

APS to Host an Evening Celebrating Arlington's History Makers on Feb. 2 *Honoring Those Who Fought for School Integration & Made History at Stratford*

Arlington Public Schools will host an event on Tue, Feb. 2, to mark the historic anniversary of school integration in Arlington County. The event will be held in the Stratford Auditorium at H-B Woodlawn Secondary School, 4100 Vacation Lane, beginning with a film presentation at 6 p.m. and a Community Conversation starting at 7:30 p.m.

The community is invited to attend to hear the memories and reflections from those who were involved and discuss why these events matter for Arlington – now and in the future. The evening will be held in two parts:

6 p.m. – Film Presentation

It's Just Me...The Integration of the Arlington Public Schools

This documentary revisits and explores the events that led to the successful integration of Stratford Junior High School. The film premiered in 2001 and was produced by the Arlington Educational Television (AETV) staff to share the memories of the people who were involved in the struggle to integrate Arlington Public Schools. More information about *It's Just Me* is available [online](#).

7:30 p.m. – A Community Conversation

Students and representatives of our community will share their memories of that pivotal time and Arlington's historic struggle to integrate our schools.

Special guest panelists will include:

- Michael Jones, Gloria Thompson Lance Newman (*Tentative*) & Ron Deskins (*Tentative*), Stratford's first Black students
- Dr. Alfred O. Taylor, Jr., educator, civic activist, community historian and author of *Bridge Builders of Nauck/Green Valley: Past and Present*
- Sharon Mondé, APS graduate and former APS teacher & administrator
- Carmela Hamm, daughter of Dorothy Hamm, Arlington leader in the struggle to integrate schools
- Martha Miller, Stratford Junior High School teacher in 1959, author of *The First Century*
- Moderator: Drew Costley, graduate of H-B Woodlawn and UDC, current news editor for the *Falls Church News-Press*

Background

On February 2, 1959, four African American seventh grade students entered Stratford Junior High School for the first time. Up until 1959, black students had to attend one of the racially-segregated schools in Arlington County instead of their neighborhood school. Here in Arlington, black families worked closely with many community allies and effectively used the legal system to challenge Virginia's Massive Resistance movement to the federal Supreme Court-mandated integration of public schools.

Sponsors

The event is being sponsored by Arlington Public Schools, Arlington County Government; the Arlington Chapter of the NAACP; and the Black Heritage Museum of Arlington.