

## NCCAA honors legacy of community action pioneer Andrea Harris

The North Carolina Community Action Association has launched an inaugural scholarship fund in honor of the late Dr. Andrea Harris, whose legacy of community service and leadership exemplify the heart of community action.

This \$2,500 scholarship will be presented annually in support of a deserving high school student who demonstrates financial need, leadership, and community service.



The late Andrea Harris was a trailblazer for minority businesses and communities. Harris became one of the youngest community action agency directors in the nation, helping fight poverty across three rural North Carolina communities. As the executive director of Franklin Vance Warren Opportunity Inc., she was also the first Black woman to oversee a community action agency in North Carolina.

She was a pioneer for racial and socioeconomic equity in North Carolina, spending more than four decades leading the charge for minority access in business. A leader and advocate for the marginalized and disenfranchised, Andrea dedicated her life to overcoming barriers to economic growth and opportunity, especially for people of color and women in the state. In 1986, with grants from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the North Carolina Association of Minority Businesses, she co-founded the North Carolina Institute of Minority Economic Development, now the National Institute of Minority Economic Development. The Institute, as it's known today, is one of the very few national organizations that specialize in eliminating barriers for minorities in business.

A graduate of Bennett College, Harris was a long-time supporter of North Carolina's historically Black colleges and universities. She strongly believed in access to affordable education.

"The Dr. Andrea Harris Community Action and Leadership Scholarship will help ease the financial burden on deserving families in homage to Andrea's life work and her beliefs," said Sharon C. Goodson, executive director of NCCAA. "Andrea possessed an unwavering passion to help others in need. It is in that spirit that we've launched this scholarship fund, so her legacy lives."

The fund received its first donation from AE Touch Technologies. "Financial resources continue to be a major barrier for students of color," said AE Touch Technologies. President Adam Crappel in making the \$2,500 donation. "As a Native American-owned business, we are dedicated to helping disadvantaged students succeed and are honored to be the first to support this initiative to advance our next generation of leaders, in the legacy of Dr. Andrea Harris."

Newly elected NCCAA President Patsy Davis' family foundation kicked in an additional \$1,000 to help jump-start the scholarship.

All are invited to support this scholarship fund by donating to the Dr. Andrea Harris Community Action and Leadership Scholarship. The first 50 supporters contributing a minimum \$25 donation will receive an Andrea Harris scholarship tee shirt. All contributions are tax-deductible. To donate, please [CLICK HERE](#) or send contributions to:

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