Clotilde Bowen, MD to Be Honored at April 10 Event

The OSU College of Medicine will pay tribute to Clotilde Dent Bowen, MD (Class of 1947), in a ceremony to be held on April 10 from 4:00 until 4:30 pm in Meiling Hall Lobby.

Dr. Bowen was the first African-American female to graduate from Ohio State’s medical school, as well as the first African-American female physician in the U.S. Army. She once described herself as having lived a “blessed” life, due largely to her faith and her education at Ohio State.

Dr. Bowen, who worked her way through undergraduate and medical school at Ohio State, traces her belief in the power of education back to her grandparents who were born into slavery on a plantation outside of Atlanta, Georgia. As a young boy, her grandfather witnessed General Sherman’s destructive march through the South. After the Civil War, both her grandparents were granted freedom and an education. That gift to her grandparents – the opportunity to participate in a formal learning program – began a family legacy of improving lives through education.

To ensure that today’s young people have similar opportunities, Bowen established the Clotilde Dent Bowen M.D. Endowed Scholarship Fund for the College of Medicine in 2010 to support students with financial need who share Bowen’s passion to help others through medicine. She has been quoted as saying:

“Everything in my life started with going to OSU medical school and being the first black woman to graduate with a medical degree. From then on, it’s been a life that most people can’t imagine.”

Dr. Bowen’s list of accomplishments often begins with “first,” as in the first African-American female to earn the rank of colonel, to command a military hospital clinic and to be named chief of psychiatry in two Veterans Administration hospitals and two Army medical centers.
Dr. Bowen was honored with the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit in 1971 for her work to set up drug treatment centers and her efforts to lessen racial conflicts during the Vietnam War. She was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in 1974.

Dr. Bowen passed away on March 3, 2011.

View the Event Program: Clotilde Bowen Tribute Event Program.pdf

In honor of Dr. Bowen's life's work and inspiration to others, the College of Medicine has named a lectures series after her – The Clotilde D. Bowen, MD, Diversity Lecture Series. The inaugural lecture will be held on Thursday, April 12, from 12:30 until 2:00 pm in 234 Meiling Hall and will feature pioneering orthopedic surgeon Augustus A. White III, MD, PhD. The title of his presentation is “Diversity and Sensitivity Training-It's Importance In Education.” Find out more: ClotildeBowenDiversityLecture.pdf

Clotilde Dent Bowen, MD Her Memory Lives On Dr. Bowen was the first African-American female to graduate from The OSU College of Medicine and the first female physician in the United States Army. She was the first African-American female to earn the rank of colonel in the U.S. Army, to command a military hospital clinic, and to be named Chief of Psychiatry in two Veterans Administration hospitals and two Army medical centers. She was awarded the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit in 1971 for her work in setting up drug treatment centers and for her efforts in lessening racial conflicts during the Vietnam War. She was also awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in 1974. Dr. Bowen established the Clotilde Dent Bowen MD Endowed Scholarship Fund in the College of Medicine to support students who had financial need and who shared her passion to help others through medicine. She is quoted as saying, “Everything in my life started with going to OSU medical school and being the first black woman to graduate with a medical degree. From then on, it’s been a life that most people can’t imagine.” Dr. Bowen passed away on March 3, 2011.
Dr. Clotilde Dent Bowen
Colonel U.S. Army Retired
March 20, 1923 - March 3, 2011
"Been There, Done That"