



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

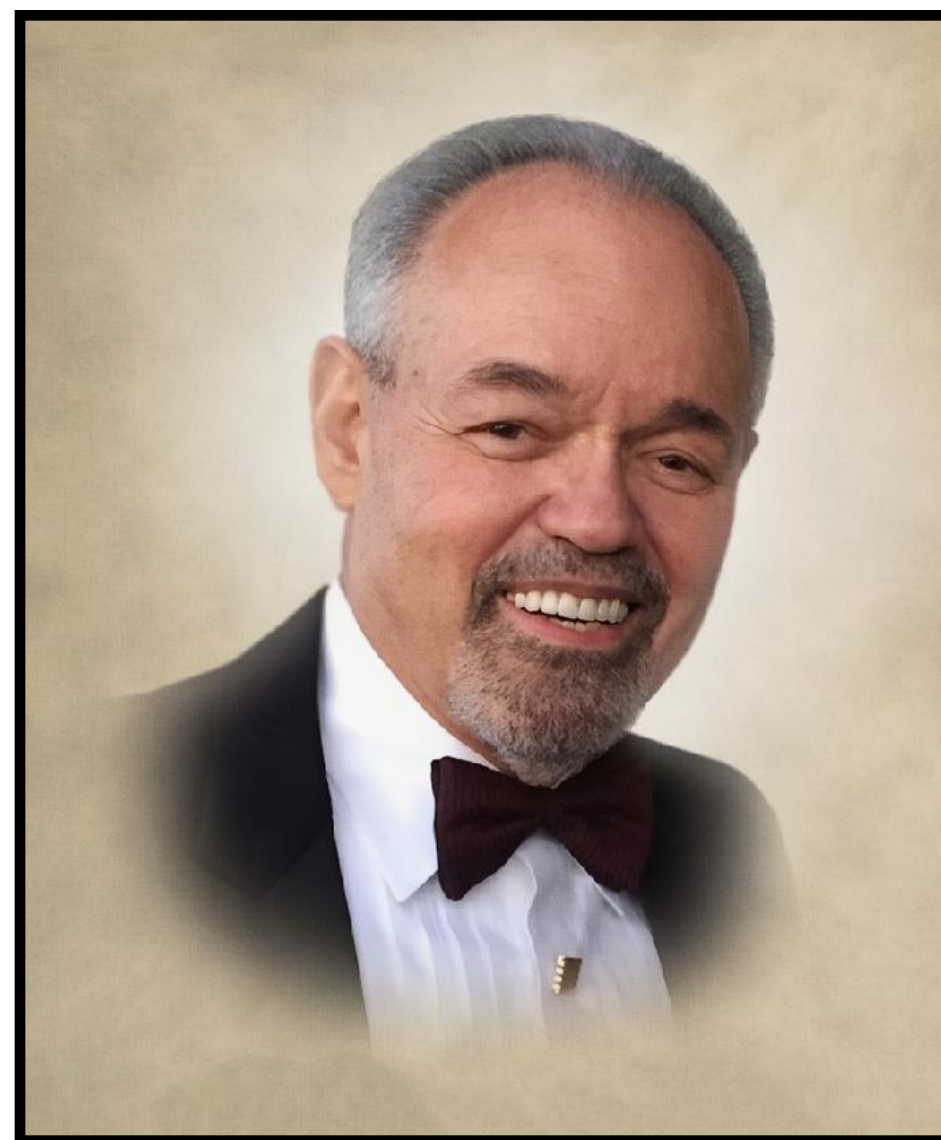
The family sincerely thanks each of you for the many acts of kindness shown during this difficult time. Your support, generosity and expressions of love will always be remembered. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Howard University family from President Vinson's office on main campus to Interim Dean Crooms' office at the Law School. Special appreciation is given to Dean Bernard Richardson and Cynthia M. Rodwell for their support and assistance every step of the way. We could not have gotten through this time without you.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Howard University Law School to support the Howard Public Interest Law Society (HPILS). HPILS provides financial and career opportunities for students seeking careers in public interest law.

Professional Services Entrusted to
McGuire Funeral Service, Inc.
 7400 Georgia Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20012
 202-882-6600 www.mcguire-services.com
Programs by Another Marvelous Design: 240.353.5113

Celebration of Life *for* WARNER LAWSON JR.

April 3, 1940 – September 17, 2023



Saturday, October 14, 2023

Visitation – 10:00 a.m.

Memorial Service – 11:00 a.m.

Dunbarton Chapel, Howard University Law School
2900 Van Ness Street NW, Washington, DC 20008

Rev. Bernard L. Richardson, Ph.D., Presiding

Warner Lawson Jr.'s Journey

Warner Lawson Jr. was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on April 3, 1940. The second of three sons (Raymond, Warner, Lyn) he was born to talented and successful educators, Nellie Washington, and Warner Lawson Sr. Warner Sr. was Director of the Music Department and choral conductor at A&T College (today NCA&T) when Warner was born. In 1942, the family moved to Washington DC when Warner Sr. joined the faculty of Howard University (HU) where he led the HU School of Music to full accreditation and served as Dean of the School of Music and after 1961, Dean of the School of Fine Arts. Nellie had a long and distinguished career teaching in the District of Columbia Public School system. Warner often referred to himself and his brothers as “Campus Brats” as the HU campus was their playground. He grew up in a very segregated city where he said he had no reason to go West of 15th Street, but on the Howard campus he was surrounded by a loving and intellectually stimulating extended family.

Warner’s childhood included wonderful summers at Highland Beach on the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland’s first African American Incorporated Town. Founded at the end of the 19th century, it provided a sanctuary from racial discrimination, creating carefree summers on the bay and lifelong friendships.

Warner graduated from Paul Dunbar High School in 1958 and Howard University in 1962 with a BA degree in political science. While at Howard he was on the swim team, Political Science Society, Army ROTC, and sang in his father’s choir. The choir was designated goodwill ambassadors to Central and South America by President Eisenhower and in the summer of 1960 performed in 18 countries in the region. Having joined ROTC, Warner served his tour of duty in Germany from 1963 to 1966 at the Medical Depot in Kaiserslautern, West Germany and was honorably discharged in the rank of Captain.

Returning to Washington, he enrolled in Howard University’s Law School and from day one knew he found his calling, graduating with honors in 1969. During his law school tenure, he was editor of the Howard Law Review and won the American Jurisprudence prize for the highest grade in Contracts, Agency, Administrative Law, Corporate Law and Urban Problems. He also served as research assistant to Professor Frank D. Reeves; was legal intern with the General Counsel of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and a member of the Law Student Civil Rights Research Council. He was a proud member of the Magnificent Seven study group “humbly” called as they all graduated with honors in the top 10 percent of their class. Their time at the Law School created a bond that lasted a lifetime.

Following law school, he joined the law firm of Proskauer Rose Goetz and Mendelsohn in New York City, specializing in labor law and litigation. Acknowledging that the role of a corporate lawyer was not his calling, he accepted a teaching position at Ohio State University’s School of Law (1971-1974) before returning home to Howard University as an Associate Professor in the law school, and Full Professor in 1981. Warner taught until his retirement in 2014 when more than 400 former students were in touch to express their gratitude for his dedication to teaching. His teaching specialties were Commercial, Contracts, Corporate and Consumer Law and he also taught courses in Civil Rights, Secured Transactions, Real Estate Finance and Bankruptcy.

Warner published several articles and two textbooks – Contracts and Commercial Law. During his career, he was a visiting professor at more than 14 law schools including Hastings College of Law, Louisiana State University Law Center, American University College of Law, Antioch School of Law, University of Utah School of Law, and the University of Georgia School of Law.

His service to Howard University included Associate Dean of the Law School from 1979 to 1985 and again from 2005 to 2006. He was an active member of the HU Faculty Senate serving as Chair from 1997-1999, and the Graduate Faculty Trustee from 2002-2004 and again from 2008 to 2012.

Warner’s favorite past time was playing golf with buddies in DC, on regular Florida vacations, and a few years on Martha’s Vineyard. He was a good player scoring regularly in the 90s and occasionally in the 80s. As a car aficionado his first car was an Austin Healy and his last a Toyota with several Mercedes in between including his much beloved white Mercedes wagon. While in Ohio, and for several years after moving back to DC, he would purchase old Mercedes and honed his skills as an amateur mechanic. As the operating systems became more advanced, he hung up his mechanic tools. He also considered himself a fixer upper around the house using the same deliberate consideration of every angle that he applied to his teaching. When his fixer-upper skills failed he called his long-time buddy Mike Smith. Warner was a great card player from poker to bridge to Uno with grandchildren. He had a great sense of humor and enjoyed telling jokes, often laughing through the telling. His smile was ever present. As a former student wrote – “Aside from being cerebrally intelligent, he has a razor-sharp blink-and-you miss it sense of humor that kept me in stitches.”

He was a loving father and took great pride in his daughter Michele’s graduation from Howard University Law School in 1974 and her legal career. He coached his son Christopher’s soccer team, leading the team to the league championship by training the little men to manage their positions and not all run after the ball. He followed Christopher’s love for lacrosse and his transition from player to coach and referee. He celebrated his granddaughter Shelby’s pursuit of academic and artistic interests, ballet skills, and multilinguistic competency.

Warner affectionally called Karen’s family of four siblings and their children and offspring “the mob” and enjoyed family Thanksgiving dinners at home, Christmas holidays in Philadelphia and summer vacations in Cape May, New Jersey and a few years on Martha’s Vineyard until he just could not tolerate the long drive. He admired Karen's daughter Lauren's scholarship, diligence, and adventuresome spirit, and enjoyed becoming a grandparent again with the births of Lauren and Jaleel's children -- Sakile, Kimathi and Sankara. Over the course of their marriage, Warner and Karen took many vacations abroad and he enjoyed driving in Europe as he had when he was stationed in Germany while in the Army. He was a great dancer and while he learned as a child through piano instruction that he had not inherited his father’s musical talent, he loved almost all genres from classical to Motown.

An article in the Washington Post after the passing of his father read “Lawson won to him the hearts as well as the malleable voices of those hundreds of singers he trained in his years at Howard.” His second son and namesake followed in his footsteps winning the hearts of hundreds of Howard Law students through his teaching, comportment, and humor (AATC, TINUS).

A loving, brilliant Professor, husband, father, and grandpa closed his eyes to this world on September 17, 2023. However, he will forever live in the hearts and indelible memories of his wife, Karen McGill; two children, Christopher Warner (Michelle) and Claudia Michele and one step-daughter, Lauren Anita (Jaleel); one grandchild, Shelby Marie Lawson, and four step-grandchildren, Etana Hill-Nash, Sakile, Kimathi and Sankara Nash; sisters-in-law, Denise Lawson, Dorothy McGill Bounds and Charisse Lillie; brothers-in-law, Tommy McGill Jr., Brian McGill Sr., Zakee William McGill and Charles Bounds Jr.; and numerous nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Presiding
Rev. Bernard L. Richardson, Ph.D.
Dean of the Chapel
Howard University

Sigma Pi Phi Omega Ritual 10:30 am

Military Tribute

Musical Prelude

Call to Celebrate and Prayer of Comfort

Reading

Introduction of Reflections

Charlene Drew Jarvis
Jack Nelson
Michael Smith
Sanford Cloud -- Magnificent Seven

Musical Selection ***“O Glory”***
Anika Sampson-Anderson, Soloist
Ned Lewis, Pianist

Ashley Joyner Chavous
Bill Robinson
Michele Lawson
Christopher Lawson/Shelby Lawson
Thomas McGill, Jr.
Lauren Arrington

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Benediction

Recessional ***“If Love Is Overrated”***

Memorial Reception
Immediately following the program.
Located in the cafeteria one floor down on the basement level.

Ned Lewis, Pianist

Dean of the Chapel

Tracy Lawson Chavous

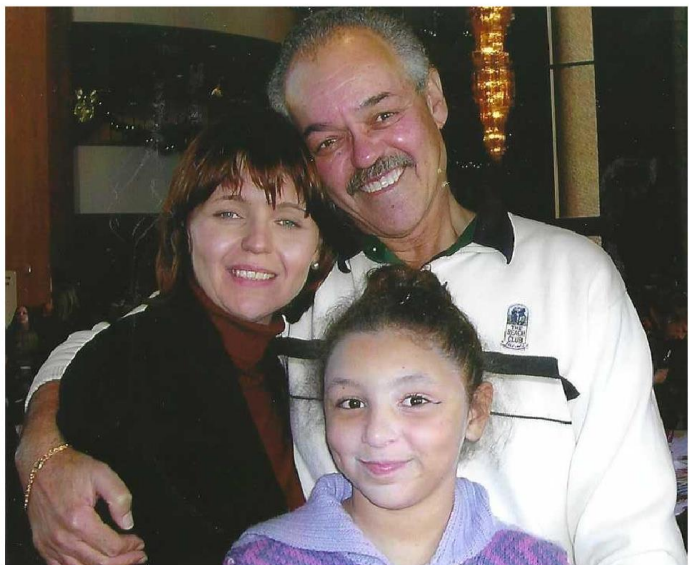
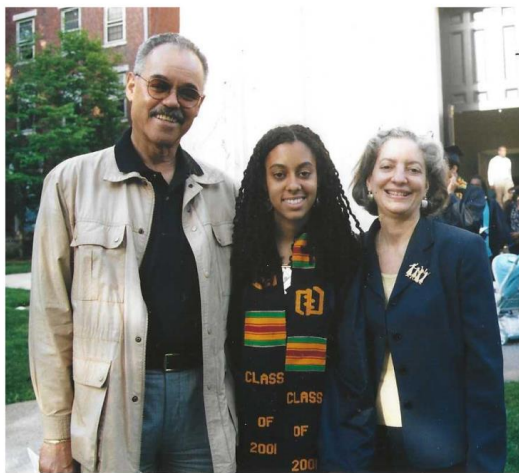
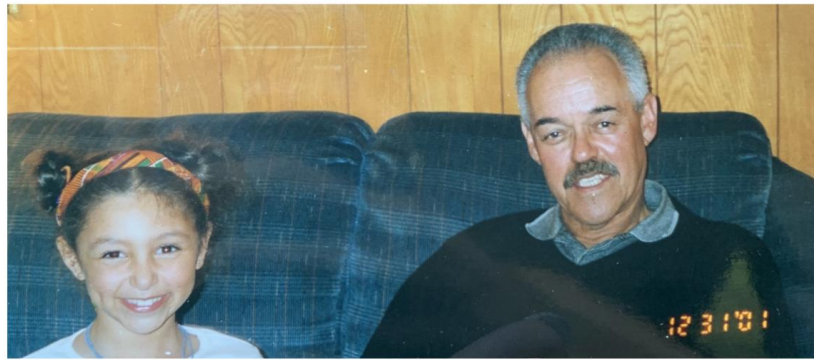
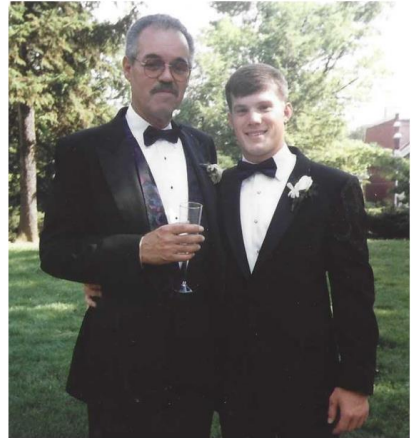
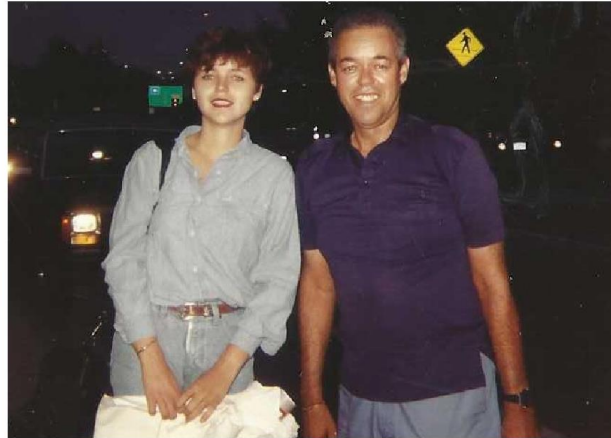
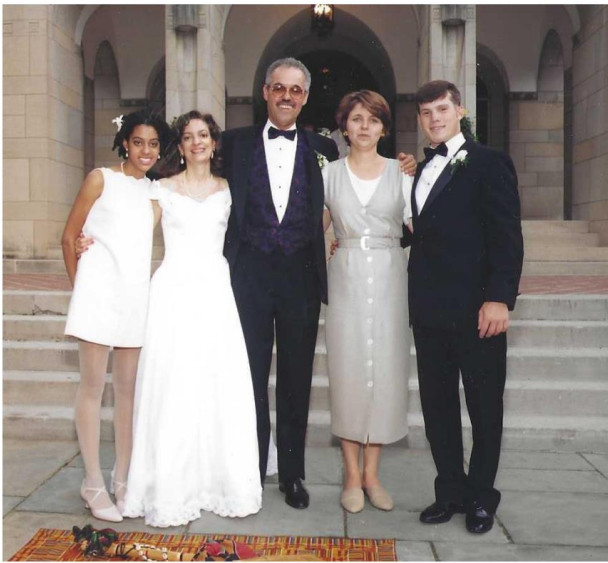
Patricia Worthy, Professor of Law
Howard University School of Law

by Evelyn Simpson-Curenton

Dean of the Chapel

by Gregory Porter



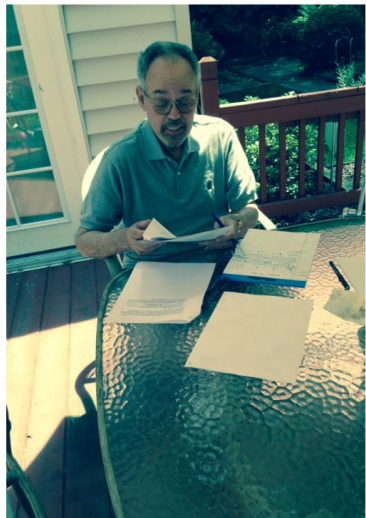




The Formal Instruction that you have received here at Howard; was "as good as" any that you "would have" received elsewhere. "Gooda Woulda Rule"

However, the Moral Instruction that You have received here at Howard; was "better" than any that you could have received anywhere. Take it with you...The books can be purchased at any time.

-Professor Warner Lawson



You must conquer the reluctance to get more involved in the class. There's no such thing as a "quiet lawyer" and law students even more than lawyers must road test their ideas in order to confront both what is understood and what remains confused. The only defense against my calling on you is to volunteer in class or to raise your questions in the office.

-Professor Lawson



HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

October 14, 2023

Family of Professor Warner Lawson Jr.
5 East Lake Avenue
Baltimore Maryland 21212

Dear Family of Professor Lawson:

Dr. Laurence C. Morse, Chairman of Howard University's Board of Trustees, and I, Ben Vinson III, Ph.D., respectfully advise you of the adoption of the following resolution by the Howard University Board of Trustees:

RESOLUTION

The Board of Trustees of Howard University wishes to include in its official record an expression of sincere condolence to the family of Professor Warner Lawson Jr., beloved law professor and mentor.

Professor Lawson, the son of Warner Lawson Sr., the dean of the former School of Music, was practically raised on Howard's campus. As an undergraduate student, Warner Jr. sang in the Howard Choir, which was directed by his father. Professor Lawson would later describe the "extraordinary experience" of being part of the choir's groundbreaking tour of South America. Professor Lawson went on to complete his Bachelor of Arts in 1962 and his Juris Doctor in 1969 at Howard.

Professor Lawson joined the faculty of the Howard University School of Law in 1974 where he taught primarily in the areas of Contracts, Remedies, and Sales and Secured Transactions. He chaired the school's Appointments, Promotions and Tenure Committee and he was also tapped to serve as associate dean in 1980 and 2004. He served as chair of the Faculty Senate and was elected to serve on the Howard University Board of Trustees as graduate faculty trustee. When asked why he took on this role in 2008, Professor Lawson responded: "When my Faculty Senate colleagues asked me to serve as trustee, it was because of my experience and my vision for the future of "Mother Howard"—notably, Howard can only be a world class university if its faculty is properly respected and genuinely viewed as a partner with those who administer this enterprise." Professor Lawson retired in May 2014 after 40 years of service with distinction.

Professor Warner Lawson Jr. is remembered by his colleagues for bringing song and color to the law school environment, sharing laughter, kindness, and friendship, and carefully mentoring both students and faculty. Always a gentleman, his was often the voice of reason and reconciliation. We honor Professor Lawson's legacy of *Excellence, Leadership, and Service*, which endures in the countless attorneys, political scientists, and other alumni and colleagues throughout the country that he trained, inspired, and influenced.

Words cannot adequately express our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Karen Lawson, Ms. Michele Lawson, Mr. Christopher Warner Lawson, Ms. Lauren Arrington, and their entire family. The Board desires to convey that all our members share in their loss.

Be It Therefore Resolved: This expression of sympathy in response to the death of Professor Warner Lawson Jr. be spread upon the minutes of the Board of Trustees of Howard University.

With sympathy and compassion



Ben Vinson III, Ph.D.
President

