African American Graduates of Jefferson Medical College: The First Hundred Years

F. Michael Angelo
Thomas Jefferson University, michael.angelo@jefferson.edu

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African American Graduates of JMC: The First Hundred Years

Beginnings

The story of early African American physicians begins in the 19th century Philadelphia with James Overton, who was recognized as the first black allopathic (regular, non-graduate) medical doctor. The first medical school for African Americans was established in 1823 at W ashington College in Pennsylvania, where students were trained by Silas Weir Mitchell, a renowned physician.

Paul James Taylor, (Class of 1906)

A Virginia boy born 1883, Paul James Taylor graduated from JMC in 1906 and was one of the first black African American physicians to take advantage of the opening at the county estab lished Douglass Hospital in Philadelphia. As a black doctor, he soon learned the limits of his profession, but he continued to work in the medical field.

Henry McKee Minton, (Class of 1906)

Born on Christmas Day in Colorado, 1879, Dr. McKee took his degree from Jefferson in 1906 along with two of his classmates, Dr. Minton and James Taylor. He was the first African American to graduate from the College of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Pennsylvania. He entered into a partnership with Dr. Howard W. Twedt and Dr. S. A. Grayer, under whom he served as an intern during his medical education. He opened the first pharmacy operated by an African American in Pennsylvania in 1892. He died on April 20, 1930.

JMC Amphitheater (“the Pit”)

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John Hume Miller, (Class of 1903)

Jefferson's second African American student, Dr. John Hume Miller was born in 1876 in North Carolina and educated at Lincoln University. He was admitted to the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1897 and transferred to Jefferson in 1902. Dr. Miller was the only black student in his class and graduated in 1903. He was a member of the Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity and a staunch advocate for civil rights. He died on April 17, 1942.

Cora LeEthel Christian, (Class of 1971)

Dr. Christian was Jefferson's first African American woman graduate, 19 years after the first African American man. Born to a family of six children, Dr. Christian attended Jefferson from 1950-1957 and received her MD in 1971. She was the first African American woman appointed to the staff of the National Institutes of Health in 1971. She died in 1992.

Thomas Spoutas Burwell, (Class of 1907)

Born in 1885 in North Carolina, educated at Lincoln University, Dr. Burwell received his M.D. from JMC in 1907. Long-evolved and often Douglass Hospital and later in his career served as the President of the National Medical Association.

Frederick Miller Hopkins, (Class of 1909)

Born in Philadelphia in 1888 and educated at Central High School, Dr. Hopkins was awarded his medical degree from JMC in 1909. He was the first African American to graduate from Jefferson and was still listed as active in 1968. Dr. Hopkins was a general surgeon and a member of the National Medical Association, American Medical Association, Philadelphia County Medical Society, Pennsylvania Medical Society, Clinical Endocrinology Academy of Medicine and Alpha Sigma Honor Society. He died on February 14, 1979.

Mercy Hospital and School of Nurses

Philadelphia received “Mercy hospital” co-founded by Dr. Henry Minton in 1907 at 17th and Fitzwater Streets. In 1919 the hospital was closed down as a large volunteer, men-only Episcopal overview, School at 24th Street and Community Hospital and operated under the name of Mercy Hospital. In 1959 the name was changed to Mercy Hospital and operated under the name of Mercy Hospital and operated under the name of Mercy Hospital and operated under the name of Mercy Hospital.

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