



Thaddeus H. Spratlen 5/1930 – 5/2021

Thaddeus H. Spratlen Memorial Tribute

Monday September 27, 3:30-5 pm: UW Foster Memorial Service

3:30-4:00 pm: Reception

Mark Forehand	Chair, Marketing & International Business
Frank Hodge	Dean, Michael G. Foster School of Business
Townsend Spratlen	Associate Professor, Sociology, Ohio State University
Myrna Varner	The PhD Project
Video tribute	American Marketing Association UW Foster community and Spratlen Legacy winners
Christina Fong	Associate Dean for Inclusion and Diversity
Carolina Rodriguez	MAP Scholarship Recipient
Naz Dessie	Foster BA, Class of 2023
Ndalo Mwamba	granddaughter and UW student

Closing Remarks by Mark Forehand

5:00 pm: Adjourn to Welcome BBQ for Black Students

*With deep appreciation to these communities: UW Foster, CBDC, & OMAD, former colleagues, students & awardees,
Mary Mahoney PNO, MASE Studio music and art curation & the Celebration of Life family planning team*

My Life Journey, Thaddeus H. Spratlen

My life has been a journey up from down South. I was born in Tennessee to an entrepreneurial mother and a father who was a college educated minister. In high school I became a member of the National Honor Society and as a senior was elected class president, while overcoming the hardship of transitional housing - living with three separate families in four years.

I was awarded an academic tuition scholarship to Kent State in Ohio, and while I soared academically, the financial burden of covering expenses, in spite of working, became too burdensome. I left to join the Army in 1948 and was trained as a Signal Corps radio operator. Following that training I was admitted to Officers Candidate School and was sent to Camp Pickett Virginia. There, I met Lois Price, a nursing student at Hampton Institute. We were married in September 1952. Following OCS graduation, in November, I deployed to Korea as an artilleryman for a year; and returned, eligible to complete college funded by the GI Bill.

I attended Ohio State University and earned my BS in Business Administration and my Master's in International Economics. Yet, with two degrees in Ohio, I remained underemployed, therefore I elected to pursue a PhD. I remained at OSU, and completed the PhD in Marketing program, after being denied admission to the department of Economics. Financial stressors remained, hence I applied for university positions in the north. I became the first African American male hired at Western Washington State College in Bellingham and began teaching in 1961.

At WWSC (now WWU) I embraced academic activism in many forms; opposing the Vietnam War, and with Lois, helped organize Citizens for Civil Rights, and the Ethnic Studies Program. In addition to becoming tenured, I was elected President of Faculty Council, and achieved tenure. However, in 1969 we opted to expand Lois' opportunities, and moved to LA, where she completed a master's in urban planning, and I eventually gained tenure, both of us at UCLA. We continued in academic activism; advocating for Affirmative Action, an African American Studies program, and I researched and testified at federal senate hearings in support of South Los Angeles Equity in Economic Development programs, initiatives, infrastructure, and funding.

In 1972, seeking better professional opportunities, Lois and I moved to Seattle; I was hired as Associate Professor of Marketing at University of Washington. I focused my teaching on retail and marketing management, developing a project-based learning model. The defining opportunity came in 1995 as I became the Founding Director of the Business and Economic Development Program, combining my interests in equity, economic development, project-based learning, capacity building with inner-city businesses, access to technical assistance and capital, expanding higher education achievement for African American and diverse students (PhD Project, NEA, GO-MAP, ABBS) and multi-cultural marketing.

In legacy and life, I'm most proud of what Lois and I accomplished together in our 60 years of marriage; raising children, family, community, and collective commitment to meaningful causes.



Please visit Foster's Spratlen Celebration of Life website to learn more about Dr. Spratlen's legacy and impact:



SCAN ME

Donations in lieu of flowers are requested for the Thaddeus Spratlen Endowment, Consulting and Business Development Center, or to the Mary Mahoney Professional Nurses Organization.