

## **Dr. Shirlene White Bradford**

### **Doctor of Education**

**Inducted into the Inaugural SC Hall of Fame October 30, 2009**

Shirlene was born the oldest of eight children in the Mississippi Delta during the Jim Crow Era. After Emmitt Till, a Chicago youth, was massacred near her hometown, her parents decided that when black children were being killed, it was time for us to leave Mississippi and move to Arizona permanently. She picked and chopped cotton until the age of 14 when she began working in a Federal Job Corp student work program in Eloy. Her mother, Willie Pearl Nelson, worked in the Eloy School District as a cook, and her father, E.B. Nelson, managed a service station in Eloy for many years.

Shirlene participated in many civil rights and integration activities in Eloy and Santa Cruz. She was elected the first SCVUHS black homecoming queen in 1965; Student Body Officer 4; National Honor Society 2,3,4, President 4; G.A.A. 1,2,3,4, Recording Secretary 2, Vice-President 3, President 4; Dance Band 1,2,3,4; Band 1,2,3,4, President 4; Devil's Call 4; Whirlwind staff 3,4; Christmas Queen Attendant 3; Girl's State 3; University of Arizona Citizenship Award for Outstanding Junior Girl, 3.

Most of her siblings graduated from SCVUHS and have become very successful and productive citizens (a pro baseball player; Southwestern USA black belt champion; ASU cheerleader; telephone account analyst; etc).

Her fondest memories of life and Eloy relates to her friends and experiences at Santa Cruz. God and SCVUHS gave her the foundation, which has set her on a path to success and a better understanding of cultural diversity resulting in many lifelong accomplishments: a National Merit Scholar, Doctor of Education, Certified K-12 school principal in three states, Arizona State NAACP Image Award, International Doctoral Honors Society, and Director of Community and Continuing Education at Central Arizona College.

I thank my Eloy school instructors: Mr. Troy Thomas, Mr. Peter Ashkine, Mrs. Betty Prock, and Mr. Oren Hawse, my awesome mentors who gave me hope and self-esteem that has moved mountains! My greatest wish is that my accomplishments will be an inspiration to future disadvantaged generations and youth and families in our community and country who face similar paths, barriers and challenges to success.