

## A Personal and Public Advocate for Racial Equality, J. Blaine Hudson Leaves a Large Legacy

J. Blaine Hudson (1949-2013) began elementary school in Louisville at the advent of *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), a pivotal time in the national struggle for racial equality and an event that would shape the life of Hudson and countless other young people developing ideals in this era. He began his fight for social change in junior high school when he was refused admittance because of his race to a downtown Louisville movie theater.



As a student at the University of Louisville in 1969, Hudson and other members of the Black Student Union occupied the College of Arts and Science building to protest the lack of black faculty, minority scholarships and Pan African Studies department. He and several other protestors were arrested and tried under the newly enacted Kentucky Anti-Riot Act. Although the charges were eventually dismissed, Hudson was forbidden by the judge to return to campus for one year and he lost a major national scholarship.

Hudson would go on to finish his bachelor and master's degree at UofL and a doctorate degree at the University of Kentucky. Returning to teach at UofL in 1974, he eventually fulfilled his dream by becoming a member of the Department of Pan African Studies, which he chaired from 1998-2003. In 2004, Hudson became dean of the same college he once occupied as a student and remained in the post until his retirement in 2012.

At a recent memorial for Dr. J. Blaine Hudson, many of his colleagues, family and friends recalled his legacy in the adage "there is still work to be done."

Oral history interviews with Dr. J. Blaine Hudson and other Kentucky civil rights leaders can be found at <http://passtheword.ky.gov>. (Image courtesy of the University of Louisville)

"Pass the Word" is a discovery tool for oral histories throughout the state of Kentucky. To learn more about this topic, visit <http://passtheword.ky.gov>.