

MICHAEL R. HART



I was raised on West Wilson Street by two wonderful, loving, and nourishing parents, William and Lottie Hart. I am also extremely fortunate to have grown up in the communities, churches and schools in and around Edgecombe County. Values learned from these people and experiences shared are my most precious treasures.

My formal education (kindergarten) began at a huge house, just west of the Tar River, on Panola Street. The castle-like house was surrounded by giant magnolia trees, with fury fruit that looked like dragon eggs. The headmaster was a tallish older fair skinned woman who was very kind but exuded sternness. I met a number of kids during this year that would be my classmates at W. A. Pattillo after my 1st through 4th grade years would be spent at G. W. Bulluck Elementary School in the county.

I attended W. A. Pattillo in grades 5 and 6 and met many of its legendary teachers, administrators, and support staff. Pattillo at that time was grades 1-12. It was a vibrant/active/welcoming community that extended even out to West Wilson Street.

In 7th and 8th grade I attended CB Martin Middle as part of regional desegregation initiatives that began dismantling the infrastructure and resources that historically served only black students.

I am a proud member of the graduating Class of Tarboro Sr. High School, 1973. I was an active high school-er participating in sports, band, clubs, and numerous extra-curricular activities.

I was co-president of each of my high school classes. I was a member of the national honor society, and I received a number of community and academic honors.

After high school I attended the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. I graduated from UNC in 1977 having completed a Bachelor of Arts double major in Political Science and African American Studies. While the expansion of access to information and experiences were like nothing experienced on West Wilson, I say too often and in too many places a truth - the most significant of my findings at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, was my friend, soul mate, wife of 47 years, babies' mama (Michael and Miah): Nettie Lee Collins-Hart.

Our early years as a family began at 1900 West Wilson Street. I began work in a marketing position at Carolina Telephone and my wife as a teacher at the high school.

In 1986, a management opportunity presented itself in Overland Park, Kansas. and my family and I moved to the mid-west. Our children and our careers flourished in the Kansas City area. My kids graduated high school in Kansas and headed off to college. I received a Master of Science degree in Management from Baker University. My wife would receive her Doctor of Education degree from the University of Kansas.

Later my wife and I moved back to Durham, NC to care for aging parents. Fate, however, in 2008 took us to Chicago and to St. Louis in 2016 where we currently reside. I would earn a Master of Science in Accounting and Financial Management degree and a graduate certificate in Health Services Management from Keller Graduate School of Management in Chicago.

I have three granddaughters; Journey, Jere, and my youngest granddaughter is called Joy, and she absolutely is. I have found joy in this maze in which I have been blessed to roam around.