

Mrs. Mellott

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### The Successful Career and Life of Myrlie Evers-Williams

From the start of her career to the end, Myrlie Evers-Williams was a brilliant woman who fought for racial equality. As soon as she graduated from college, she wanted to hop in the world of social work. Myrlie and her husband worked with the NAACP to investigate racial attacks on African-Americans. Together they took a risky job most people would not take. This job led them to death threats from white supremacists. This is just a prime example of Myrlie making sacrifices of her life for everyone's equality. Myrlie Evers-Williams was a powerful woman during the civil rights movement, using civics, civility and collaboration to help others.

After graduating from Alcorn A&M College as an honor student, Myrlie discovered the world of social work. She met her husband Megar Evers in college, and he wanted to pursue the same. The duo received job offers from the NAACP, thus beginning careers. A broad example of civility helped Myrlie's career flourish. The couple discovered problems at local gas stations. People of color could not use the bathroom at certain gas stations. As a solution, a boycott would be created. It included two oddities: a gas station and a bumper sticker. So after some research of finding these gas stations, the duo created bumper stickers with the saying "Don't buy gas where you can't use the restroom." A great example of civility, the two had a peaceful boycott where no damage was done physically. While starting their family, the pair was reaching for civil rights. At the NAACP, the couple organized boycotts, including the

investigations of lynchings and racial attacks. But again, this job came with its risks. The couple received many death threats due to their affiliation. Ultimately, Medgar would be shot and killed coming home from work. He was murdered by a Ku Klux Klan member. Myrlie was on her own having to raise a family, juggling her own career.

A few years passed after her husband's death, and Evers-Williams relocated her family to California four years later. During their time in California, Myrlie became the true definition of civics. When Myrlie was 35, she received a sociology degree at Pomona College. She spent some time around the college after achieving her degree as a planning director. Then, her career outside of the NAACP flourished. She had many firsts as an African-American woman. From having positions in corporations, to being the first black woman to be appointed to the Board of Public Works, holding the title for 8 years. Working for these boards would help her study her duties as a citizen, and what it takes to become a true leader. Along the way of her career, she remarried another civil rights activist Walter Williams. They remained together until his death from cancer in 2020. Myrlie was finally back on a somewhat normal routine after losing her first husband in such a tragic way.

After a break from the NAACP, she made the decision to collaborate and join the board of directors as well as run for chair of the board. She came in at a crucial time, as the organization was in debt. She stepped in, uniting with other members to reduce the debt. After the debt issue, Myrlie put efforts into having strong financial habits for the organization. She then decided to take another break from the NAACP, with the mission to promote her late first

husband's legacy in Jackson, Mississippi. Evers-Williams also demanded justice for Medgar, as the first two trials were deadlocked from an all-white jury. But 30 years later, Byron De La Beckwith was finally be sentenced to life in prison for the murder in 1994. Justice was finally served Myrlie and the African American community. She could finally rest knowing that the murderer who took her husband was charged. When the trial concluded, Evers-Williams wrote her own autobiography titled *Watch Me Fly: What I Learned on the Way to Becoming the Woman I Was Meant to Be*. She also goes on to edit an autobiography of her late husband Medgar titled *The Autobiography of Medgar Evers: A Hero's Life and Legacy Revealed Through His Writings, Letters, and Speeches*. Her latest achievement was in 2013. At Barack Obama's second inauguration, Myrlie delivers the invocation. This makes her the first woman and non-clergy member to perform the prayer. In her lifetime, she accomplished a variety of awards.

To conclude, Myrlie Evers-Williams is a trailblazing African-American woman. She was the first of many in the NAACP. Throughout the civil rights movement, she was a key player in spreading awareness. Throughout many tragedies, not to mention stresses in her life, she overcame many hurdles. She made accomplishments out of her struggles. Myrlie Evers-Williams raised a family, made history, and demanded justice all in one lifetime. In summary, although Myrlie had tragedies in her life, she became successful throughout it all.

Works Cited

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