American social workers in North Carolina by removing obstacles and implementing systems to ease their transition from Master of Social Work graduates to full-time social workers. As a trained social worker, McClinton contributed social work skills and knowledge in a field that, at the time, taught more theory than practice. Mrs. McClinton was the first to teach a course on institutional racism at UNC.

McClinton spent nearly 45 years as a professional social worker. McClinton was the first African American professional social worker to be employed in several public, private, and governmental social agencies, including the Durham County Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Durham, North Carolina. At the hospital, she was the only African American professional on staff. McClinton worked in the Psychiatry Department where she supervised MSW students from several universities.

McClinton's professional competence demanded that hiring policies change at the university and that direct social work practice approaches be tailored more appropriately to acknowledge diversity. She illuminated the significance of culturally competent practices and taught the skills and knowledge that social workers needed to provide services without racial and cultural bias.

Biographical Data

Born in Oklahoma, McClinton received her Bachelors Degree from Howard University in 1939 and her Master of Social Work Degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work in 1941. She was a member of both the National Association of Social Workers and the National Association of Black Social Workers. She continues to be a powerful presence in the local human service community, her church, her sorority, the Durham Public Library, and her book clubs. [Mrs. McClinton celebrated her 102 birthday in August 2020.](#)

Significant Achievements and Awards

- [2021 UNC Faculty Service Award by the UNC General Alumni Association](#)
- [NASW Social Work Pioneer](#), inducted in 2015
- 2009 Legacy Award for distinguished service from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Black Faculty Staff Caucus

Awards named in honor of McClinton include:

- The [Hortense K. McClinton Faculty Award](#) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is given by the Black Student Movement to faculty members who "teach principles both inside and outside of the classroom" and "empower students by educating them through his or her tireless commitment";
- The UNC **Hortense K. McClinton Outstanding Faculty / Staff Award** has been given since 1981, and renamed to honor Mrs. McClinton in 2013, and honors a faculty or staff member, past or present, who has made outstanding contributions to the Carolina community;
- The Kappa Omicron Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority presents the annual Hortense McClinton Senior Service Award Recipient to service-minded students.

Mrs. McClinton is most definitely a national treasure and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is incredibly fortunate to be a host of her legacy. The social work profession in North Carolina thanks the UNC Board of Trustees, Chancellor Guskiewicz and the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Naming University Facilities and Units for publicly removing the names of slaveholders and white supremacists from the UNC campus and working to heal the university and community by honoring true heroes who have contributed so much to the rich history of UNC. Hortense K. McClinton's career exemplifies the inclusive transformation UNC seeks to uphold its mission to serve as a center for research, scholarship, and creativity and to teach a diverse community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to become the next generation of leaders.

Sincerely,



Valerie Arendt, MSW, MPP

Executive Director

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