

The Obituary

## Willard S. Holt, Jr., M.D.

**Willard Sloan Holt, Jr.**, the only child of the late Willard S. Holt, Sr. and Laura Dean Brown, was born in Greensboro, NC on December 24, 1928.

Willard attended public schools in Greensboro and graduated from Dudley High School in 1945. Upon graduation, he enrolled at Hampton University in Hampton, VA where he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Science in 1949. He moved to Winton, NC where he taught math and science at C. S. Brown High School. He also coached the boy's basketball team there, earning the honor of All Conference Coach of the Year. While in Winton, he became a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity. He also met and fell in love with his wife to be, Vivian White, from Elizabeth City, NC, who was also a teacher at the same school.

While in Winton, he was inducted into the army and was stationed at Fort Jackson, SC where he rose to the rank of Sergeant during the Korean conflict.

A broken collarbone suffered during an intramural football game prevented him from being shipped overseas with the rest of his unit. Of all of the soldiers in his unit who did go overseas, none survived.

While in the service, he and Vivian were married August 9, 1953 and have lovingly remained so for forty-seven years. To their union were born a son, Willard, III and a daughter, Kimberly Joy.

Upon being honorably discharged, Willard began pursuing his dream of becoming a medical doctor. He obtained a Masters Degree in Physiology from the University of Illinois in 1954. After working as a teacher for a year in Washington, DC, Willard was accepted at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN graduating in 1960.

He did his internship at St. Joseph's Hospital in South Bend, IN and was named Intern of the Year. From there, he was accepted as a resident in anesthesiology at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI. At both St. Joseph's and Henry Ford, he was the first Black in each program and did an outstanding job at both hospitals. He was

invited to remain at Henry Ford Hospital as an anesthesiologist. From there, Willard began a long and distinguished medical career at St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital in Pontiac, MI. He later practiced at Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital in Detroit, MI where he became the Chairman of the Anesthesia Department, managing a group of twenty anesthesiologists which served several local hospitals. Eventually, he was elected President of the Medical Staff. Again, he was the first Black to hold those positions.

Willard, or "Doc" as he had become affectionately known, also became involved in numerous business ventures and discovered the entrepreneur within. To the very end, he was actively and passionately involved with his medical group, businesses and community organizations.

These activities notwithstanding, Willard still found ample time and energy for his family and friends. He was a devoted husband and father and a proud grandfather. He enjoyed rich friendships with all types of people from all walks of life. Those who knew him would testify to his generosity and compassion. If you had a problem or needed advice, you could always go to Doc and find a friendly ear and a sincere word. He was a lover of people and a true friend in both word and deed.

Willard was a member of Hartford Memorial Baptist Church and a committed Christian. He read the Bible regularly and took great comfort in his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Willard lived life to the fullest. He has left us with many memories of devotion and love as a legacy of diligence, sacrifice and excellence. We who love him, and have been loved by him, including his wife, children, grandchildren, relatives, and his many, many friends thank God for the time he graced all of our lives. His touch upon our lives has left us all better and stronger individuals.

Willard is survived by his wife, Vivian Holt; son, Willard S. Holt, III; daughter, Kimberly J. Holt-May and her husband, Owen May; grandchildren, Jonathan Douglas Holt, Aaron Sloan Holt, Taylor Nicole Holt May, and Joshua Alexander Thomas May; two uncles, Richard Dean and Quincy Holt; two aunts, Lucinda Dean Solomon and Trudy Holt Wilson; many cousins, other relatives and friends.