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100 W. Broadway, Frankfort KY

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Profile: Brenda Hughes



In 1973, Brenda Hughes became the first African American woman to register as a basketball official with the Kentucky High School Athletic Association.

A Lexington native and graduate of Dunbar High School, Hughes learned to officiate in the Lexington Parks and Recreation system and in Dirt Bowl tournaments. As a parks employee, she officiated both girls' and boys' games.

The time Hughes became a KHSAA official was sandwiched between a court ruling that required KHSAA to recruit more African American officials and the reinstatement of girls' basketball. While she encountered prejudice because of her race and gender, people generally considered her to be businesslike and self-confident in her officiating. Hughes once stated that she knew the rules as well as anybody and did not foresee problems.

Among the many games Hughes officiated were five Girls' Sweet Sixteen® State Tournaments. She is a member of the Dawahares Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.



(Photo courtesy of University of Kentucky, Special Collections and Research Center.)