



Alabama New South Coalition

"A Change for the Better in Our Lifetime"

Montgomery County Chapter

November 14, 1995

46 E Patton Avenue

Montgomery, AL 36105 Ms. Lani Ashner

(334) 288-5754

Citizen of the Year Award Committee

Post Office Box 1000

Montgomery, Alabama 36101-1000

Dr. Gwen Patton
President

Dear Ms. Ashner:

James Wilson, Esquire
Vice President

Since my youth, I have know Mrs. Idessa (Williams) Redden. In those days, the youth called her Mrs. Idessa. She was a genuine friend and mentor to youth who took time with us to listen to our concerns, guide us in a positive manner and urge us to live a life of service to our community.

Milton Bethune
Treasurer

She was a hairdresser at that time and her shop also served as a meeting place to discuss the state of affairs in our community and city. Her beautiful home was always opened to people and I partook of many meals there.

Mrs. Connie Bethune
Secretary

Torrey Young
Ezell W. Smith
Youth Coordinators

The successful Montgomery Bus Protest in which she played a prominent role was over. Young people were anxious to keep the Movement alive forever. Mrs. Idessa and her friends were conducting citizenship classes to help people learn how to fill out the literacy test, the pre-requisite to become a registered voter, and then take them to the registrar's office. This work was viewed as adult work.

Mrs. Ida J. Watkins
Parliamentarian

I worried Mrs. Idessa to no end to be a part of this work. Much of the work required driving to various neighborhoods and to the registrar's office. I couldn't drive. Much of the work was done at night while I had to be at home doing homework. Nevertheless, I persisted, or should I say pestered, Mrs. Idessa to let me do this work. Finally, she relented and allowed me to ride with her, to canvass neighborhoods and to carry leaflets to various communities and churches. Thanks to Mrs. Idessa, I, along with other youth, became the legs of the Movement, walking the full breath of Montgomery's Westside.

While riding with Mrs. Idessa, she would talk about the purpose and meaning of life. She stressed the importance of having principles, convictions and fearlessly standing up for what is right. She would say, "If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything."

I admired her steadfastness, her firmness and her "positiveness." She always carried forth on her decisions.

The greatest gift that Mrs. Idessa gave me was religious understanding and ecumenical respect. She was/is a devout Catholic. Her presence in the Movement dominated with Protestants exemplified the true meaning of Eucharist... where all of God's children can sit at the welcoming table to be served after giving service to His children. And, SERVICE is, indeed, the hallmark of Mrs. Idessa as she continues to this day to serve as a servant to people and to our God.

Sincerely, Gwendolyn M. Patton

When there were very few blacks registered as voters in Montgomery County I conducted registration drives and voter education classes in my home. To add in my services I obligated myself to attending workshop on voter education in Frogmores, S.C., Mt. Eagle, Tenn., and Dorchester Center in Mactosh Ga. I served as chairman of the voter registration for Montgomery Improvement Assoc. from 1964 to 1968. I worked with the Barristers for the same issue. The club members were black lawyers of the city.

I was supporting the cause of brotherhood even before I understood it to be social work. I have done countless community work for Montgomery and Lowndes Counties. One outstanding case being that I raised funds through the radio and newspaper media to obtain care of a 14 year old youth from the Snowdes community suffering from rheumatic fever. By having her placed in Jackson's Hospital in March 1957 for the necessary attention.

In 1968 I worked in the Federal Project called FEED. In 1969 I did volunteer work with the Headstart Program and was hired in April of 1970 as a teacher's Aide. In September 1970 I was transferred to Social Services this being my most suitable work.

I enrolled in typing and basic education classes in 1971 at St. Jude Catholic School. In January of 1972 I attended a class at Alabama Christian to prepare myself for the GED Test also I attended several basic education classes at Bell St. NSC center under Mrs. Loman. I passed the GED Test and passed on March 12, 1973 and August 12, 1973. I took a course at AHN in Early Childhood Development in 1973 and passed.

I am a great believer in the song that the late Sam Cook wrote "You Can Make It If You Try". When the good Lord calls me from my earthly duties I can truthfully say that I have done my duty for my fellowman as God has desired for me to do as a Christian.

Mrs Idessa Williams

1002 Bragg Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36108
November 21, 2001

TO: The Pastor of Church of God Penecostal Church
Members, vistors, and friends

RE: Loving and fond – and cherished memories of Mrs. Idessa Redden

Mrs. Redden is affectionately called "Dess" by me , her classmate, next door neighbor and very close friend. I have many memories of her, I could go on and on, but I am going to try to share only a few of the thoughts I have about her. She has always been energetic, vibrant, and active – which accounts for her enormous work and following with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr . during the Civil Rights Movement in our city.

When we were in school, Dess played basketball on the Girls' Basketball Team. She has a kind and giving heart and is always going around helping somebody. She and I Have lived in our homes side –by-side for more than 50 years.

Since she has stayed on this street her sister Charity lived in Hope Hull where Dess Discovered a little girl who had a heart condition. Dess had to hold the back of the girl in order for her to sleep. They got the child to the hospital, later found a lady who lived on Adeline Street in Montgomery to care for her until she was able to go back home. I was well into my adult-life when I lost my sight. Dess was a big help around my house, and beside that she bought me flowers.

Another story which stuck out in my mind, was just how humane and caring she is about animals. Recently she came to the aid of a dog which was tied-up, spent most of the time barking and was not being taken care of, Idessa fixed that situation. In the past she got a stray cat, went out and bought cat food for it. That cat ate its belly full and then it left. But you know what , that cat figured out it had not been too smart! That cat went back to Dess' house. (smile)

She loves flowers she is always digging around in her flower bed. She often shares these with me. Sometimes, she looks over in my yard and say to me, "you don't do nothing to your flowers and they always come – up with pretty blossoms and blooms". (smile)

She's always buying shoes for children who need them and other things also. I can tell much more about unwed teenage mother who was expecting at the same time the mother of that particular teenager is expecting Dess helps out. God bless you.

God bless you, Dess, I love you and I am so proud and happy for you today

*Mrs. Blanche Saffold
via MCM*

Ladies of Charity
St. Jude Catholic Church



To Our Dear Sister, Idessa Redden,

"Charity well becomes the Christians who bear the name Ladies of Charity. This virtue makes it a duty to love not only God but also our neighbor that we find the proof of our love of God.....Let us love in deed and in truth and not merely talk about it." Manual-Ladies of Charity

These words describe the greatest of the principal virtues of the Ladies of Charity. You have for many years brought these words to life in your ability to champion the causes of the poor whether it was economic poverty, social poverty resulting from injustice, or a poorness in spirit. We can recount many times your being the voice of wisdom and caution reminding us that we exist to serve and not be served. Of course, we dared not question what was clearly and profoundly God-sent direction.

You have a vision of inclusiveness. However, you realize that inclusiveness and leadership come at a price for all of us but especially for those of your people who have been blessed. You have repeatedly witnessed that they must think and act "out of the box" to be empowered and to empower others. In our Ladies of Charity, you have consistently been the high performer for our organization's projects and always challenged us to change our methodology in order to maximize results.

The Ladies of Charity's Prayer for Mutual Charity exclaims, "According to the gifts and talents that each has received from you, Heavenly Father, help us to share them with others as good stewards of your manifold graces.... And in helping others, let it be with the strength which You furnish through the Holy Spirit; that in all things You may be honored, through Christ Jesus, our Lord." As a Christian, you have held these words in your heart. You are exemplary of one who witnesses that none of your accomplishments happened without or outside of God.

It is with great love that we congratulate you, our dear sister, in having a visible testimony of your life in the day care center being dedicated in your name. To you we say, "by the Lord has this been done."

Essie Smith
President



Montgomery
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

MR. TOM GARDNER, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 20, 2001

1066 ADAMS AVENUE
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104

Dear Mrs. Redden:

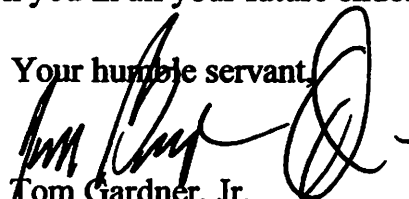
You are true humanitarian and it is my sincere desire that the naming of this facility in your honor will allow your name and your legacy to live forever. I truly regret that I am unable to be with you physically today, but know that you are in my thoughts. I assure you that this program to dedicate our new Infants and Toddlers facility in your honor, have my whole-hearted support and my spirit will always be present in your well-doings. May your life and your legacy continue to serve as an inspiration for the young boys and girls of this City, County and State.

One great philosopher said, *"If we appear to be tall, it is because we stand on the shoulders of giants."* Thank you for your shoulder and in my memory you will always stand among the giants. We are who we are today because of your struggle yesterday.

On the behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the entire Community Action Program, to you we say thanks for a job well done.

May God continue to bless and strengthen you in all your future endeavors. I remain

Your humble servant,



Tom Gardner, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer

P. S. Call me we'll have lunch later.



PHONE 334-263-3474

Montgomery

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

MR. TOM GARDNER, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1066 ADAMS AVENUE
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104

November 20, 2001

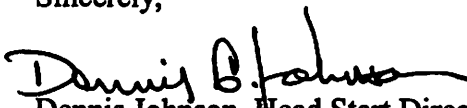
Dear Mrs. Idessa Redden,

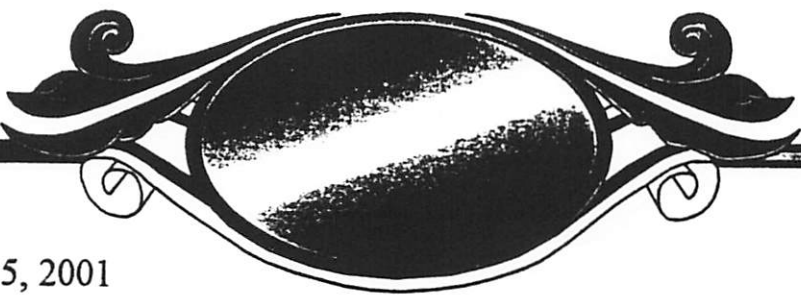
On behalf of the Montgomery Community Action Agency, we would like to congratulate you on your contributions to the Head Start program and the community. It is truly an honor to have one of our Head Start sites named after you.

You have assisted our agency in reaching our goals and objectives, and that of providing quality services to children and families. You have shown great concern for the needs of the community and addressed the needs through your continuous efforts to educate individuals and make them appreciate their surroundings.

Today is indeed your special day. May God continue to bless you in every way.

Sincerely,


Dennis Johnson, Head Start Director



November 15, 2001

Dear Mrs. Idessa,

Thank you for recognizing and nurturing (along with my Foster-Patton Families, Mrs. Hazel Gregory, Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Smith, Mrs. Jeriline Bethune, "Sweetie Girl," Judge Charles Conley and Coach Rufus A. Lewis) my thirst for freedom when I was a young girl in the mid 1950s.

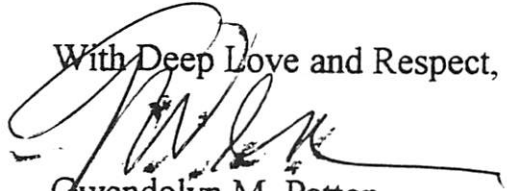
Thank you for allowing me (no doubt as a pest who constantly asked you "when do we get our freedom?") to travel with you and to learn from you community-organizing skills. What I learned from you fortified my sense of self-worth, self-confidence and self-criticism as the foundation to serve others.

Thank you for always being there for young people, from our early days in our "stride towards freedom" to this very day when we constantly call upon you to motivate young people to take up the challenge to continue the legacy.

Thank you for always being "on ready," from generation to generation in linking our lifetimes in our quest for freedom.

Thank you for being my mentor for over 47 years and for encouraging me to "hang in there and to hang tough." **Democracy will work for all of us. We will be first-class citizens. We will enjoy the full complement of constitutional rights guaranteed to all USA citizens.**

With Deep Love and Respect,



Gwendolyn M. Patton



EMANCIPATION ASSOCIATION OF MONTGOMERY

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November 19, 2001

Mr. W. W. Steele
1062 Adams Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

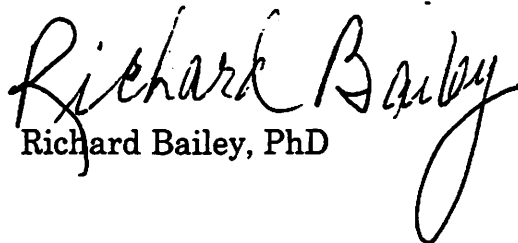
Dear Mr. Steele:

As president of the Emancipation Association of Montgomery, I wish to add our organization to chorus of applause you have received for your decision to name and dedicate an early childhood center for Mrs. Idessa Redden, who is uniquely qualified for this honor. She knows the value of early childhood training. Born on Montgomery's Westside, she was reared by great-grandparents until the last one died when she was 12. An uncle then took care of her. Mrs. Redden never saw her own father until she was 12. Yet, the records clearly show that she persevered and was able to attend school and become an asset to her community.

If we measure success by the depth from which we ascend in life, Mrs. Redden easily becomes a role model for all us. Yet, the true measure of Mrs. Redden's life is her modesty. Few people have achieved so much and remained as modest as she has.

We all should pause on this day to congratulate Mrs. Redden for her achievement. Then we should say thanks to the Montgomery Community Action Agency for identifying Idessa Redden for reaching such a noble milestone. Because of the endeavors of each of you, Montgomery has become a much better place to call home.

Sincerely,


Richard Bailey, PhD

Life is precious, so make the most of it. Hold your head up high, because you deserve this precious moment. Through the midst of hardships, a blessing can still be told. Achieve all you can during your lifetime. God will bless you with opportunities richly divine.

Believe and have faith in all you do. Depend on God to guide you through. We are nothing without God on our side. He should always be our Leader and forever our Guide. Never doubt the power of prayer, because miracles do come true.

This is truly a miraculous occasion



W. W. Steele,
Family & Community Partnership Manager/MCAC

We never know why we're faced with challenges of today, but we do know that being a child of God, He'll never lead you astray.

I pray you'll be strengthened from day-to-day; By remembering God's word on how He'll always make a way.

As you approach another journey that you have never traveled before,

God is right by your side to lift you up more.

Just remember God loves you.

Be proud of who you are, not discouraged at what you are not.

Your name shall forever be remembered in the "Head Start" family.



Lixxie J. Hardie,

Assistant Education Manager/MCCE

The many stories that were told to me about your courage and dedication to help all mankind, inspired me to write words of support in your memoirs. A very strong, courageous picture of you was painted by your many friends.

Today I will meet a strong, courageous and dedicated woman. I say to you "No matter what trials and tribulations you have faced, God loves you."



Paulette Moncrief,
Education Manager
Montgomery Community Action Head Start

As you know, no words can describe the bond you share with the Terrell family. We congratulate you on this most memorable occasion. You are blessed in such a special way. God has allowed you to be present on this honorable day. You have spreaded your love and joy in so many ways. You have brighten up the world with your beautiful smiling face.

Trials and tribulations have made you strong. You trusted in God to make you strong. You believed in God in all your ways. For He is worthy of all the praise. Lean on Him from morning to night. You had faith in Him to make things right. You will always be a part of the Terrell family.

Love

Diana Terrell

&

Family

*Some people are born to spread
love, joy, and peace.*

*In a world of special people
who have so much to give,
touch others' lives
with each day that they live.*

*In a world of special people,
there's no one quite like you-
May the love, joy, and peace that
you give return to you
in the spirit given today and all
year through.*

*Thanks Mrs. Redden for being a
special part of our family. May
God's light continue to illuminate
in your spirit.*

*The Davis Family
Henry, Angela, Danielle,
Wesley, and Brian
St. Jude Catholic Church*

Mrs. Idessa Redden

A few years ago, I nominated you as one of "Montgomery's Ten Women of Achievement" and you were one of the ten chosen to receive the honor. You were very surprised because you never knew that you were my "Hero". To God be the glory for the good things you have done.

I am so happy that Montgomery Community Action is observing and recognizing the charitable works you have done for so many families in need. This is a Special Day for a Special Lady.

*You are one of those wonderful people
Whose gentle and heartwarming ways
Have done so much to bring joy to others
You brightened their lives and their days.
You are someone important and special
To so many hearts that you have touched
You've always been a thoughtful and caring person
Who will always be loved very much!*

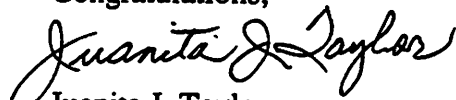
This is a beautiful day and a special occasion celebrating the dedication of the "Idessa Redden Early Childhood Development Center" – no other words could sound better.

I present this letter to you –

a wonderful woman who is greatly admired
from one of the many people whom you have inspired.

"You are my Hero"

Congratulations,


Juanita J. Taylor

NOVEMBER 19, 2001

DESSA,

That's the name I knew as a little girl growing up when Mom and Bertha Carter talked about you and when we were around you at the gatherings. You stood tall in my image as a black woman during my high school and collage days when the Civil Rights movement was taking place. The name Odessa Redden made me feel proud because I knew you as "Dessa"; I felt like I had a personal connection with you. You have had an impact on my life and I'm sure other black women so I would like to dedicate this poem to you.

I AM AN AFRICAN AMERICAM WOMAN

What makes me strong?
My heritage
What makes me weak?
My fears
What makes me whole?
My God
What keeps me standing?
My Faith
What makes me compassionate?
My selflessness
What makes me honest?
My integrity
What sustains my mind?
My quest for knowledge
What teaches me all lessons?
My mistakes
What lifts my head?
My pride
What if I can't go on?
Not an option
What makes me victorious?
My courage to climb
What makes me competent?
My confidence
What makes me beautiful?
My everything
What makes me a woman?
My heart
What empowers me?
I do

WHO AM I? I AM AN AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN

Joyce Gordon Collins
m.c.a.c.

450 Piedmont Avenue, #1108
Atlanta, Georgia 30308
November 25, 2001

Mrs. Idessa Redden
c/o W.W. Steele
1062 Adams Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Dear Dessie:

Congratulations!!! Reagan and I are very sorry that we are unable to attend the dedicatory ceremony of the Idessa Redden Early Childhood Development Center.

What a well-deserved honor and tribute to a lifetime spent caring and protecting others. Your work with children and in the Civil Rights Movement has been an example to us all. You have touched so many lives in such truly wonderful ways. We are all very lucky that you cared and we are blessed to have you in our lives.

With love,


Robyn & Reagan Crittenden

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

MARY LEE OLIVER

November 14, 2001

Dear Dessa,

Congratulations and sincere best wishes on your special day. Your compassion and concern for the Montgomery Community speaks for itself. You extended help to the needy, listening ear to those who were hurting and contributed to many charitable organizations.

May God Bless you with a long and healthy life as you continue in the work you love.

Your cousin,

Mary Lee Oliver
Mary Lee Oliver

3541 SUWANEE DRIVE
MONTGOMERY, AL

November 5, 2001

Dear Mrs. Redden,

"Congratulations!" On having this honor bestowed upon you. I cannot think of any one that deserves it the most.

- As I glance back to the 60's when you and I first met, it never crossed my mind that our lives would become so entwined. Our lives have been so similar in many ways. Putting others before ourselves, reaching out to help the poor and needy and those that were less fortunate than we were. When we began to work in the Civil Right Movement, our main goal was to get black people registered to vote so they could help make a better life for our children (black boys and girls) and better paying jobs for the adults. We went through hell to get there but with God we made it through.

I am sure your heart aches just as mine does to see such unappreciative people today. They are all about self, wanting to be famous and never done anything, only going by what they read or heard.

It has been a real pleasure to have been associated with you. I often think about the time we integrated the John Marshall. At that time it was Richmond, Virginia's largest hotel during the SCLC 7th Convention.

Our paths didn't stop there. We were reunited with Head Start. Our mission continued helping and caring about others due to the social conditions. I feel that God placed us in the positions we held to be of more service. Because of your kind heart and generosity, many lives have been touched and enriched because you are one of God's instrument.

I am sure at times you had some of the same feelings I had, just give it up. We prayed and God gave us his guidance and his strength and thank God we made it. By his grace and mercy, we would overcome. Again, I say I don't know of anyone else who deserves this honor more than you.

We will continue to pray for each other. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Remember: "We Shall Overcome."

Your friend and Sister in Christ,

Carrie G. Peavy
Carrie G. Peavy

635 W. Jeff Davis Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama
November 9, 2001

My dear Mrs. Redden,

I recalled two memorable events when I was directed to write a letter to you as a part of the celebration of the dedication of a childhood center in your honor. I remember you as an excellent beautician and an outstanding social worker. I remember you as a very strong member of the Montgomery Improvement Association.

I found you to be a very considerate and caring person who never sought recognition. You have that innate desire to help people. As a field worker during the CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT you encouraged Blacks to register and to vote.

You were a strong supporter of the MOVEMENT'S leaders. You worked beside them. You walked with them. You marched with them. You prayed with them.

No one can dispute the fact that you played a vital role in the MOVEMENT. No one can dispute the fact that you are truly an unsung hero.

Therefore, it is with much jubilation and many best wishes that I congratulate you on this day, November 15, 2001, upon being honored by the Montgomery Community Action Agency in its dedicatory ceremony of the IDESSA REDDEN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER.

YOU DESERVE IT!

Respectfully yours,

Evelyn Bolden Flowers

(Mrs.) Evelyn Bolden Flowers

924 Hill Street
Montgomery, Alabama
November 10, 2001

Dear Idessa,

Words. Words. Words.

Immediately upon reading the invitation from the Montgomery Community Action Agency to attend--in your honor--the dedicatory ceremony of the IDESSA REDDEN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, the following words came to mind which, I think, are characteristic of you:

I--Ideal. Intelligent. Impressionable. Innovative.
D--Daring. Darling. Distinguished. Demure.
E--Earnest. Enthusiastic. Effectual. Eminent.
S--Sweet. Supportive. Serious. Spiritual.
S--Sympathetic. Strong. Selfless. Straightforward.
A--Adorable. Amiable. Active. Attentive.

R--Reliable. Remarkable. Renowned. Religious. Respected.
E--Energetic. Elegant. Exceptional. Endearing.
D--Dedicated. Determined. Devout. Diplomatic.
D--Dependable. Dear. Devoted. Discriminatory.
E--Eminent. Eager. Eloquent. Eligible.
N--Noteworthy. Noble. Nice. NON-VIOLENT!

To you, Idessa, I extend my warmest congratulations, and may those whose lives you have touched be ever mindful of the GLORY of GOD.

A life-long friend,



Dorothy Jarrett Lee

*Mrs. Acquanetta Gaston Poole
921 Busch Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36108
(334) 264-8443*

November 14, 2001

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Mrs. Idessa Redden for the last ten years. We worked together as Family Service Workers for Montgomery County Head Start. I found each experience spent with Mrs. Redden to be extremely positive. She exemplifies what I believe to be essential features of a great leader.

One of Mrs. Redden's main strengths was being a problem solver. She would help resolve the real problems the community faced. She often met with some of Montgomery's executives to address and analyze these problems and emerged with funds, food, and other resources the community desperately needed.

Mrs. Redden's true value went beyond the traditional role of a Family Service Worker. She was also involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Mrs. Redden's unique combination of problem-solving skills, communication skills, and people skills is why I look at her as a mentor and an inspiration. I commend the Montgomery Community Action Agency for the wise decision to name a Head Start Center in honor of Mrs. Redden.

Respectfully,

Acquanetta Gaston Poole
Acquanetta Gaston Poole

+

Dear "Miss Jess,"

It did my heart good to read about the good news of the name for the Development Center. If anyone deserves such a honor it is you. Congratulations!

We know how hard you worked, and what a beautiful job you did. You did it all — not knowing that this day would come.

We are so proud!

May God and His angels continue to bless and keep you.

Love ya!
The Joy Family

Nov. 10, 2001

Dear Idessa,

Ever since I met you in April, 1965, you have been an inspiration to me. You were an important leader in the Civil Rights Movement in Montgomery, where we met. Later you spent many years working with needy children and their families. You have devoted your life to helping others, and it is very fitting that the Early Childhood Development Center is named in your honor. It is a privilege to know you.

Love,

Jan Kiley



November 12, 2001

W. W. Steele
1062 Adams Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

Dear Mr. Steele:

It is with great joy that I write you this day. The thought of a child care facility bearing the name of one of Montgomery's finest citizens and my lifetime second mother has me truly excited.

This is a woman of character, drive, commitment and above all integrity. She should be researched so that we can all get a better understanding of her genetic makeup. If we can get the next generations to use her as a role model, then our future will surely be brighter.

I love this woman and I'm very proud to be able to congratulate her on this day of recognition. I Love You Dessie!!!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roderick L. Crittenden', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Roderick L. Crittenden
Associate Broker



TONY HARRISON, President • JULIUS L. CHAMBERS, Past President
MARY FRANCES DERFNER, Vice-President • STEVE SUITZ, Executive Director • JOSEPH W. WATKINS, Treasurer
75 MARIETTA STREET, N.W. ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303 (404) 522-6786

August 20, 1985

Mrs. Idessa Redden
1010 Bragg
Montgomery, AL 36108

Dear Mrs. Redden:

During 1983, you were interviewed by the Southern Regional Council for a proposed series of radio documentary broadcasts about the civil rights history of Atlanta, Columbia, Jackson, Little Rock and Montgomery.

The interviews were conducted by Worth Long and/or Randall Williams under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Work on this project is continuing although it may be another year or so before any of the documentaries are actually produced and broadcast.

I have enclosed here a copy of the transcribed remarks you made during the interview we conducted with you. We want you to have this copy for your personal files and also in hopes that you will read it and then contact us if you are reminded of other people who should also be interviewed, of other stories which need to be told to make the record clear, or of any matters which ought to be clarified or corrected.

In due time, we will send you a copy of the script(s) which pertain to the city about which you were interviewed.

Worth and I hope that you are well.

Sincerely,

Randall Williams

Reply to:

400 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

Mrs. Idessa Redden is a very dear and dedicated friend of mine. She and I have been friends for forty years. I think of her as a "people person". The concern she has for people is overwhelming and this attribute shows through her unselfishness by helping them in anyway she can. Her untiring effort goes beyond concern; she shows this by providing transportation for those who need it, such as going to the doctor. Also finding shelter for the homeless.

She was employed with Community Action for 30 years where she worked as a social worker. A very fitting job for a person who has so much compassion.

At an early age, Idessa, showed an interest in how people were treated. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. only heightened her interest when she heard him speak at the Holt Street Baptist Church during the Civil Rights movement. This prompted her to become an active volunteer and work with Dr. King whenever she could.

Mrs. Enest Lee Coty

**"With God behind you and His arms beneath you,
you can face whatever is before you".**

Dear Idessa,

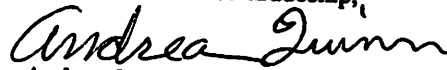
How appropriate that you have been honored by the naming of an Early Childhood Center after you. You have always loved children and looked out for them and have been an extra aunt and grandmother for every child in the community for longer than most of us can remember. No one has worked harder to make a success of Head Start than you have, and no one has put more pressure on the established powers of the community to do right by the children than you have.

We hope you can keep children entertained and instructed for many years with funny, scary, and heroic stories about the dangers you have passed and the victories you have won for your community. It will be a proud thing many generations to come for the little children of today to know you. They will amaze their own and their adopted grandchildren and great-grandchildren by telling them that they actually knew and had their noses wiped and listened to the stories of the great Idessa Redden, the community leader for whom the Early Childhood Development Center is named. It will be exactly the type of immortality that you have long deserved.

We recall from many years back how you welcomed people like us from all over the country to help register voters, to help get the laws that would make your community an effective political power. We are proud to have been part of the fight against the fear and hatred of those who tried to keep you and your community powerless. We recall your stories of the bus boycott and the Selma march and those who were imprisoned or died to get the rights that are taken for granted today. It is our proudest boast that we are a part of a few of those stories and that we have been part of your circle of friends and that your extended family had become our extended family. Whenever we were scared or discouraged and wanted to give up, we could think of you and keep on keeping on. I am sure your entire community does the same.

We know you will keep on taking care of the people you love and that we have come to love, and that you will keep on making life difficult for the lazy and selfish whom we know you will teach how to do right.

With love and in comradeship,



Andrea & Quinn Brisben
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