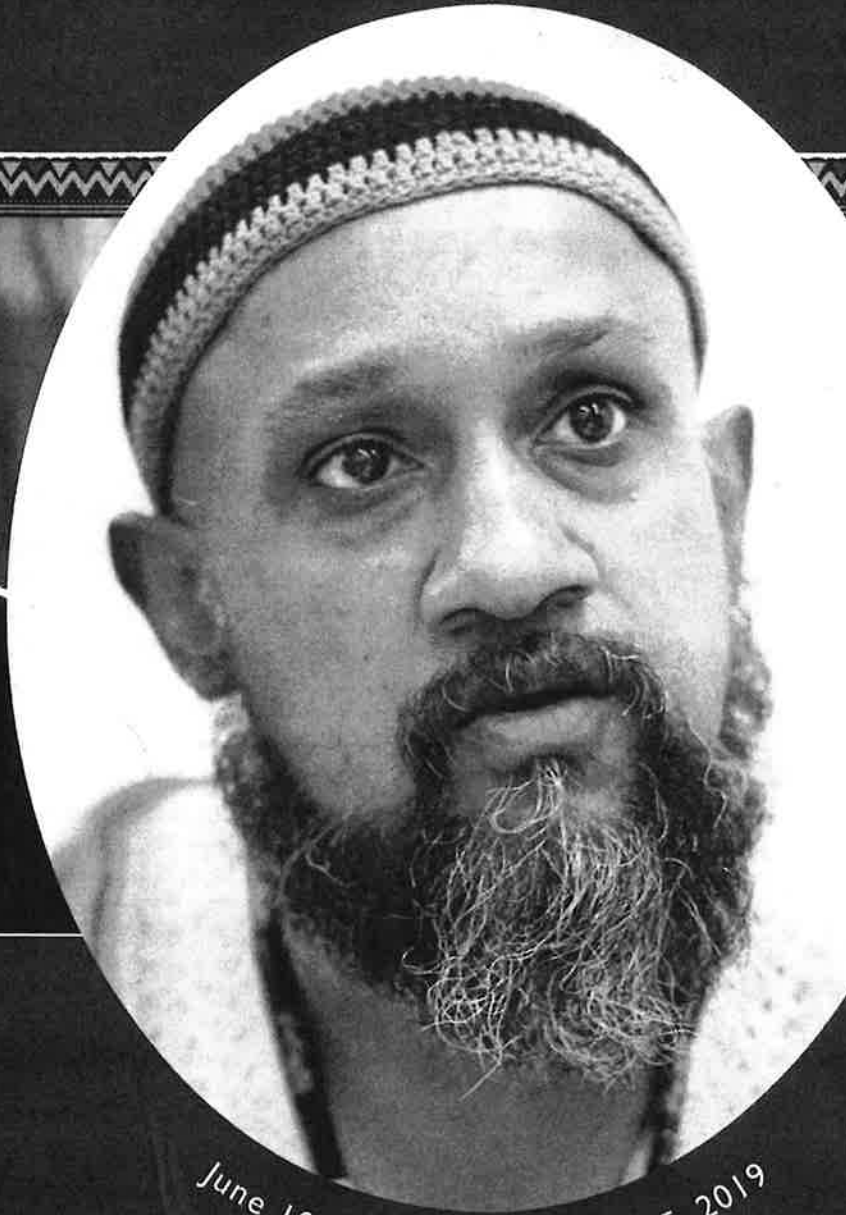


*In Loving Memory of*

# Charles Henry Turner, II



June 10, 1940 • December 25, 2019

# EULOGY

Today, we gather to celebrate the life and legacy of Charles Henry Turner, II, an extraordinary man, better known to us all as Chuck. While many of us know him best as a revolutionary spirit dedicated to serving and improving the lives of people in the community, Chuck's impact on our lives was much more than that. He was a humanitarian, a visionary thought leader, a family man, and a superb organizer who always put the needs of the community first, and in so doing empowered us all to dream, again, and to step-up to shape a more just and loving society.



Family meant a lot to Chuck, as he was raised by his grandmother and aunt. He was well loved, and he cherished moments with his family. Chuck grew up in a family of accomplished Black professionals in Ohio, who demonstrated through the example of their lives that African Americans could achieve any goal, if given the opportunity to do so. His grandfather Dr. Charles H. Turner, for whom Chuck was named, was a well-known scientist. His older brother Darwin T. Turner entered college at age 13 and began his college teaching career at age 18. His father and uncle were businessmen, who open one of the first Black-owned pharmacies in Chicago, in the 1940s. On a visit to Chicago, it was his father who lit the torch of "service to community" in Chuck's heart that fueled his life-long passion for helping others.



Chuck, his Dad & Brother

His wife Terri Small Turner was the rock on which he leaned. As an activist herself, she provided a place of sanctuary that supported him and enabled him to focus on his life's work. Bright lights in Chuck's life are his adult children Stephanie Bonner-Lyons, Alana Small Maddox, Levar Small and best of all his grandson, Jacob Charles Estremera, who all encircled him with the renewing power of love and laughter.



Terri & Chuck 1990s

Both his Boston family and those in the Mid-West gave him the "confidence to follow his heart, to focus on his goals and not worry if those goals would make it more difficult to fit into American life as a Black man." (Chuck) So, on graduating from Harvard University, Chuck came to a crossroads in his life. Would he follow the plan to become a lawyer, or follow his heart to help people? Well, Chuck "took the path less traveled by, and that made all the difference." (Robert Frost) With his decision to become a community organizer/activist, Chuck stepped forward to pursue a life-long journey to secure economic, housing and social justice victories for marginalized, and poor people in his community, in Boston and beyond. Throughout his life Chuck was a hope-filled optimist, a great leader who listened well, and fought tirelessly for people oppressed by systemic racism, unemployment, gender biases and gentrification all of which are designed to benefit the few at the expense of those most in need. One of Chuck's most important legacies he leaves behind are the young people he trained and supported to become organizers, to become activists, to become caring elected officials and to be strategic about the work that they do. This legacy lives on in the community leaders who carry on the important work of helping people learn how they too can take-action to improve the quality of their lives. **We celebrate the life and legacy of Chuck Turner, as he is a giant of a man who shared so much with us all. While he is no longer here with us in person, his legacy will live on with us, forever.**



Chuck's Family 2019



Chuck & Jacob

Chuck is survived by his beloved wife of 25 years, Terri Small Turner of Roxbury, MA; his daughters, Stephanie Bonner-Lyons of Roxbury, MA and Alana Maddox (Small) and her husband, Marcus, of North Providence, RI; his son, LeVar Small of Fitchburg, MA; his grandson, Jacob Charles Estremera of North Providence, RI; his niece, Pam Turner Welch of Austin, TX; his great-nephew, Reginald J. Welch of Austin, TX; his cousins, Yvonne Ewing (Knight) of Cincinnati, OH and Clara Martin and her husband David of Cincinnati, OH; his brother-in-law Charles White, IV, of Boston, MA and sister-in-law, Maggie Jean Turner of Iowa City, IA. He was preceded in death by his parents; his grandmother Laura Troy Knight; his aunt, Mamie K. Faulkner; his brother, Darwin T. Turner, a literature critic, poet, and professor; his nephew, Darwin (Keith) K. Turner; and his grandfather Dr. Charles Henry Turner, a prominent animal behavior biologist, zoologist and entomologist.

# CELEBRATING THE LIFE AN

**Charles “Chuck” Henry Turner II, 79, of Roxbury, MA passed away peacefully at home on December 25, 2019, following a long battle with cancer.**

Chuck was born on June 10, 1940 in Cincinnati, Ohio to the late Darwin R. Turner and Laura C. Turner (Knight). He was raised by his aunt, Mamie K. Faulkner, and his grandmother, Laura Troy Knight. Chuck's family strongly believed that education was the pathway out of poverty. Chuck was named after his grandfather, Dr. Charles Henry Turner, a prominent animal behavior biologist, zoologist, and entomologist. Chuck excelled academically and received a four-year academic scholarship to Harvard University in 1958. While attending Harvard, Chuck pledged Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated in 1960. Chuck graduated in 1963 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in government.

After graduating, Chuck went to work as a reporter in Washington D.C for the Washington Afro-American newspaper. While covering the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, “March on Washington D.C”, Chuck decided that his future was to not only cover the news, but to be a part of it. He left Washington D.C. and went on to join the Northern Student Movement (NSM) chapter in East Harlem, NY as an organizer supporting the rent strike protests. There he was mentored in organizing by Jessie Gray, an American Civil Rights leader and politician. Chuck moved on to become the director of the Hartford, CT chapter of NSM, North End Community Action Program. Chuck and others were arrested for protesting and organizing rent strikes. Due to the impending trial their lawyers informed everyone involved that they need to remain close to Hartford, CT. Byron Rushing who was a member of the Boston chapter of NSM and the Director of South End Neighborhood Action Program (SNAP) invited folks to come back to Boston with him. While working at SNAP Chuck led Roxbury residents in burning trash in Madison Park to protest the city's disregard for the neighborhood. Chuck and other community activists elicited a massive gathering of residents, signaling that Lower Roxbury bore significant grassroots power and forced the city into cleaning up the park.

In the late 60s and early 70s Chuck continued working with Madison Park Development (MPDC) and helped fight urban renewal plans, gaining Boston Redevelopment Authority approvals to build housing at Madison Park Village. In 1966 Chuck began working as an organizer with Roxbury Associates an organization, he founded and co-chaired. Chuck's work there led to the development of the Low Cost Buying Club, a chain of six buying clubs ran by neighborhood residents in the South End and Roxbury. Chuck organized a housing development corporation in the Fort Hill area of Roxbury which led to the creation of 200 new and rehabilitated units in the area through a merger with the Roxbury Action Program (RAP). Chuck connected with local grassroots organizers and activists. Chuck was a founding board member of the Community University Center of Roxbury. This collaboration connected Roxbury community based educational organizations and Boston College. Chuck was a founding board member of Circle, Inc., an organization of Black men in Roxbury focused on the economic development of the community. Chuck founded and co-chaired the Boston Black United Front, a coalition of organizations in the Black and Hispanic communities of Boston. The focus of the group was to collectively address the needs and concerns of those communities.

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King was assassinated, sparking riots of despair in Boston and across the country. On April 8, Chuck helped to organize 5,000 mostly African Americans for a rally at White Stadium in Franklin Park at which were issued 21 demands around community control of the economy and the politics in the black community. In an immediate sense, the demands were unwinnable due to a lack of enough organized African American power in Boston at the time. But Chuck Turner spent the next 50 years working to make them winnable.

In 1969 Chuck moved on from Roxbury Associate to work at Northeastern University Afro Institute as the founding director now renamed the John D. O'Bryant African American Institute. There he guided the Institute in its initial development of a \$400,000 per year budget. Chuck secured the financing and coordinated the development of the \$300,000 three-story AfroCenter at the NU campus. Chuck supervised the development of a community-based center and the Center's provision of classes as well as educational services for students of color at Northeastern. The John D. O'Bryant African American Institute celebrated its 50 years of existence in 2018. However, Chuck was not included in the celebration.

## **INTERSTATE 95 HIGHWAY (I-95)**

Beginning in 1969, Chuck founded and chaired Operation Stop, a community coalition organized to stop the highway design when the threat of the I-95 corridor was to run through Boston's community of colors as well as white working-class neighborhoods. Acknowledging that this was a statewide and federal issue Chuck co-chaired, Greater Roxbury Committee on the Transportation Crisis which was the regional coalition that stopped the development of the highway. There had to be a conversation around what was an alternative to the highway, so Chuck founded and co-chaired The Southwest Corridor Land

# LEGACY OF CHUCK TURNER

Development Coalition. With Model Cities money, this community-based coalition of organizations and individuals land usage plan became the state's plan for the land, once the governor decided not to move forward with the highway. This group also served as the watchdog and monitoring agency for the community while the state implemented the plan. The total project cost, including subway, road, and land use improvement, was estimated to be in the range of one billion dollars by 1990. Chuck continued working with Madison Park Development Corporation (MPDC) and as a result of the highway defeat, MPDC gained Boston Redevelopment Authority approvals to build housing at Madison Park Village.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

Chuck always focused on educational opportunities and participated in a program conducted by Ujima, an organization of Black trainers focused on human relations while also taken a half year course in Organizational Development Techniques at Boston University. Chuck was a community fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). During this time Chuck was the campaign manager for Herbert "Hubie" Jones when he decided to run for US Rep for the 9th Congressional District.

In 1972, Chuck began working at Circle, Inc. as the Executive Director. There he supervised a \$1,000,000 venture capital fund, the Greater Roxbury Development Corporation which helped to fund key development projects. These projects include a demolition company, restaurant, and a two-story commercial building that housed the local offices of the telephone company. Chuck produced a study that surveyed over 600 families in the service area regarding a variety of community issues as well as supervised a program that taught the families how to teach under-achieving members to read. This was the model that Community Development Corporations (CDC) adopted statewide. Chuck founded and co-chaired the Coalition for a Clean Community. This community-based organization was formed to focus attention on the need for better service delivery from the City of Boston.

In 1975, Chuck began working at the Third World Job Clearing House as the founding director. This was the community-based agency for construction workers of color in the Boston area. The success in serving minority populations in Boston led to the creation of similar offices in Cambridge, Worcester, & Springfield. The budget increased from \$200k - \$800k in the four years under Chuck's leadership. Chuck was the founding director of the Fannie Lou Hammer Memorial Housing Foundation. This was a subsidiary of the Third World Clearing House responsible for the creation and implementation of a \$150k housing rehabilitation project. This project led to the rehabilitation and sale of 6 town houses owned by HUD and purchased by residents in the community. Chuck was a founding member of the United Community Construction Workers & Greater Roxbury Workers Association. Chuck also was a member of the Federation of Black Directors.

In 1977, Chuck founded and co-chaired Boston Jobs Coalition (BJC), a city-wide, economically, and racially diverse coalition. The BJC pioneered the concept of developing a policy through which white Boston residents could have a guarantee share of the city, jobs, along with workers of color and women. The Mayor adopted the policy in 1979 and the unions challenged the Mayor on this policy all the way to the US Supreme Court. It was denied in 1982 and in 1985 the Mayor extended the policy to major private projects (defined as projects over 100,000 square feet).

Also in 1979, Chuck was a board member of the Community Finance Development Corporation, a ten million dollar finance corporation established to aid CDC sponsored businesses. Chuck was a board member as well as chairperson for 2 years with the Bishop Burgess Fund of the Episcopal City Mission Society. This board made approximately \$200k in grants each year to community economic development projects.

In 1980, Chuck worked as the education coordinator for Industrial Cooperative Association where he was responsible for the design and implementation of workplace education programs at worker-owned companies throughout the United States. Recognizing that gentrification meant the continued displacement of families in the community, Chuck began working with leaders and tenants of seven (7) public housing developments in Roxbury. He taught them about all of the ownership options available to them, and years later five (5) of the seven developments moved forward to cooperative and partnership ownership of their housing to ensure that those living there would be able to remain in the community. Warren Gardens is an excellent example of Chuck's legacy, as his caring, loving and training of new leaders has enabled them to stay together over decades to produce a community no longer threatened by gentrification. This legacy lives on through the Roxbury Neighborhood Council, designed to share power with the City in determining how vacant land in Greater Roxbury will be developed.

In 1986, Chuck was self-employed for a year as a consultant, teacher, and trainer. Chuck provided education and consultation in the area of community economic development, cooperative development, community organizing, organizational development and human development. Chuck was a board member of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative as they began to implement their designation as an empowerment zone. As a member of the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority Chuck founded the Interim Roxbury Neighborhood Council, a 21-member body established by the Mayor and the

# MAY CHUCK'S WORK, SPEAK FOR HIM

community to oversee the City's actions within the Roxbury community. This was the evolution of The Southwest Corridor Land Development Coalition and model used to create Neighborhood Councils across the City of Boston. The Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority led the way in targeting banks for redlining, overseeing the ongoing development of the Roxbury Neighborhood Council, and creating community wide associations.

In 1987, Chuck became the founding director for the Center for Community Action where he was responsible for the development and supporting community organizing programs in the city of Boston, with an emphasis on training organizers of color. During this time Chuck implemented his growing perspective that liberation of the old required the creation of the new. Chuck began to appreciate that if there was to be new relationships of equality there was the need to create new forms of organizations and relationships. To that end he continued his work on coalition building throughout the city pulling together minority groups of the city.

In 1989, Chuck was the founder and chairperson of the Coalition for Community Control of Development (CCCD) which was a city-wide organization focused on given neighborhood residents' substantial control over land development in their neighborhoods while maintaining open access and affordable housing in all neighborhoods.

In 1990, Chuck and Jemadari Kamara collaborated on a project house at UMass Boston to create Community Action Information Network (CAIN). The purpose of this group was to collect data relevant to communities of color in Boston. In 1991, Chuck went to work as the co-director of Emerge: Counseling and Education to Stop Male Violence. This was the nation's first counseling program for men who batter. Here Chuck provided counseling for men who batter their female partners, provided training to other service providers as well as community education and media interviews about domestic violence.

Chuck was a board member of Roxbury Community News in partnership with the Boston Foundation. Chuck was a community facilitator leading dialogue and focus groups in the Black community as part of "The Boston Persistent Poverty Project" (a.k.a. The Boston Indicators Project) which is a report that is still released to this day. Initially the project did not want to include people of color and there was a fight to make sure residents of color were involved. Chuck was on the frontline for this fight. Chuck was a board member of Community Works, which was an alternative fund to the United Way. This organization allowed organizations that didn't have access to funding through United Way an alternative source through workplace charitable contributions.

From the late 80 to the late 90s Chuck served as Adjunct Professor at New Hampshire College now known as Southern New Hampshire University teaching courses in community economic development.

In 1999, he was asked to and successfully ran for and won the District 7 seat on the Boston City Council, covering Roxbury, the South End, the Fenway area, and parts of Jamaica Plain. From 1999 to 2010, Chuck dedicated himself to providing services to the residents of District 7. He assisted in or led initiatives that directly impacted all Boston residents. He opened the first fully staffed satellite city council office in Dudley Square (now known as Nubian Square). This much utilized satellite office was not funded by the city. While carrying out his City Council duties, Chuck continued his focus on developing jobs for community residents. Chuck co-founded the Boston Workers Alliance, Center for Economic Democracy, reactivated the Boston Jobs Coalition (BJC). Ujima named their lecture series after Chuck Turner called Chuck Turner Black Trust Arts and Lecture Series. Two organizations that held a special place in Chuck's heart was Boston School Bus Drivers Union and City Life/Vida Urbana.

From 2013 until his passing, Chuck worked with renewed vigor to continue aspects of his previous work, notably working with the Boston Jobs Coalition, Warren Gardens Co-Operative, the African American Master Artists-in-Residency Program (AAMARP) and the Nubian Square Coalition. Chuck worked for 56 years to secure the liberation of his people, his community, the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed. ***What we have shared here is but a portion of the work that Chuck focused on during his lifetime. His commitment to humanity and his presence will be sorely missed.***

To quote Haywood Fennell, "*The equation for the success of Chuck Turner was his belief in our dignity and the willingness to stand and demand. We must embrace the legacy of this fallen warrior and pick up his "weapons" that challenged for changing the paradigms for inclusion and do the work that he did*"

# IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS AND AWARDS

**Chuck Turner received numerous awards, certificates and acknowledgments throughout his lifetime for his dedication to community service. Listed below are the organizations that Chuck worked with over the years that supported him and honored his work.**

## A

ABCD (1987, 2007)  
Association of Black Harvard Women (2007)  
Association of Community Orgs. for Reform Now (1999)  
American Friends Service Committee (2001)  
Black Community Information Centers for Afrikan Achievers (1995)

## B

Black Community Information Center Inc (2019)  
Black Economic Justice Institute (2016)  
Black Political Task Force Community Leadership award (1992)  
Boston African American Community Inner City Institute (2006)  
Boston Center for Independent Living Inc  
Boston City Council (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006)  
Boston Equal Rights League (2002)  
Boston Jobs Coalition (2019)  
Boston Society of Vulcans, Inc (2001)  
Boston Urban Asthma Coalition (2004)  
Boston Workers Alliance (2014, 2015)  
Boston Police Department- National Night Out (2001)  
Brandeis University (2001)  
Brian J. Honan Apartments (2005)

## C

Carribean American Carnival Association of Boston (2006)  
Center for Social Justice and Development (2015)  
Coca Cola-Randy Carter/Donovan Walker Violence Free Zone Initiative (2005)  
Community Church of Boston for Social Justice (2007)  
Community Fellows Program (1991)  
Community Works Social Action (1997)  
Cooperative Housing Members of St Joseph's Community Inc (2002)

## D

Democratic Socialists of America for Leadership in the struggle for Racial Justice and workplace Democracy (1988)  
Developmental Neighborhood Coalition (2004)

## E

Eliot Church of Roxbury Missionary Association (2005)  
Estrellas Tropicales (2003, 2007)

## F

Fenway Community Development Corporation (2005)  
Franklin Park Coalition (2004)

## G

Grant Manor Development  
Greater Boston Tuskegee Alumni Club (2000)  
Guilford College (1984)

## H

Healthy Baby Healthy Child (2007)  
Human Resource Development Institute (2007)

## J

John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute (1999)

## L

Lower Roxbury Residence Assoc. & Comm. Land Trust (2002)

## M

Martha Eliot Health Center (2001)  
Masjid Al-Qur'an (2007)  
Minority Developer's Association (1991)  
Museum of Afro American History (1992)

## N

National Association of Minority Contractors (2002)  
New Hampshire College CED Program (1992)  
No on #3 (1990)

## P

Paige Academy (1972, 1980)  
Psi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (2007)  
Puerto Rican Festival (2003)

## R

ReClaim Roxbury (2019)  
Roxbury Action Program (2008)  
Roxbury Community College (1991, 1992, 1998)  
Roxbury Mission SDA Church (2000)  
Roxbury Multi-service Center Inc (2002)  
Roxbury Red Sox Rookie League (2001)

## S

Say Brother (1983)  
School of Community Economic Development (2007)  
Seminar Cultural Festival Dominicano Inc (2006)  
Senator Edward Markey (2019)  
Shortchange Ent  
Stanley Jones Courage Award (2008)  
St Cyrian's Episcopal Church and Union United Methodist Church (1990)

## T

The Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy (2017)  
The Learn 2 Teach, Teach 2 Learn & South End Tech. Center  
Universal Life Church (2010)

## U

U. Mass. Boston - Public and Community Service (1991)  
Upper Roxbury/North Dorchester Little League (2000)

## V

Vets-Veterans Business Council (2002)  
Vietnamese Community of Massachusetts (2003)  
Vinfen Fuller Residential Network (2003)

## W

Warren Gardens Owner Cooperative (1984, 2000, 2019)  
Whittier St Health Center (2007)

Thank you all!