

Mrs. Rozelia Anne Wiggins Cobb is being recognized by the Ocean City Juneteenth Organization with the Educational Leadership Award during the Inaugural Juneteenth Celebration & Brunch, June 17, 2017. Mrs. Cobb was the education cornerstone for so many children from Philadelphia to Ocean City. Her passion for education was not just limited to her classroom, but extended to every child she met. In and out of the schoolhouse, her wisdom, guidance, and love shaped the minds and souls of the whole community.

Mrs. Cobb was born on October 14, 1927 to Leonard L.T. Wiggins and Rozelia Anna Shaw Wiggins in Blackwood, N.J. Early educated in the Wesley Avenue School, she was later accepted into Bordentown Preparatory School. At the age of 17, she began attending post-secondary school at Glassboro State Teacher's College (now Rowan University) where she received her Bachelor's degree. Soon after graduation, her career began in the Atlantic City public school system. After a few years, she relocated to Philadelphia where her career excelled, becoming tenured with 20+ years of employment. In the early to mid 60's, Mrs. Cobb would spend summers working as a local chambermaid to stay humble. She moved back to Ocean City in 1965, and during the first few years, she made the commute to and from Philadelphia daily to teach. Although extremely well experienced and credentialed, she was at that time rejected for employment multiple times with the Ocean City public school system. She faithfully re-applied every school year, refusing to be denied the opportunity to teach in her hometown. Finally, after the turn of the decade, she was employed with the Ocean City Board of Education and assigned to the Intermediate School teaching in a newly formed department called "LRC" or "Learning Resource Center." There is reported success story after success story of her sometimes unconventional means and breakthrough methods of educating which were supported by unimaginable levels of learning, growth, and achievement of those who were privileged to end up in her classroom. She loyally, lovingly, and unforgettably taught there until her terminal diagnosis in 1990. Mrs. Cobb was also a church organist, director of three choirs, and faithful member of Macedonia United Methodist Church. She instituted, without grants or public funds, arts and crafts, black health & beauty and home nursing programs. Her flagship project was a homework center in which she recruited other local teachers to benevolently share their expertise, ensuring the opportunity of academic advancement for so many children. She was known to organize trips and finance them through fundraisers, private donations, and personal funds. She also founded the first celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday in Cape May County, which is still held each year. As an accomplished pianist, soloist, and speaker, Mrs. Cobb was often called on to render a vocal selection or play for local weddings, funerals, and other public and religious events. Her legacy leaves one daughter, three grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and three great, great, grandchild to date. Mrs. Cobb passed away on May 6, 1990 after a life of love and giving to so many.