

**Jackson State University
Margaret Walker Alexander National Research Center
For the Study of the 20th Century African American
Archives and Record Division**

Manuscript Collection

Collection Title: Melvene L. Coney Collection

Dates Covered: n.d.

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Provenance: This collection was presented to the Margaret Walker Alexander National Research Center by Mrs. Clarece Dillon Coney, mother of the late Ms. Melvene L. Coney.

This collection was processed on May 9, 2007.

Restrictions:
None

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Biography/History:

Melvene Lavon Coney was born on February 7, 1950 to Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Coney. Melvene was the second of six children... Melvene received her high school diploma from the Holy Child Jesus Catholic School in Canton, Mississippi in May 1967. Immediately upon graduation, Melvene received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology at Jackson State University in August 1971. She then relocated to Washington, D.C. and found employment with the United States Department of Labor and the World Bank.

Melvene obtained her Master of Arts degree in Social Science in May 1976. After graduation Melvene began working with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Jackson, Mississippi. Melvene's commitment to excellence is not limited to her academics and her career as she has participated and currently participates in various community service projects. One of her most noted acts of

community service was when she assisted in the construction of a home for a disadvantaged family. This was made possible through Habitat for Humanity and her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.

In 1983, she was nominated and deemed the Outstanding Young Woman of the Year in 1983. Before that year she received a commendation from Columbus Ohio, which was presented by the Black Caucus of Columbus, Ohio. In 1984 she was diagnosed with colon cancer. She underwent lengthy chemotherapy treatments, prayed and kept faith that God would bring her through this trying and very challenging period in her life, and when able, she resumed doing what she did best; striving for excellence and helping others. Melvene continued chemotherapy treatments until the necessity for such decreased and then halted. Her health then stagnated into a fair condition until June 1999. From 1984 – 1999, Ms. Coney received many accolades, awards, nominations, and commendations for her work through various organizations within her community.

Kirk Fordice, the governor of the State of Mississippi from 1993-2000, appointed Melvene as the commissioner of the Veterans Memorial Stadium. She then was nominated and chosen as the Jackson State University Alumnus of the Year in 1992. Immediately preceding this commendation, Ms. Coney was elected as the National President of the Jackson State University National Alumni Association, Inc. where she served diligently from July 1, 1992 – June 30, 1996. Throughout her tenure at such post, Melvene Coney never allowed her potentially terminal ailment to get the best of her. She received the Mary McLeod Bethune Award given by the National Council of Negro Women. She received keys to the cities of Gulfport, Mississippi and Memphis, Tennessee. Melvene also received the EEOC Special Commendation of Outstanding Performance for the years of 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995. She was bestowed with a commendation by the city of Jackson, Mississippi for her achievements as President of the Jackson State University National Alumni Association. Further, Melvene received an award titled “Notable Accomplishments in the Profession and Society for Jackson State University” (1997-1998). Her accomplishments do not stop there as she is a past member of the Jackson Challengers, International Training in Communication group, and the former President of the Metro Section of the National Council of Negro Women.

Just when everything seemed to be going well for Melvene, from the health and career perspectives, she was hit with yet another health dilemma as she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in June 1999. Nevertheless, Melvene continued to live her life to the fullest and maintained a sense of self-respect, dignity, and compassion that every individual, who knew her, envied or desired to obtain. She continued to dedicate a substantial amount of her time to the community through her memberships in various organizations.

She underwent chemotherapy treatments from June 1999 – May 2000 and focused on her health. Immediately proceeding this period, Melvene was appointed the Interim Director for Alumni Affairs and Development at Jackson State University. She maintained this position from June 2000 – February 2001 at which time she was appointed Special Activities Coordinator in Alumni Affairs at JSU. She currently serves in this capacity.

February of 2001 was not only a time of triumph for her newly appointed position, but it was also a trying time as this is the month in which Melvene was informed that her colon cancer was in remission.

She was the assistant secretary of the state board of directors for the National Council of Negro Women, an active, life member and recording secretary of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., an active member of New Hope Baptist Church, and a member of the board for the Margaret Walker Alexander Research Center. She died August 9, 2003 after a long bout with cancer.

Melvane L. Coney Collection [AF029]

Preliminary Box Inventory

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- F2 Miss JSU, 1992-1993, Coronation Program
- F3 JSU 8th Annual Southwest Regional Conference, April 8-10, 1994
- F4 JSU 1994 Summer Commencement Exercises Program
- F5 JSU Development Foundation Management Letter, June 30, 1992
- F6 JSU Southeast Regional 3rd Annual Conference Souvenir Booklet, April 15-17, 1994
- F7 JSU Development Foundation, Inc., News Briefs, September 1993
- F8 Detroit Chapter JSU Alumni Association, Inc. Annual Blue and White Breakfast invitation, March 30, 1996
- F9 JSU Alumni Weekend '96, May 10-11, 1996
- F10 JSU Development Foundation, Inc. Report of Nominating Committee for Board Officers, November 10, 1992
- F11 Inter-Alumni Council Minutes, January 15, 1992
- F12 Proposal
- F13 Presidents' Meeting, March 26, 1993
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- F19 JSU on the cutting edge: tabloid honoring James E. Lyons
- F20 South Vine

F21 Ayers Decision, volume I

F22 Annual Alumni Weekend, May 10, 1991

F23 "Plaintiff plan would strip Ole Miss of renown, chancellor says", Clarion-Ledger, April 14, 1994

F24 Black College Alumni Leadership Summit IV, August 12-14, 1994

F25 JSU National Alumni AIDS Prevention Project

F26 JSU National Alumni AIDS Prevention Project

F27 World of Thanks clock

F28 JSU National Alumni Fall Alumni Council Luncheon

F29 JSU Sports Hall of Fame Banquet, November 11, 1994

F30 The Golden Anniversary of Dr. and Mrs. Lee E. Williams, Sr., March 4, 1995

F31 The Ayers Decision

F32 The Delta Journal (Fall/Winter 1994-95)

F33 Clarion-Ledger FOCUS, April 12, 1990

F34 The Delta Legacy, 1994-1996 Corporate Report

F35 Guidelines for NCNW Junior Sections

F36 Metro-Jackson Section NCNW

F37 Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Recommendation Letter

F38 Metro-Jackson Section NCNW 3rd Annual Baby Contest

F39 Metro-Jackson Section NCNW Heritage Meeting

F40 Metro-Jackson Section NCNW Photo

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F43 Cooking With Delta Cookbook

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F45 49th Annual Convention Mississippi State Conference NAACP Community Service Luncheon, November 11, 1994

F46 Correspondence: Mike Moore, Attorney General, State Of Mississippi

F47 Wage Discrimination Exercises

F48 49th Annual Convention Mississippi State Conference NAACP Souvenir Booklet

F49 EEOC Analysis of Document form

F50 Americans with Disabilities Handbook

F51 "Federal Building Elevator Plunge Hurts 2 Women", Clarion-Ledger, June 23, 1989

F52 EEOC On the District Level, Third Quarter 1990

F53 EEOC Correspondence

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BOX 2

F55 JSU Founder's Day Banquet, October 24, 1997

F56 Inauguration of James E. Lyons as President of Jackson State University,
March 20, 1993

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F58 Mississippi Veterans' Memorial Stadium Commission

F59 1977 JSU Spring Commencement Exercises Program

F60 Newspaper Clipping

F61 Vicksburg Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Founders' Day Program,
January 22, 2000

F62 Certificate of Appreciation

F63 JSU National Alumni Association, Business Session, Minutes, May 9, 1992

F64 Miscellany

F65 Miscellany

F66 NCNW

F67 Elect Melvene Coney flyer

F68 JSU National Alumni Association

F69 Newspaper clipping

F70 1993 JSU Senior Banquet

F71 NAFEO Alumni Record, April 1997

F72 Certificate

F73 JSU 117th Founders' Day Convocation, October 21, 1994

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F76 JSU Founder's Day Banquet, October 13, 2000

F77 JSU 116th Founders' Day Convocation, October 22, 1993

F78 JSU 108th Founders' Day Convocation, October 17, 1985

F79 JSU 116th Founders' Day Bellringing Ceremony, October 22, 1993

F80 JSU Alumni News, Spring 1997

F81 Metro Jackson Section NCNW 3rd Annual Baby Contest

F82 Margaret Walker Alexander National Research Center, International Conference on Black Women Writers of Magic Realism

F83 JSU Annual Alumni Banquet, May 14, 1988

F84 JSU Baseball team annual banquet, February 15, 1993

F85 JSU Alumni Awards Banquet, May 14, 1993

F86 JSU Annual Alumni Weekend, May 11, 1990

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F88 Martin L. King Holiday Activities, West Point, MS, January 14-17, 1994

F89 MIS-SIPPI, July 1992

F90 Who are the Poor?

F91 Feature Selection Booklet

F92 Miscellany

F93 1995 JSU National Alumni Conference

F94 Your True Hero: Melvene L. Coney

F95 The Mississippi Link, June 20-26, 1996

F96 "JSU Alumni Elect New Leader", Clarion-Ledger, May 16, 1996

F97 JSU Alumni Association, Executive Director's Report, June 30, 1993

F98 James E. Lyons, Eighth JSU President, Clarion-Ledger, March 14, 1993

F99 Obsequies For Mr. Edward S. Bishop, Sr. (2 copies)

F100 JSU Alumni News, Summer 1981

F101 Newspapers

F102 JSU Annual Alumni Weekend, May 10-11, 1996

F103 Capital City Classic Braves/Tigers Football, November 19, 1994

F104 Poem

F105 JSU Founders' Day Convocation Invitation, October 16, 1986

F106 Martin L. King, Jr. Birthday Speech

F107 Excerpt of Martin L. King, Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech

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F110 From Frontier Capital to Modern City

F111 Oxford Development Association Soul Force, August 1992

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F113 Jackson Challengers International Training in Communication, Installation Program

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F124 "Black Alumni Close Rank", Clarion-Ledger, October 14, 1992

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