

Paying Tribute to Youth Advocate Phyllis Hicks

When most of the youth of her generation were hastily leaving the hometown for other parts of the nation as soon as they finished high school or college, Phyllis Hicks made the decision to remain in Omaha and contribute what she could towards the hometown's future.

Fate decreed that much of her efforts would be in the field of youth counseling and encouragement of the young people in her community. The main locale of 58-year-old Phyllis' efforts became the Salem Baptist Church where she became a member at the tender age of five.

Of course, she is best known for her establishment and leadership of Salem's great Stepping Saints Drill Team which has appeared at many of the nation's and Canada's major events such as the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans, Walt Disney World in 1985 and 1990, Disneyland in 1988 and 1991, the National Shrine Convention in New Orleans in 1992, the Martin Luther King Parade in Las Vegas in 1995 (where they won first place in the marching competition), and at the 1986 World's Fair in Vancouver.

Phyllis is the daughter of Juanita Agee Morrow of Omaha and James P. Mosley of Denver, Colo.; the great-granddaughter of the late Mariah Morgan; and the granddaughter of the late Emma Lee Sullivan. Phyllis and husband Alonso Hicks have one son, Wayne Hicks, who holds a major position with a Las Vegas hotel and casino.

Ms. Hicks attended Howard Kennedy grade school, Peru State College in Peru, Neb., and Creighton University before settling in Omaha. She later became one of the pioneering members of the management team at Omaha's OQIC



Phyllis Hicks

where she was a key member of that team.

She also divided her time with various other meaningful activities with Omaha organizations such as the Midlands Cancer Society where she acts as a volunteer, and the Youth Ministry Program at Salem Baptist Church. Her devotion to Salem Baptist is legendary in Omaha church circles.

Since establishing the Stepping Saints Drill Team in 1965, Phyllis Hicks has felt that with the passing of each year, the Stepping Saints program becomes more essential to our city's youth. Literally thousands of Omaha youths, especially those in the black community, have benefited greatly by the existence of that program and by others of Phyllis' activities in the area of youth advocacy.

Phyllis might be referred to as "the girl who stayed at home while others of recent generations scurried to seek their destinies in other cities and states." There is little doubt that with her energy and resourcefulness, Phyllis would have reached great heights in any place of her choice.

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