Honorary Pallbearers

Dr. Keith Taylor  
Dr. Louis E. Cunningham  
Mr. Terry Wesley Blackmon  
Mr. Reginald Cleveland  
Mr. Michael Bates  
Brother William Smith III  
Brother Michael Jones  
Brother Darrell Listenbee  
Dr. Billy Wesson  
Brother Stephan Jones  
Brother Tony Calhoun  
Dr. Ronald C. Williams

Active Pallbearers

Mr. Meryl Bledsoe

Flower Bearers

Gamma Alpha Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Acknowledgement

We are never prepared to face life’s darkest hours alone. At such times, the thoughtful expressions of friends make the dawn come quicker and the cross a little easier to bear. The family of the late Dr. Wesley Cornelious McClure sincerely appreciates all expressions of love, support, and the many prayers during his illness and death. May the peace and love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be always with you.

Repast

The Repast will be held in Phillips Dining Hall on the campus of Lane College immediately following the burial services.

Entombment

Parkway Memorial Gardens  
2841 Paul Coffman Drive • Jackson, Tennessee 38301

Services Entrusted to:  
BLEDSOE FUNERAL HOME, INC.

256 MIDDLETON STREET | JACKSON, TN 38301  
Ph: (731) 427-1521 | FAX: (731) 427-1522  
www.bledsoefuneralservicesinc.com

Programs by Bledsoe Funeral Home

A Celebration of the Life and Legacy of Dr. Wesley Cornelious McClure

Saturday, December 14, 2013  
11 o’clock in the morning

New St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church  
1670 N. Royal Street • Jackson, Tennessee  
Rev. Dennis Blalock, Pastor

Reverend Walter L. Brown, Jr., Officiant  
Reverend James E. Dowell, Sr., Presiding Elder  
Bishop Lawrence L. Reddick, III, Presiding Prelate
O Love, That Will Not Let Me Go

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine’s blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life’s glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

-Words by George Matheson
When All Thy Mercies

When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I’m lost
In wonder, love and praise.

Thy Providence my life sustained,
And all my wants redressed,
While in the silent womb I lay,
And hung upon the breast.

To all my weak complaints and cries
Thy mercy lent an ear,
Ere yet my feeble thoughts had learned
To form themselves in prayer.

Unnumbered comforts to my soul
Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived
From Whom those comforts flowed.

When worn with sickness, oft hast Thou
With health renewed my face;
And, when in sins and sorrows sunk,
Revived my soul with grace.

Through every period of my life
Thy goodness I’ll pursue
And after death, in distant worlds,
The glorious theme renew.

-words by Joseph Addison

Celebrating the Life and Legacy
of
Dr. Wesley Cornelious McClure

Dr. Wesley Cornelious McClure was the Ninth President of Lane College. He served at the helm of his Alma Mater for twenty-one years, making him the second longest serving President in the history of Lane College.

Dr. McClure was a native of Jackson, Tennessee, where he graduated as Valedictorian from Merry High School in 1960. He received his Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics, with Honors, from Lane College in 1964. He continued his education at the University of Virginia and received the Master’s and Doctorate in Mathematics and Educational Research in 1968 and 1970, respectively. He also attended the Institute for Educational Management of Harvard University, where he received a Diploma (1971).

President McClure was appointed by the Lane College Board of Trustees on August 20, 1992, and assumed office on September 1, 1992. On that day, he came to the College with a spirit and a vision that would allow the College to experience unprecedented growth, and achieve local, regional, and national recognition during his tenure.

Under Dr. McClure’s leadership, the College experienced significant growth in enrollment (from a low of 532 students in 1992 to a high of 2,222), financial stability, an increase in faculty strength, an expanded curriculum, strengthened institutional management, a significantly improved and expanded physical plant, and a student-centered campus climate, including heightened student morale.

In 1993, the College was admitted to Division II of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). This accomplishment saw an increase in male enrollment and increased recognition of the College on regional and national levels.

One of the first major actions taken by Dr. McClure was the completion of the Chambers-McClure Academic Center (CMAC). When he arrived in 1992, this facility was only an outside shell. Working to secure funding from the Department of Education and several national foundations, this 60,000 square foot facility was completed in 1997. CMAC houses the Library/Learning Resources Center, an auditorium, several classrooms, seminar rooms, skills laboratories, and a telecommunications center. In February 1997, the Board of Trustees named the building the Chambers-McClure Academic Center.

In April 1996, the College purchased the former Budde & Weiss Manufacturing Company, a firm that designed and made church furniture. Its successor in title was Tennessee Dimensions, Inc. From this purchase of 6.7 acres, plus the acquisition of the property at 536 Lane Avenue, the size of the campus was increased to approximately 25 acres. Also, an extensive campus beautification initiative was undertaken which included: a New Football Practice Field; Recreational Center; The Archives, housing a Student Computer Center, a Bookstore, Communications Copy Center, and Study Lounge/Café; Spiritual Life Center; the Health Services Center; and remodeling of the Heating Plant.

In 1997, the College began renovation of the Bray Administration Building. This edifice, built in 1905 and known as the “Crown Jewel” of the campus, received a complete interior overhaul, costing $2.2 million. Funds for this project were acquired through the U.S. Department of Education. The renovation was completed in July 2000.
In September 2001, the Lane College Board of Trustees approved the administration’s strategic plan to expand the College’s curriculum, strengthen the quality of its faculty, and increase student enrollment. Since 2002, and particularly between the years 2006 and 2009, the College executed some of the most aggressive expansions in enrollment and facilities in its 131-year history.

The exponential increases in enrollment between the years 2001 and 2010 were dramatic. In fall 2001, 672 students were enrolled at Lane. In fall 2010, student enrollment was 2,222, a 235 percent increase of which the ratio of males to females was approximately 1:1.

In order to accommodate planned and sustained growth in student enrollment, the College’s administration established a strategic plan to meet the needs of the increased student population.

During fall 2002, the College began to expand its campus acreage and, in the summer of 2003, began extensive renovations on The Archives (now known as Water Tower Place). The project, funded by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), supported the establishment of six (6) new minority businesses. This facility is ideally suited for meetings, coffee, or quiet study, and is equipped with wireless internet access. During the evenings, the Cyber Café is also utilized by students for live entertainment and poetry readings.

In July 2005, the College acquired the FCC license to operate its own radio station, WLCD-FM. Lane is one of only two private colleges/universities in West Tennessee with its own radio station.

Between March and December 2006, the College acquired an off-campus residence hall named Eastbrooke, with a capacity for 100 occupants; erected P.R. Shy Hall (formerly named Meeting Hall and Production Center), the home of WLCD and the College’s Wellness Program; acquired title to the 3,500-seat Rothrock Stadium from the City of Jackson (the home of the Lane College Dragons football team); purchased a telecommunications system to alert students, faculty, and staff of any emergency; and bought the historic St. Paul CME Church building located on the eastern perimeter of the campus. This building, renamed The Lighthouse, is now used for concerts, plays, and other cultural activities.

In the summer of 2007, the College completed construction of two residence halls: The Edens and The Orchards, and a new dining facility, Phillips Hall. Phillips Hall was expanded in 2009 to accommodate more than 800 students. The former dining hall was converted to The Grand Student Lounge, a learning/relaxing facility that houses a computer laboratory supporting 200 computers, a lounge section, offices, meeting rooms, study halls, and a counseling center.

In the summer of 2008, work was completed on another men’s residence hall, Alumni Hall. In summer 2009, work was completed on an additional men’s residence hall, Harper Hall, and an additional women’s residence hall, Jennie E. Lane Hall.

During the spring and summer 2009, construction was completed on the 42,000 square foot science and business building. The new building, Millennium Hall, includes twelve classrooms; six laboratories; four lecture rooms replete with state-of-the-art technology; telecommunications capabilities; and office and lounge space to meet the needs of sixteen instructors. This new facility was designed to support the College’s goal of claiming recognition as a major producer of graduates in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs, and to help prepare students to be truly competitive as they enter business and global marketing careers.

During the timeframe, 2000-2012, the College invested more than $25 million in the acquisition of land, improvements and renovations to existing structures and construction of new capital facilities.
A major facelift along the heart of the College during the summer of 2010, particularly the three-block area proceeding easterly on Lane Avenue from the railroad tracks to Middleton Street, helped to heightened the aesthetic appeal of the campus. The project included the installation of decorative street lights and crosswalks, street resurfacing, sidewalk replacements, and landscaping beautification. Also, during the summer of 2010, the College completed construction of a pedestrian underpass that connects Harper Hall with the North campus by creating a walkway under the West Tennessee Railroad.

In October 2010, the College completed construction of the new Berry Music Hall that replaced the former building that was moved to campus over 68 years ago. Students in music enjoy state-of-the-art facilities within the new music hall that enhance their vocal and musical talents.

During the winter of 2010, the College acquired Rothrock Stadium, now Lane Field, and acquired title to property on the west side of Hays Avenue, near Lane Field, between Lexington and College Streets.

During President McClure’s tenure, the College gained regional and national recognition and its accreditation was reaffirmed twice. In 2002, the College’s accreditation was reaffirmed by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools with commendations in library and information technology. Most recently (June 2013), the College’s accreditation was reaffirmed for ten years with no recommendations. A testament to the hard work and strategic vision of Dr. McClure.

Throughout President McClure’s tenure, he managed the limited fiscal resources of the College in a highly prudent and responsible manner. In 1992, when Dr. McClure was appointed President, the College had a cumulative deficit of over $2.1 million. Through enhanced fiscal management, the College was able to eliminate this cumulative deficit in less than a three-year period. Throughout his 22-year tenure, the College operated with a surplus each fiscal year. The College was also able to secure financing in the amount of $26 million through the Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Program. This extraordinary achievement allowed the College to consolidate all outstanding capital debt and reduce the cost of its debt financing by more than a quarter million dollars each year.

The College increased and expanded strategic partnerships, public relations, and collaborations with other constituents. These relationships extended far beyond grantmanship and fundraising. Through this work, projects in Wellness, Teacher Education, STEM disciplines, and Community Outreach were extended and intensified. Central to this thrust was a message that was delivered to various constituencies, e.g., churches, businesses, government agencies and units, non-profit public service organizations and associations, higher education institutions, and opinion shapers. The aim was to solidify the College’s niche as the best institution in the Region for articulating the case minorities and poor people.

No accomplishments were more significant than the hopes, dreams, and ambitions of the many students who matriculated through the College. President McClure dedicated his life to seeing that his students reached their full potential. Dr. McClure intimately understood his students because he saw reflections of himself in their eyes. He was a child of very humble beginnings and never forgot where he came from and the obligation of helping the underserved and those without a voice. This was reinforced by love and devotion from a strong, yet loving grandmother named Lula “MaDear” Humphreys.

Dr. McClure was committed to the doctrines of access and affordability for minority and low-income high school graduates. The College was ranked #4 among all national liberal arts institutions in the least amount of loan debt at the time of graduation in the 2011-12 edition of Best Colleges, U.S. News and World. It also holds a similar rank for lowest cost of tuition and fees.
Prior to assuming the presidency of Lane College, Dr. McClure gained a wealth of administrative experience through service in a wide range of executive leadership positions in higher education: President, Virginia State University, 1988-92; Chancellor of Southern University and A & M College in Baton Rouge, 1985-88; Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Southern University and A & M College, 1981-1985; Executive Assistant to the President at St. Augustine's College, 1979-81; Dean of Faculty and Instruction at Clark College (now Clark Atlanta University), 1978-79; and Assistant to the President and Title III Coordinator at Lane College, 1970-78.

Dr. McClure was a distinguished mathematician, educational analyst, and speaker. He made significant presentations before Congressional committees, to the United States Department of Education, and to a variety of prestigious professional organizations. His board memberships and affiliations included: Past Chairman, Member Institutions of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF); Institutional Director, the UNCF; Chair, Accreditation Task Force, and member of the Agenda Committee, UNCF; Past Chairman, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO); Past Treasurer, NAFEO; Member, Commission on Government and Public Affairs, American Council on Education (ACE); Member, Policy Steering Board, Alliance for Equity in Higher Education; Member, Advisory Committee, General Foods; Executive Committee, Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA); and Commission on Governmental Relations, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU).

Locally, Dr. McClure served as a past member of the Board of Directors, Jackson-Madison County Chamber of Commerce; a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; and a member of the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Dr. McClure was a teacher at heart. He loved the opportunity to teach new concepts and new ideas to persons. This included members of the Administration and Staff. Dr. McClure encouraged faculty and staff to adhere to the same philosophy and commitment that he shared for the students. President McClure served as a mentor, father, and confidant to many students during his tenure. He firmly believed that every child should be given the opportunity to receive a quality higher education that afforded him/her the chance to go on to serve their various communities.

Dr. McClure loved God, his Family, and Lane College. He was a lifelong member of St. Paul Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. At the time of his passing, he was Treasurer for the East Tennessee Annual Region of the CME Church.

Dr. McClure was blessed to be married for forty-eight years to the committed and loving former Mary Bradley of Germantown, Tennessee. They have three (3) children: Wesley II (Karla); Carter Bradley (Marsha); and Dessalines McClure Pieh (Samuel Hingha). He is also the father of Toussaint McClure. Dr. McClure will also be fondly remembered by his nine (9) grandchildren, Wesley McClure III, Julienne McClure, Gabrielle McClure, Madelyn McClure, Kiersten McClure, Hannah Pieh, Clara Pieh, Andrew Wesley McClure, and Mary Hope Pieh. Dr. McClure also leaves a dear aunt, Ruth Neal; one sister, Victoria Blackmon Hines; and several close relatives including Terry Wesley Blackmon, Brandi Mahogany, Elain Jarmion, Tena Bruce, Marguerite Neely, Anna (Rose) Carter (Alec), Sabrina (Clark) Johnson (James), Raleigh Dodson (LaWanda), Marguerite Neely, Rev. Franklin A. Collins (Anita), Mecca Jarmion, Rev. Andrew Collins (Marquitta), Daryl T. Neely, Jr., Darnell Neely, Cheryl D. Nelson, Millicent Nelson, and Debbie Nelson.