

## **GARY JACKSON**

GWHS 1963

In 1960, I had Mr. Hoffman as my 10th grade Algebra teacher. He required a certain type of graph paper for all homework assignments to be written on. This paper could only be obtained from the University of Denver Bookstore on Evans & University. We called the paper "Hoffman Paper." I vividly remember having to get on the No. 9 bus that traveled University Avenue to go to the bookstore. It was an adventure, because I had never been on a college campus previously and never been in a university bookstore. Mr. Hoffman's requirement for this special paper was the first example of structure, discipline, and commitment that he required from each student. I achieved an A in the Algebra class for both the first and second semester. As a junior, I took Geometry from Mr. Hoffman. On my first test, I got a C grade. Mr. Hoffman immediately said to me that, if I wanted to continue playing on the high school basketball team, I would need to improve my grade to an A. At that time of my high school life, playing on the basketball team was the most important activity, because I knew that I was going to be the next Oscar Robertson. Mr. Hoffman knew that I was an A student and he had that type of expectation for me in Geometry, as well as the additional classes that I took from him (Calculus). For me, Mr. Hoffman having a high expectation for my grades, let me know that I could exceed in all the classes that I took at GW.

In 1960, I was one of five African American students at GW which had approximately 2,000 students. When I spoke to Mr. Hoffman last week, in my attempt to jog his mind as to whom I was and his impact upon me as a student, I said to him that I was one of the five black students at GW. Mr. Hoffman said he "still" could not remember me, because he did not look at his students based upon their color. That statement, of course, increased my admiration of Mr. Hoffman.

You may want to Google a couple of articles that describe the successes that I have achieved with the help of Mr. Hoffman: "The Man from Cherry Creek North," by Ron S. Doyle, in *Colorado Super Lawyers*, April 2012; or the January 12, 2012, article in *Colorado Legal Connection*, by Sara Crocker, on my receipt of the 2012 Colorado Bar Association Award of Merit, the highest award that a Colorado lawyer can receive.

To cap off my 42-year legal career, I have recently been selected to be a Denver County Court judge. Thank you for allowing me to provide you with my short story about Mr. Hoffman. Please keep me aware of when you publish your article.

Best wishes,

— Gary Jackson  
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