

# Hazel Harvey Peace 1907-2008



Hazel Harvey Peace (1907-2008) was an educator, activist and humanitarian.

Born in Waco, her family moved to Fort Worth three months later. An avid reader, she spent much of her time at Fort Worth's segregated Carnegie Public Library, where she could check out books, but not stay and read them.

After graduating from the Fort Worth Color School, she attended Howard University in Washington, D.C., before returning to Fort Worth to work at her alma mater, which had been renamed I.M. Terrell High School. She was there for nearly 50 years, serving as a teacher, counselor, dean of girls and vice principal. When school was out of session, she took classes at Columbia University in New York to pursue a master's degree. She continued her postgraduate studies by taking summer courses at the University of

Wisconsin, Vassar College, Hampton University and Atlanta University.

Though she and her husband, Joe Peace, never had children of their own, she earned the nickname "Mama Hazel" from her students. She taught whatever subject needed a teacher, including English, drama, debate and history. She launched a children's theater at I.M. Terrell, and also a debate club.

After I.M. Terrell was closed in 1972, she worked in administrative positions at Bishop College, Paul Quinn College, Huton-Tillotson College and Prairie View A&M.

She volunteered in the evenings at John Peter Smith Hospital. After retirement, she served on the Fort Worth Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Fort Worth Public Library Advisory Council, the board of the Women's Center of Tarrant County, the United Way, the Fort Worth chapter of the NAACP, YWCA and the reading program at Bethlehem Community Center. She was chairwoman of the Mayor's Task Force on Housing, the Near Southeast Citizens Commission and the Near Southside Neighborhood Advisory Council.

In 2000, the Central Library's Youth Center was named for her. In 2007, to celebrate Peace's 100th birthday, the Library held a public celebration for the occasion. In 2009, the city named a new municipal building for her, the Hazel Harvey Peace Center for Neighborhoods. Fort Worth ISD dedicated an elementary school named for her in 2010.

