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## **Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs Announces 2021 Rowland Hill Award Honoree**

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs is pleased to announce its honoree for the 2021 Rowland Hill Award. This recognition is a lifetime achievement award bestowed annually to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to philately in the Southeastern United States. Because the pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2021 Southeastern Stamp Expo, the award was deferred so that the ceremony can take place at the 2022 Expo in late January.

The Board is proud to recognize the late Dr. Esper G. Hayes as its 2021 honoree. Hayes becomes the second honoree to receive the award posthumously. Further, she is the second female philatelist to win the award, and the first person of color to do so.

The story of Dr. Hayes' journey in philately has practically become legend. She attended a stamp show in 1971 and realized that she and the great Jesse Owens, at the show signing autographs, were the only African Americans present in the room. Their conversation turned to the topic of how to celebrate the accomplishments of Black Americans, and Dr. Hayes promised the great sprinter that she would work to help African Americans "take pride in what they do, and what they have accomplished."

After Owens' passing in 1980, Dr. Hayes set about organizing a group that would work toward driving interest in stamp collecting within the America's Black community, and work to study the depiction of African Americans on stamps. She founded the Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections, using the acronym ESPER in her honor. Dr. Hayes managed the society through its infancy, and then worked to promote the society until her passing in 2019.

As an academic, Dr. Hayes understood well the educational value of stamp collecting. She also understood that the hobby as a whole could greatly benefit from more diversity, and she worked toward that goal. Today, ESPER as a philatelic society boasts 300 members worldwide, who work collectively to promote the collection and study of African Americans on stamps. Their award-winning journal *Reflections* is published four times a year, and ESPER members can be found attending stamp shows all over the United States. The diverse nature of ESPER's membership is a tribute to Dr. Hayes' tireless work to bring about more diversity in the hobby of stamp collecting.

Dr. Hayes received many awards throughout her life for her work in philately, but it was her induction into the American Philatelic Society's Hall of Fame in 2021 that cemented her place among the greatest contributors to philately.

"She was an amazing and inspirational person, " said Walter Faison, past-president of ESPER. "She encouraged me to get involved with other philatelic organizations and also to get my kids involved with stamp collecting. I remember fondly her words: 'Teach your children that they have a right to be proud of whom they are and that they are a part of history and that is something that no one can take away from them.'"

Current ESPER President Dr. Warachal E. Faison, reflecting on the award and its significance to ESPER members, shared "Thanks so much to the leadership of the Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs for recognizing Dr. Hayes with the Rowland Hill Award. She was a champion of hope, pride, commitment, and celebration for not only the members of ESPER, but also the community-at-large."

In her personal life, Dr. Hayes earned a Masters Degree and Doctorate in Social Work from Yeshiva University, and would later work as a Professor at Seton Hall University where she taught Human Growth and Development and Social Policy. She would later be awarded an honorary doctorate at Seton Hall due to her work with students. For the latter part of her life she made her home in North Carolina, and was a treasured member of the philatelic community of the Southeastern United States.

Dr. Esper Hayes passed away at age 84 on January 11, 2019.

Dr. Hayes' daughter, Michelle Bullock, will accept the award in her honor at the Awards Banquet of the Southeastern Stamp Expo on January 29, 2022.

### **Past Winners of the Rowland Hill Award**

- 2005 Nancy B. Clark
- 2006 William H. Waggoner
- 2007 Lt. Col. (Ret.) Robert C. Effinger Jr.
- 2008 Ed Jackson
- 2010 Douglas N. Clark, Ph.D.
- 2013 Bruce Roberts, Ph.D.
- 2014 Frank J. Crown
- 2015 Charles J. O'Brien III
- 2016 Dr. Thomas W. Broadhead
- 2017 Roger P. Quinby
- 2018 John T. Burnett
- 2019 Tony L. Crumbley
- 2020 Dr. Harvey Teal

## **About the Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs**

The Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs is a registered non-profit organization representing 21 stamp clubs and societies in Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Maryland and Alabama which pool resources for a common goal of promoting and supporting stamp collecting activities and philatelic education in the southeastern region. Principal among these activities is the sponsorship and management of the annual Southeastern Stamp Expo, an APS World Series of Philately stamp show. The 2022 Expo will be held January 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton Atlanta Northeast, 5993 Peachtree Industrial Blvd. Peachtree Corners, Georgia.

## **About the Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections**

The Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections, whose initials spell its founder's name, Dr. Esper Hayes, was organized in 1988 and is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the collecting of stamps and philatelic material depicting people and events related to the African Diaspora and to encouraging and supporting the interest and participation of Black people in all aspects of philately.