1972

Dr. Beryl Warner Williams Honorary Degree File

University of Maine

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BERYL WARNER WILLIAMS -- born in Bangor and educated in its public schools; you are an honors graduate of this University with Bachelor's and Master's degrees in mathematics. You chose to leave Maine to begin your teaching career in the deep South, in the 1930's and 40's this was, indeed, a great distance away. You have taught in secondary schools and colleges in Louisiana, Florida, the Carolinas and Maryland. Since 1948 you have been associated with Morgan State College in Baltimore, first part-time in extension programs; then as a member of the English and Mathematics departments; from 1963 as director of the evening and summer sessions; and since 1971 as Dean of the Center for Continuing Education. During your entire life you have worked well and effectively with both the Y.W.C.A. and the Methodist church.

Your professional career has been an integral part of your life-long effort to improve education, housing and employment for Black people. To that commitment you have brought faith and optimism, courage and persistence, and hard, hard work.

You have said you maintain within yourself "a lively dialogue as to the meaning of the Maine experience and expanded vision of life as the result of pine trees, classrooms and people at the University of Maine..." If some of your "expanded vision of life" came from your University of Maine experience, then you and we have attained a very precious goal of liberal education. A University
is honored and distinguished by such successes. However, it is because you in turn constantly and creatively work to expand the vision of life of your students and your fellow citizens that the Trustees of your alma mater interrupt your dialogue to honor you and the work you do, and with pride confer upon you the honorary degree of DOCTOR OF PEDAGOGY with all the rights and honors pertaining thereto. Your name will forever be borne upon the rolls of the University of Maine at Orono.
Beryl Elizabeth Warner Williams was one of two daughters of the late James H. and Elizabeth A. Warner of Fourteenth Street, Bangor. She grew up in the Bangor schools: Fairmount Elementary, Hannibal Hamlin Grammar and Bangor High, graduating with the grammar school honors medal and with honors from high school. She was an accomplished pianist, active in school sports, the high school orchestra, the Latin Club, and was elected to the National Honors Society. During her school years, she was a member and active participant at Grace Methodist Church and the Bangor-Brewer Y.W.C.A.

She attended the University of Maine, graduating with honors in mathematics, and minor fields of English and music. While there she partially supported her expenses as a pianist in the Physical Education Department. She was active in field hockey, the Student YWCA, the Mathematics Club, the college orchestra. She was elected to All Maine Women. She returned later to the University to earn a master's degree in mathematics. She began her teaching career in English and music at Gilbert Academy, New Orleans, Louisiana, under the General Board of Education of the Methodist Church, continued later at Fessenden Academy in Florida, under the American Missionary Association of the currently known United Church of Christ and included her teaching in the church-related institution Claflin College, also Methodist supported, in Orangeburg, South Carolina.

Having met Roger Kenton Williams at the last institution, she married and joined him at what is now known as the Agricultural and Technical State University of North Carolina in Greensboro. The birth of a son Scott Warner Williams and her husband's period in the armed services intervening, she returned for a short period to Bangor, where she was active in the Community Center and served on the Board of the Bangor-Brewer Y.W.C.A.
After World War II she re-joined her husband in Greensboro where she taught mathematics in the Department of Engineering at A. and T. She was active in the community and in the Greensboro Y.W.C.A.

The Williams next moved to Baltimore, Maryland in 1948, where they have lived since. Mrs. Williams has continued her training at the Johns Hopkins University, Michigan State University and the University of Chicago, both in English and in adult and continuing education. She has been employed at Morgan State College: first part-time in the extension programs, later full-time in the Mathematics and English Departments. In 1963 she became the first woman director of the evening and summer sessions, with the title assistant dean. In 1971 she became dean of the Center for Continuing Education at Morgan State. She has consistently served on many college committees and has been advisor to the Student YWCA and the campus Wesley Club.

In Baltimore and Maryland, she has served on many committees and boards between 1950 and 1970, being formerly

President of the Maryland League of Women's Clubs,
President of the Maryland Association for Adult Education,
Chairman of the Maryland Committee for United Nations Children's Fund,
Chairman of Maryland Committee for Equal Public Accomodations,
Legislative Chairman for Maryland Church Women United,
First Vice-President of the Baltimore Y.W.C.A.,
Officer and board member in the Parent Teacher Association of the schools her son attended,
Member of committees and a troop service director for Girl Scouts of Central Maryland.

She has been active in the Methodist Church serving as President of the
Church and on district and conference committees on Christian Social Concerns. She has been delegate to Annual Jurisdictional and General Conferences. She has limited her stay as alternate delegate to the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, in order to come to Bangor this weekend. She has been listed in *Who's Who in Methodism*.

In Baltimore she has worked untiringly in neighborhood and community groups for better housing, employment and education particularly for the black community. She has participated in seminars, fund-raising drives and marches in the city and state. She has supported many candidates for office but has not chosen to run herself.

She is currently a member of the NAACP (completing life membership), life member of National Council of Negro Women, life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, life member of the College English Association of University Women, The Citizens for Black History. She is on the advisory Board of the Volunteer Action Center of Central Maryland and is chairman of the Advisory Board of Direct Search for Talent. She has received several citations as Volunteer of the Year and Woman of the Year in Baltimore for work in community service, the church, and education.

She is a member of the Adult Education Association of the USA, the Adult Student Personnel Association, trustee of the United States Association of Evening Students, member of the Maryland Alumni as well as the General Alumni Association of the University of Maine.

Dr. Roger Kenton Williams, her husband, a native of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, has recently resigned as chairman of the Department of Psychology which he organized in 1949 and is now Vice-President for Academic Affairs.
at Morgan State. Dr. Williams and his wife wrote and the College published *How to Take Tests*, an orientation booklet used by thousands of freshmen at Morgan State. Mrs. Williams also wrote a chapter "White Students in a Black College" in the book *Counseling Services for Adults*, 1971.

Their son, Scott Warner Williams, grew up in the Baltimore Public Schools, graduated with honors in mathematics from Morgan State, was a teaching assistant at Lehigh University receiving a master's degree and Ph.D. in mathematics there. He was for two years a research professor at Pennsylvania State University and is currently assistant professor of mathematics at the State University of New York in Buffalo. Today, April 22, is Scott's twenty-ninth birthday.

Mrs. Williams has less time for earlier hobbies in music, needlework, active sports, and gardening. Her current hobbies are writing, black studies and travel. She has travelled extensively in the United States, to Canada and Bermuda, and in 1969 spent a month in West African countries: Senegal, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Dehomey, Nigeria and Ghana.

She and her husband have sponsored many black students in college. Two current students are an American who will graduate from the Department of English this June at Morgan State and an African pre-med student who will graduate in 1974. Some have lived in their homes.

Of her childhood and formative years in Bangor, Mrs. Williams says that the cold weather, her parents allowing her freedom to grow and the community's being unaware of what is popularly known today as racism made developing a strong personality for survival essential in Maine.
She recalls her mother voting at 6 a.m. one morning shortly after the passage of Women's Suffrage Amendment and that she was known as the first woman voter in Maine. Mrs. Williams also recalls her parents taking her to the first NAACP meetings in Bangor shortly after World War I before she could read. All of this has been background to what she feels has been the privileged excitement of the fight for existence and service to mankind in the middle half of the twentieth century.
August 25, 1972

Dr. Beryl Warner Williams  
4905 Alameda  
Baltimore, Maryland  21218

Dear Beryl:

We were delighted that we were able at our 146th Commencement exercises to confer an honorary degree upon you. It was so richly deserved and so rewarding to us to have this opportunity to recognize what you have done and what, we all know, you will continue to do.

I am enclosing four pictures which I hope will serve as momentos of this most pleasant occasion.

Sincerely and with best wishes,

Winthrop C. Libby  
President

WCL:ht
Encs.
August 24, 1972

Mr. Donald Stewart  
Executive Director  
General Alumni Association  
North Hall Alumni Center  
Campus

Dear Don:

You and Ruth hosted the Williams with effectiveness and grace. I sincerely appreciate your taking them in tow and making the occasion especially memorable for them. I am sure they enjoyed the entire performance.

Out of all of the honorary degrees given on August 18, I feel that the one to Beryl was especially appropriate and especially appreciated. I enjoyed her reactions and the reactions of her family. They liked the recognition and the warmth of their reception. You two were the secret ingredient that made the vital difference.

Thanks,

Winthrop C. Libby  
President

WCL:jc
August 15, 1972

Dr. Winthrop C. Libby
President
Alumni Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04473

Dear Dr. Libby:

Thank you for the invitation to the convocation at which our Dean Beryl Williams will receive a doctoral degree honoris causa. We share your pride in Mrs. Williams and are joyful at the University of Maine's recognition of her worth as a person with deep convictions regarding the well-being of fellowmen, and her outstanding achievements in the field of education.

Unfortunately, previous commitments which take me out of the country at this time preclude my attendance at the convocation. Missing this occasion is one of life's great disappointments. Please accept my sincere apology.

Again, thank you for the invitation.

Sincerely,

Homer E. Favor
Dean

HEF/mld

cc: Dean Beryl Williams
August 15, 1972

Dear Dr. Libby:

Thank you for your invitation to attend the graduation exercises on August 18 and the conferring upon Beryl Warner Williams, the honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree. I cannot think of another event I would like to attend more than this particular one. However, prior commitments make it impossible for me to come to Maine on this particular date. As a native New Engander who plans to live part of the time in Maine in the future after retirement, the trip would be doubly enjoyable.

Please extend to Mrs. Williams my best wishes and high esteem.

Cordially,

Barbara P. LeCroy
Upward Mobility College
August 14, 1972

Mr. Winthrop C. Libby
President, University
of Maine
Orono, Maine

Re: Your letter dated August 9, 1972

Sir:

I would be greatly honored to attend graduation exercises scheduled on August 18, 1972 in the Memorial Gymnasium on the Orono Campus.

Would you please reserve tickets for me and my wife, for at this late date, it is doubtful that they would reach me in time if sent by mail.

Very truly yours,

Mr. & Mrs. E. Leslie Jackson

EJ/pa
14 August 1972

Office of the President
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04473

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your kind invitation to attend the Commencement Exercises this Friday Evening, during which time Mrs. Beryl W. Williams, Dean, Center for Continuing Education, Morgan State College, will be awarded the honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree.

I regret that I shall be unable to be present, when this most deserving lady, whose office I am a part of, receives this honor; but my wish for everyone involved, is all the success, health, and happiness so much deserved.

Sincerely,

M. Arthur Camper

M. Arthur Camper,
Assistant, Summer Session
Office of the President
Alumni Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04469

Dear President Libby:

We accept with excitement your invitation to attend the graduation exercises on August 18 in the Memorial Gymnasium. Please reserve two tickets for the Andersons.

Cordially,

J. J. Anderson, Jr.
August 12, 1972

President Wrinthyp C. Libby
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04469

Dear President Libby,

The time is very short and responses are delayed because my husband and I took a seven day rest in the West Indies. We shall be back at work on August 14, but we do have the Friday morning flight which arrives in Bangor at 11:28 A.M. August 18. We expect our son from S.U.N.Y. Buffalo to be joining us in Boston and to be on the same flight
have already reserved rooms at the University Motor Inn as my sister
Mrs. H. Althea Warner Mandel, class of 1940, will be arriving on an afternoon flight,
and someone will pick her up in Dago.
Mr. and Mrs. Stewarts' offer to be host
and hostess is quite delightful and your
supreme offer to have us at the residence
diner is, of course, tempting. We would
appreciate seeing the Stewarts at the airport
but hope you will permit our small family a few minutes together at the meal.
We are scattered in several states, and
it is good to be together for an occasion or
than a funeral. We shall come to
My husband, who is vice president for Academic Affairs at Morgan State, has handled the delicate issue of being released by the president at Morgan State College for August 18. As a husband on executive teams we try to be very tactful on these unusual occasions. Our son (Ph.D. Mathematics, Lehigh University) is giving up a day of his vacation at the Rochester Folk Art Guild. My sister Althen, a day nursery school administrator in Cleveland, is coming from a term of community projects in Chicago.

Thank you again for these courtesies.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]
August 11, 1972

President Winthrop & Libby
Office of the President
Alumni Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04469

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the invitation to attend your graduation exercises August 18 in Memorial Gymnasium on the Orono campus, where Mrs. Beryl Warner Williams will be honored.

Please send me two tickets.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Louise Halfling
237 Gratiot St.
Boston, Mass 02119
Mr. Winthrop C. Libby  
President  
University of Maine  
Orono, Maine  

Dear President Libby:  

Thank you for the invitation to attend the graduation exercises on August 18. I certainly plan to be present for the conferring of an honorary degree on my sister, Mrs. Beryl Warner Williams. Please send me two tickets.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Althea Warner Mandel
August 11, 1972

Winthrop C. Libby, President
Alumni Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04473

Dear President Libby:

It is with pleasure that I learn the University of Maine is to award Beryl Williams the honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree on August 18th, and I am grateful for the invitation to be present.

Unfortunately I am already committed to two wedding services that same evening and will not be able to attend.

Because Beryl is one of Bangor and Maine’s finest churchwomen, serving the United Methodist Church in the Baltimore Conference in her local church, the Annual Conference, and the General Conference of the church, it is kind of you to wish to include a representative of her home church.

Since it will not be possible for me to attend, maybe you would wish to invite the District Superintendent of the Northern District of the Maine Annual Conference, the Reverend Gordon W. H. Buzza. I have taken the liberty of speaking to him about this, and he tells me if invited, he expects to be able to attend. His address is:

The Reverend Gordon W. H. Buzza
211 West Broadway
Bangor, Maine 04401 Phone 942-5332

Grace and Peace

James M. Young, Pastor, Grace Church

Grace Church
BANGOR, GRACE
193 Union Street

Bangor, First
110 South Park Street

Brewer, First
40 South Main Street
August 9, 1972

Mrs. Beryl W. Williams
4905 The Alameda
Baltimore, Maryland  21218

Dear Mrs. Williams:

Thanks for sending me a list of friends to whom announcements of your honorary degree should be sent. We are planning on you and Dr. Williams for our pre-ceremony dinner on the 18th. If you would like other close friends invited to the dinner we would, of course, welcome them. Perhaps, for example, your son may be in the area at this time. We would be delighted to have him and his family at the dinner but we should know who is coming so plans can be made.

Others receiving honorary degrees at this Commencement are: Gerald Warner Brace, a widely recognized author and teacher; Dr. Willie Lee Rose, a distinguished historian on the staff at Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and Joseph Fuchs, a violinist and faculty member at Juilliard.

Remember, Mrs. Libby and I would be pleased to have you spend the night of August 18th with us.

Sincerely,

Winthrop C. Libby
President

WCL:jc
August 9, 1972

On Friday evening, August 18, 1972, the University of Maine at Orono will be recognizing the contributions to our culture which have been made over the years by Beryl Warner Williams by conferring upon her the honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree. Mrs. Williams did her undergraduate work at the University of Maine and her professional career has brought credit to the University as well as to herself.

We wish to invite you to attend our graduation exercises scheduled for 7:45 p.m. on August 18 in our Memorial Gymnasium on the Orono campus. If it is possible for you to attend, would you please let me know so tickets can be sent to you.

Cordially,

Winthrop C. Libby
President
On Friday evening, August 18, 1972, the University of Maine at Orono will be recognizing the contributions to our culture which have been made over the years by Beryl Warner Williams by conferring upon her the honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree. Mrs. Williams did her undergraduate work at the University of Maine and her professional career has brought credit to the University as well as to herself.

We wish to invite you to attend our graduation exercises scheduled for 7:45 p.m. on August 18 in our Memorial Gymnasium on the Orono campus. If it is possible for you to attend, would you please let me know so tickets can be sent to you.

Cordially,

Winthrop C. Libby
President

Office of the President
Alumni Hall
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04473
4905 The Alameda
Baltimore, Maryland
August 5, 1972

President W. O. Libby
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04473

Dear President Libby:

The excitement generated by the coming event of August 18 has caused me to overlook the necessary amenities such as asking that my greeting be extended to Mrs. Libby. As with interest about another or others to be so honored, I enclosed information for your Office of Public Relations at Wayne to send necessary information. My facts are height (5'5½"), weight 175, caps size 7½.
August 2, 1972

Mrs. Lawrence Cutler
33 Grove Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

Dear Kay:

In accepting our tender of an honorary degree Beryl Warner Williams wrote, in part: "Having maintained within myself a lively dialog as to the meaning of the Maine experience and expanded vision of life as the result of pine trees, classrooms and people at the University of Maine..." That could be worked into a citation?

I am pleased you are willing and anxious (?) to author such a document. I know it will bring a fresh viewpoint to the occasion.

Sincerely,

Winthrop C. Libby
President

WCL:jc
August 2, 1972

Mrs. Beryl Warner Williams
Soper Library 112
Morgan State College
Baltimore, Maryland 21239

Dear Mrs. Williams:

We find that Commencement is a much more pleasant occasion for honorary degree recipients when they have a host and hostess during their stay on campus. Mr. and Mrs. Donald Stewart (Don and Ruth) will serve as the host couple for you and Mr. Williams when you are here in Orono on August 18th.

Incidentally when your travel plans are firm you may wish to let me know. The Stewart's would be pleased to meet planes if you travel by air. Furthermore, if you decide to stay in Orono overnight, Mrs. Libby and I would be delighted to have you stay with us or if you prefer we could make a reservation for you at a motel.

I am looking forward to seeing you again.

Sincerely,

Winthrop C. Libby
President

WCL:jc
cc: Donald Stewart
July 21, 1972

Mrs. Beryl Warner Williams  
Soper Library 112  
Morgan State College  
Baltimore, Maryland  21239

Dear Mrs. Williams:

We are very pleased, indeed, that you can be with us for our Commencement exercises on August 18, 1972. We trust that you will find the experience an enjoyable one.

Commencement exercises will be held at 7:45 p.m. in the Memorial Gymnasium. We would be happy to provide you with a cap and gown for the occasion but would need to know your height, weight and cap size.

Prior to the exercises a dinner will be held in Wells Commons at 5:30 p.m. We would like to invite you and Mr. Williams to join us there about 5:15 p.m.

If there are members of your family or close friends whom you would like invited to this event, please send me their names and addresses.

Our Public Information office would like to get out some advance publicity. Would you have a photograph that could be used for this purpose and returned to you?

I am enclosing an information sheet with detailed information which you may find helpful. If you have any questions, however, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Winthrop C. Libby  
President

WCL: jc  
Enclosure
Morgan State College  
Baltimore, Maryland 21239  

July 17, 1972  

President Winthrop C. Libby  
Alumni Hall  
University of Maine at Orono  
Orono, Maine 04473  

Dear President Libby:  

I accept the opportunity to receive the honorary degree, Doctor of Pedagogy, from the University of Maine the evening of August 18, 1972.  

Having maintained within myself a lively dialog as to the meaning of the Maine experience and the expanded vision of life as the result of pine trees, classrooms, and people at the University of Maine, I am unprepared to respond appropriately to your extraordinary letter received today. In a state of shock, I have not decided how to react, but surely there is appreciation.  

Recipients of honorary degrees, of course, should add luster to the University; and I, suspect, the chain of recent publicity that I have received in this northeast corridor of the country has not hindered the public relations the University deserves.  

Receiving a degree by action of the Board of Trustees upon the occasion of the mid-summer graduation, at the time when the majority of the recipients of degrees have been in the continuing education process, is a special honor. Can you believe that by August 18 I shall have completed our summer session here, completed materials including registration for our fall large extension program, completed the remnant of a vacation period in the Caribbean area, and shall be drawing a breath in Baltimore, even doing some writing as the September activities draw near. Hence, the state of being free to be in Orono on August 18 is relevant. I shall be fettered equally in a feeling of wonder at this turn of events and an expression of regret that there has not been time to do much more for humanity.  

Very sincerely yours,  

Beryl Warner Williams  

BWW:ems
Mrs. Beryl Warner Williams  
4905 Alameda  
Baltimore, Maryland 21218  

Dear Mrs. Williams:

It was indeed pleasant to see and hear you at the Bangor meeting of the NAACP this past Spring. Your reception at the meeting was warm and sincere.

On the evening of August 18, 1972 we will be holding our regular mid-summer Commencement exercises. On this occasion the University of Maine would like to confer upon you an honorary degree, Doctor of Pedagogy, in recognition of your splendid accomplishments in the fields of religion and education. The Board of Trustees has taken this action and authorized me to extend this invitation to you. I do hope you will be able to accept.

By tradition recipients of honorary degrees must be present in person to be so recognized. I certainly hope your schedule is such that you can arrange to be in Orono to receive the degree. Would you please let me know whether or not this is possible.

Most sincerely,

Winthrop C. Libby  
President

WCL:jc

cc: Mrs. JoAnne Magill
June 29, 1972

Chancellor Donald R. McNeil
228 Deering Avenue
Portland, Maine 04401

Dear Don:

I dislike asking for special favors but I am in the process of doing it here today. Our August Commencement (August 18) is only six weeks away and yet I'd like to nominate on the basis of committee recommendation two individuals for honorary degrees.

One of these is Joseph Fuchs, eminent violinist and distinguished artist, who is our Commencement "speaker" this year. He will speak with his violin by presenting a composition by Grieg. This is certainly a first for us. Mr. Fuchs has made a splendid and enviable reputation. He is an artist par excellence. He conducts our special Summer Music School which attracts people from all over the world. I recommend him for a Doctor of Fine Arts degree.

The other is Beryl Elizabeth Warner Williams, a graduate from here (B.A. in 1935, M.A. in 1940--both in Mathematics). She has had a most distinguished career for herself in the field of education and religion. I have known Mrs. Williams for some time and regard her very highly. She is a native of Bangor and a graduate of Bangor High School as well as from here. I recommend her for a Doctor of Pedagogy degree.

I enclose supporting biographical material on both and ask as a special favor that the Trustees be requested to take action on this by a telephone poll. I hope that perhaps Jo Magill might restrict the polling to the Executive Committee.

Sincerely,

Winthrop C. Libby
June 28, 1972

President Winthrop C. Libby
Alumni Hall
Campus

Dear Win,

Enclosed are biographical material and nominations for two candidates for honorary degrees. Both candidates have been reviewed favorably by the honorary degrees committee. In the case of Joe Fuchs, I was unable to contact Dean Carlson or George Davis, but all other members of the committee very strongly endorsed the nomination.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

John C. Mairhuber
Chairman

JCM:mp
Enclosures