

Donna H. Oliver, Ph.D.

Dr. Donna H. Oliver, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Chief Operating Officer) at Edward Waters College, has a distinguished career as a K-12 public school biology and chemistry teacher, a college professor and K-16 administrator that spans 30 years. She is the 1986 North Carolina Teacher of the Year and the 1987 National Teacher of the Year having been selected from among America's 2.5 million K-12 teachers. She was presented the Crystal Apple Award by President Ronald Reagan during an Oval Office Ceremony in the White House, which included the US Secretary of Education, Bill Bennett, and the White House Press, led by Helen Thomas. Her Congressman, Howard Coble, honored her during a Congressional Luncheon at which time she was presented to Congress and the proceedings are written up in the Congressional Record 1987. Dr. Oliver is also recognized in the 1987 Annual Edition of Britannica Encyclopedia and Scholastic Magazine as an outstanding teacher and during this same year traveled to Madrid, Spain to serve as an educational consultant and lecturer at the American School. In 1988 she was selected to be a member of the first official United States Delegation of Educators in 12 years to study and speak in China-Taiwan, Taipei.



Oliver began her college studies at Elon College where she completed her undergraduate degree in biology and education. After teaching five years at the high school level, she earned a master's of education degree in biology and curriculum and instruction from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. After being named the North Carolina Teacher of the Year she earned a master's of science degree in educational administration with licensure as a K-12 principal from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University. After she began her career as a College Teacher Educator, she returned to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where she earned a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Teaching with a concentration in multicultural education and began to conduct research in the areas of teacher education and multicultural education. In 2004 as a Bush Scholar, she completed the Higher Education Institute for Educational Management Certification at Harvard University. She continues her research today by having students identify what they perceive to be barriers to their education. She has published numerous articles on multicultural teacher education in professional journals and has presented her research at numerous national professional meetings and conferences. She continues to conduct workshops for public schools and university teacher education faculty.

Dr. Oliver made history in 1987 by becoming the first African American to receive the Distinguished Young Alumnus of the Year Award at Elon College, now Elon University. During that same year she was recognized by Howard University as an outstanding African American Woman of Achievement, was named to the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars and the White House Commission for a Drug Free America. In 1995 she was featured in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* as the weekly Profile for the January 28 volume. She has been recognized in more than 40 of the United States and three foreign countries for her contributions as a teacher, administrator, and educator. She is the recipient of the Kentucky Colonel Award, the Arkansas Traveler Award presented by former President Bill Clinton, and Keys to the City in 10 different states. She has received more than 100 Outstanding Educator Awards from local, state, national and international civic, education, community and religious organizations.

Dr. Oliver is an active participant in numerous community and civic organizations including the Elon Homes For Children Board of Directors, the Board of Visitors of Elon University, and the Triad Private Colleges North Carolina Piedmont Automated Library System Consortium Board of Governors. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Tri Beta Psi Honorary Biological Society and is a lifetime member of Girl Scouts of America, having served 3 full terms on the Tarheel Triad Girl Scout Board of Directors-the maximum term allowed. She is also a past chair of the Board of Governors of the North Carolina Piedmont Automated Library Services for Private Colleges. Dr. Oliver has also served on many state boards, commissions and task forces. She served two terms on the Governor's School Advisory Board having served as Vice Chair for two years, the NC State Education Committee Review Board, and she served as a member of the Transition Team for a former State Superintendent of Public School, Bob Etheridge, who is now a United States Senator.

In addition to the national teaching award, Dr. Oliver has received numerous awards including the Alamance Burlington NAACP Educators Award, Democratic Women of Alamance County Woman of Achievement Award, the Bennett College Faculty Service Award and the Belle Ringer Award, the National Science Teacher Association Biology Honors Teaching Award, the Governor's Teaching Award in Science and Mathematics, the Burlington Jaycees Outstanding Young Educator Award and the UNC-Greensboro Alumni Distinguished Service Award.

Dr. Oliver and her husband James C. Oliver have one daughter, Rachel Oliver-Cobbin (the 1987 Miss Black America and R&B recording artist with Atlantic Starr), son-in-law, Keith James Cobbin (financial and estate planner), a three-year old grandson, Cameron James Oliver Cobbin and an eighth month old granddaughter, Raina Lael Oliver Cobbin. Mr. and Mrs. Oliver are former life-time members of Wayman's Chapel A.M.E. Church in Graham, NC where Dr. Oliver served as church organist for more than 25 years, was a member of the Steward's Board, a former class leader, Vice Chair of the Layman's Society, Assistant Church Secretary, Co-Chair of the Church's 100 Year Celebration Steering Committee, and Choir Director for the Senior and Gospel Choirs. Dr. Oliver continues speaking, consulting and engaging in community service while continuing her work at Edward Waters College.