

# Yvette Olivia George '71

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Tuesday, May 12, 2015

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**UNH degree:** Bachelor's, history (later a master's in African American studies, Boston University)

**Currently lives in:** Houston, Texas

**Please share highlights of your career or occupational experiences.**

I spent four years as assistant director of the African American Institute, Northeastern University. For 20 years, I was a mathematics teacher, grades 6-12 in Houston, New York and Antigua. I was a primary/middle school principal in New York City for 16 years.

**What are some of your overall highlight(s) and/or life achievements since graduating?**

"Flock of Eagles National Inner City Principal" Award, given to the top 20 urban

Lutheran principals in the United States. Received while working as a principal for 16 years at Grace Lutheran School in Bronx, N.Y. Consistently working with underprivileged, under-prepared students of difference to better prepare them to meet life's challenges, eschewing No Child Left Behind politics and instead ensuring students left my classroom with working knowledge of useful mathematical skills. I returned to my country of origin, Antigua, in order to bring modern mathematical teaching techniques to rural classrooms. I was a student in the inaugural class of the African American Studies graduate program at Boston University. I also have a wonderful daughter who went on to earn her Ph.D. as in a university professor

**How and what were you involved with on campus when you attended UNH?**

Black Student Union, black history programs.

**What were some of your accomplishments as a student here at UNH, and as a pioneering black student at UNH?**

Serving as a role model to other students of color.

**What is one of your favorite UNH memories?**

I plead the 5th.

**What is one of your very most unique UNH memories or experiences?**

Living in the Black Student Union House during the summer of 1970.

**Who were your role models and/or mentors while here at UNH, and how did they impact your life?**

Professor George Cunningham encouraged each of the students in the program to focus on our education and challenged us to be of service to our communities once we left UNH. His challenge influenced many of my decisions about the kind of work I did and whom I choose to do it. As a result of his encouragements I have always put myself in serve to underserved communities of color.

**What advice would you give to current UNH students of color, or any students, based on what you learned while at UNH, and what you've learned from life after college?**

Make sure to take full advantage of each educational opportunity that comes your way. And as you make your way in life, work with a sense of integrity and always give back meaningfully to the communities of difference whose access to opportunity has been more narrow or altogether foreclosed.

- WRITTEN BY:  
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**INCLUSION**



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