



IN *Loving*  
MEMORY *of....*



Joseph  
 “BOB”  
 TAYLOR

JULY 18, 1941 - SEPTEMBER 20, 2021





# Life Reflections

On July 18, 1941, **Joseph (Bob) Thornest Taylor** was born to Joseph Thornest Taylor Sr. and Mildred Gertrude Taylor in Indianapolis, Indiana. Bobby, as his mother nicknamed him, moved to the south side of Chicago with his parents and younger sister Patricia.

**Bob** graduated from Francis W. Parker High School, where he was a member of the Glee and Press clubs and served as a hall guard. He remained connected with many of his fellow Parker students until the very end. After high school, Bob attended Wright Junior College.

It was after attending Wright Junior College and Loyola University Chicago that Bob took a job doing Pharmacology Research at Mount Sinai Hospital. There he met Dr. Eric Kast, who introduced him to social activism.

In 1969, Bob was selected as one of ten social workers in the United States to study social welfare systems in Northern Europe on a grant sponsored jointly by the Ford Foundation and the Florence Heller Graduate School of Social Welfare at Brandeis University. In this same year, Bob was a member of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for United Community Action of which Reverend C.T. Vivian was the Coordinator/Executive Director, and who would become a lifelong mentor to Bob. The Coalition, a group of 61 Chicago Black organizations, started the national direct action campaign against racism in the building trades unions and produced the Chicago Plan, which resulted in the Chicago Building Trade Unions committing to train and place 20,000 Black youth in Chicago trades within a five year period. In 1999, 30 years after the release of the Chicago Plan, Bob received an award of appreciation for his historic contributions as a trailblazer in advancing the role of African-Americans and other minorities in the Chicago construction industry.

In 1971, Bob moved his family (former wife Mae Catherine Taylor, daughter Debbie, and sons Malcolm and Martin) to the newly planned community of Reston, Virginia, whose origins he had read about and whose design reminded him of the cities he visited while on travel to Europe.

In 1975, Bob returned to Chicago and worked over the next 15 years for organizations focused on community and economic development that included the Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County and Chicago Youth Centers (Robbins and Lower North Center located in Cabrini Green). During this time, he reconnected with and married Rhetta C. Taylor in 1980, to whom he remained married for 41 years.

**Bob** had a long and distinguished career of public service with a smile. He served as one of the early staffers and later Chief of Staff for then 4th Ward Alderman Toni Preckwinkle, currently the Cook County Board President of Commissioners. Bob retired from Cook County government in 2009. During his retirement, Bob was fortunate to travel frequently to Cuba and Panama, where he loved the history, culture and geography, and where he found himself working with C.T. Vivian, writing proposals and assisting with civil rights issues, once again.

**Bob** was a voracious reader and loved tennis, gardening, jazz, and socializing with the many friends he made during his storied journey through life. He was a story teller, who was fortunate to have first-hand accounts of people and events that shaped Chicago and the nation.

**Bob** is preceded by his parents Lee and Mildred Fentress, and Joseph Thornest Taylor, Sr. He leaves behind to cherish his memory wife Rhetta Taylor; former wife Mae Catherine Taylor, children Debra Trimiew, Malcolm Taylor, Martin (Tania) Taylor, Doug O'Neal, Michael Miller, and Monique Miller; grandchildren: Janae Miller, Mila Hudson, Shannon Miller, Zachary Trimiew, Race O'Neal, and Imani O'Neal; sister, Patricia Whitehead; niece, Nalita Whitehead Ross and a host of grand and great grand-nieces and nephews, and friends.

# Treasured Memories



# Order of Service

Friday, October 8, 2021

Memorial Service 3:30pm

*DuSable Museum of African American History*

740 E. 56th Place

Chicago, IL 60615

Musical Prelude

Welcome

Prayer

Reading of Obituary

Reflections from Family & Friends

Words of Encouragement

Remarks from Toni Preckwinkle,  
*President, Cook County Board of Commissioners*

Acknowledgments

## Acknowledgements

The family of **Joseph (Bob) Taylor** wishes to thank you most sincerely for your expressions of kindness and sympathy.