

A Memorial Resolution Honoring Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones

Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones, a graduate of Spelman College and the University of Michigan, was a steadfast friend, devoted mentor, and advisor to librarians in Detroit and throughout the United States; and was a social activist, a visionary leader;

Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones, who for forty (40) years served the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), Inc., was the first recipient of the "ALA Black Caucus Distinguished Service to Librarianship Award" in 1970, and won the "BCALA Trailblazer Award" in 1990, reached the pinnacle of her professional career in 1976 when she was seated as the first African American "President of the American Library Association";

Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones lent her gifts to the library profession, and to low-income, unserved, and underserved populations, as a tireless fighter for justice, equality, and human rights; and, was one of the early pioneers in the field of information referral and library outreach services; and, who, through Detroit's churches, schools, community centers, radio stations, and television, spread the word that the library was there to serve the African American community and to be accessible to everyone in the community;

Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones further lent her gifts to the library profession and to this nation, early in her career, as a reference librarian in the Dillard University Library, New Orleans, Louisiana; as an associate librarian for the Southern University Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and then later as a librarian and top executive in the Detroit Public Library System for more than thirty years, holding vital positions as a Librarian, 1944-1949, First Assistant, 1949-1950, Chief of Division, 1950-1963, Chief of Department, 1963-1968, Library Neighborhood Consultant, 1968-1970, and Library Director, 1970-1978, thereby achieving the distinction of being the first woman and African American to head the Detroit Public Library, and the first African American to direct a major urban library in the United States;

Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones left a roadmap and rich legacy by publishing extensively on library outreach and methods used by libraries to confront social and economic injustices; her publications include: "Urban Public Library: Proving Utility" (1976); "Branches: a Visible Presence" (1977); "ALA President Views the Racism/Sexism Resolution as Liberating, Not Repressive" (1977); and "The Library and Detroit's Future" (1977);

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Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones worked tirelessly to promote justice, human rights, and intellectual freedom; and provided leadership in combating racism and sexism in the library profession, thereby putting ALA at the forefront in the struggle against oppressive practices; and

Whereas Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones served on the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) appointed by President Jimmy Carter; and served as a strong advocate for the ALA Office for Library Outreach Services; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA) on behalf of its members:

1. honors her memory by trying to bring into our own lives that dignity and professionalism, coupled with deep and spirited concern, sustained commitment, power, and purpose that made her life a worthy pattern for our emulation, and that we earnestly try to live as purposefully and unselfishly as did Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones; and
2. expresses its sincere sympathy to the family of Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones and places a copy of this resolution in the permanent archives of The Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Inc., and also send a copy of this resolution to the members of Mrs. Clara Stanton Jones's family, and the Detroit Public Library.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association

Tuesday, January 29, 2013

In Seattle, Washington



Keith Michael Fiels

ALA Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council