



# Distinguished Graduate

## Gordon Fletcher Bullock

Whenever there was a question that related to science, there was one who always knew the answer. To folks in his hometown of Tarboro, he was known as Collie. In Hampton and Newport News, VA, where he spent most of his life, he was known as Gordon Fletcher Bullock.

Gordon's interest in science began when he was a boy. The story told by his parents, Carey and Catherine Dancy Bullock, is that he once experimented on a lamp, took it completely apart, put it back together and as a result, it caught on fire. Nevertheless, that didn't diminish his love of experimenting and exploring science.

Gordon often told stories of growing up with his siblings Carey (Karo), Marion (Teetee), Lewis (Bug), Martha (Dot), Milton Douglas and Mittie. His father had a big truck and he enjoyed helping his father when he moved families to another house.

Upon graduation from Pattillo High School in 1951, Gordon went to the Air Force. During his four years of service, of course, he worked in the electrical department. He enjoyed his tour of duty and especially loved his overseas tour of Germany and took advantage of visiting many of the nearby countries.

Following his honorable discharge from the Air Force, Gordon went to North Carolina A&T State University where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering. While at A&T, he served as the articles editor for the A&T Register, the school's newspaper. After graduation in 1962, Gordon went to work at NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA as one of the few black engineers at that time. He fondly recalled his first interview there. He was asked the same question repeatedly. He was not intimidated by that questioning and answered the same question the same way each time. He was being tested, but he knew exactly what he was talking about and never changed the original answer to the question.

At NASA, Gordon worked on many space-related projects and for his job he often traveled to other NASA sites across the country, including in Texas and Florida. He designed items that were sent on space shuttle missions for experimentation and made a big impact on the space industry. He had fond memories of working at Wallops Island, NASA's test flight facility on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. After 30 years of a successful career as an Aerospace Engineer with NASA, Gordon retired and enjoyed retirement life.

For many years, Gordon served as a science fair judge for the Newport News School Division. He was always enthusiastic about looking at and evaluating the students' projects, and he always encouraged boys and girls to pursue higher education. He also served as a volunteer docent at the Virginia Air and Space Museum, which he loved. He attended World Victory Church and participated in many plays as an actor. He was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the Masons and 100 Black Men-Virginia Peninsula Chapter, where he served as financial secretary of the Board of Directors. He was a lifetime member of the NAACP. For several years, he volunteered with the LINK Hunger Program and the Help Him Now Program. Those programs gave him an opportunity to interact with and help many people. In addition, Gordon was appointed by former Governor John Dalton to serve on the Virginia Division for Children in the 1970s.

