



PROJECT NAF

Nurturing
Asheville &
Area Families

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JANET VIVIAN HILL

January 28, 2023

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC.



Calvin, Janet, Grant, and Tamia Hill

Inspirational Words

- Deborah Rutter, President, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
- Calvin Hill, husband
- David M. Rubenstein, Co-Founder and Co-Chairman, the Carlyle Group
- Alvia J. Wardlaw, Director, University Museum at Texas Southern University
- Alan D. Schwartz, Executive Chairman, Guggenheim Partners
- Elizabeth Alexander, President, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Richard Brodhead, President Emeritus, Duke University
- Song: "If I Can Help Somebody," Alma Androzso
- Ambassador Andrew Young, Civil Rights Activist
- Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton
- Grant Hill

PROJECT NAF COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

Jacquelyn Clarke Odom:
Representing NAF Participants;
Business Owner, C&J Designs

Kristina Dixon: Madison County Schools

Denise Duckett: Buncombe County HHS

Nancy Farmer: SPARC Foundation

Parris Finley:
Mountain Area Pregnancy Services

Ruth Franklin:
First Presbyterian Church, Asheville

Charlene Galloway: Mt. Zion Missionary
Baptist Church of Asheville, Inc.

Sherri Holbert: Advent Health

Katherine Hyde-Hensley:
Perinatal Emotional Health Network

Patricia Simpson: Representing Children
with Different Abilities

Tim Splain: Representing Fathers
(Advocacy & Support)

Royanna Williams: Business Owner,
TBN Designs; former NAF Participant

ECHO (Enhancing Collaborative Health Options & Opportunities)

The Life & Legacy of Mrs. Vivian Janet Hill

This was a challenging article to write, but one I felt was necessary to share the life and legacy of Vivian Janet Hill, for she was near and dear in our hearts (the Grant Family-Asheville). Some may refer to Janet as the wife of NFL star Calvin Hill, or the mother of NBA Hall of Fame Grant Hill, or Janet, as we (John and I) affectionately called her.

Janet was a legend in her own right. A trailblazer who opened doors for Black women to step into roles that were not available to them before.

Words cannot express the profound impact Janet had on the world during her 74 years of life. This article cannot encapsulate the magnitude and impact of her life, leadership, and the legacy of her commitment and dedication to the many initiatives she undertook to break down barriers for African American women particularly, and all women generally, to serve and impact change.

Vivian Janet McDonald was born in New Orleans, LA. She attended Wellesley College in Wellesley, MA and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics in 1969. She attended the University of Chicago Graduate School and the Graduate School of Education and, in 1972, received a Master of Arts Degree in Teaching Mathematics.

Janet passed away on August 13, 2022. Her funeral was held at the Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia on August 23, 2022, Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley, Pastor. The memorial service was held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC on Saturday, January 28, 2023. Dr. Grant and I attended both services.

Leadership Roles

Janet served in numerous leadership roles including Board of Directors of the Carlyle Group, Esquire Bank, and Echo360, a private software company. She was Vice President of Hill Ventures, Inc., her son's real estate investment business.

Mrs. Hill served on four boards from which she retired at the time of the sale of the underlying companies: Sprint, Inc. (which was sold to Softbank); Tambrands, Inc. (which was sold to Procter & Gamble); Security Capital Group, Inc. (which was sold to G.E. Capital); and Houghton Mifflin Company (which was sold to Vivendi International).

From 1978 until 1981, Janet was the Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. She advised the Secretary on specific positions prior to policy decisions; formulated programs to improve and enhance soldier quality of life; prepared speeches for public presentation and testimony for Congressional hearings.

Mrs. Hill served as a liaison to the office of the Secretary of Defense, the White House, Congress, and other government agencies; and prepared briefing and position papers on issues affecting soldiers, material readiness and operations, and maintenance.

Prior to her work for the Army, Mrs. Hill was a scientist with a private consulting firm in the Washington, DC area. She was responsible for data analysis regarding



Vivian Janet Hill

ambient noise levels and shipping distributions; coordination and analysis of technical evaluations of noise levels in the perfection of sonar detection systems; design of ship movement models under contract to the US Navy.

Mrs. Hill assisted with the research and editing of environmental regional assessments in the Northeast Pacific and Northeast Atlantic for various Navy intelligence units; and the development

of computer programs to evaluate data on Soviet submarine surveillance.

In 1998, the Hill family traveled to Asheville to dedicate the Elizabeth Grant Hill Campus of Learners, a Center for Technology, Health, and Entrepreneurship, a program of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc. The purpose of the center was to work to bridge the digital divide in our community, and to help under-served individuals, families, and communities enhance and enrich their lives by providing them with opportunities and encouraging them to master the computer skills necessary to work and thrive in the world.

The Elizabeth Grant Hill Campus of Learners was awarded the Faith-Based Initiative of the Year Award by the North Carolina Association of Community Development Corporation. During that event, Grant Hill dedicated a basketball camp for youth and children that was held at the Stephens Lee Center. The Hill Family were the primary contributors for this center.

Until her illness and death, Janet Hill was a principal in Hill Family Advisors, where she oversaw the family's assets and investments. In 2010, she retired after 30 years as the co-owner and Vice President of Alexander & Associates, Incorporated, a corporate consulting firm in Washington, DC. She provided corporate planning, advice, and analyses to directors, executives, and managers in the areas of human resource planning, corporate responsibility, corporate communications, and government consultation.

In 2019, Janet Hill was inducted into the National Association of Corporate Directors' Hall of Fame, and in 2020 into the Washington Business Hall of Fame.

Noteworthy

It was noted during Janet Hill's Memorial Service that no matter where she was, whether in a board meeting or serving in other leadership roles, that every-day at 4 p.m., Janet would excuse herself to call home to check on Grant, asking details about his day, what he had learned at school, homework assignments, etc., A devoted wife, mother, family member and community leader. *Devoted to Serve!*

In his memoir, *Game: An Autobiography*, Grant Hill wrote of his mother, "In a foreign world, she didn't bend her self-worth for the sake of conformity. She made the world bend for her. She'd spend her lifetime often as the only woman of color—frequently, the only woman, period—in corporate conference rooms and board meetings. She would often hold the door open behind her, making inroads for others who looked like her to eventually follow."

MOUNT ZION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.



Dr. John H. Grant, Founding Chairman, President, CEO of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.



Belinda K. Grant, Chief Executive Director of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

PROJECT EMPOWER EDUCATION MEANS POWER

Community Advisory Council

Johnnie Grant: *The Urban News*

Dr. Randall Johnson:
Asheville City Schools District

Rasheeda McDaniel: Buncombe County
Health & Human Service

MOUNT ZION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Staff

Belinda K. Grant:
Executive Director
(828) 776-1428
belindakgrant@mzcd.info

Sapphire DeBellott: Project NAF
Outreach Worker (828) 776-1429;
sapphire.debellott@mzcd.info

Ms. Rosa B. Hearst: Receptionist
Natalia Munoz-Schneier: Volunteer

Mr. Henry Glaze:
Transportation Coordinator

Board of Directors

Linda Glaze: Chair, Chief Operating Officer

Rev. Scott Rogers: Vice Chair

Michelle Harper, Treasurer and
Fundraising Co-Chair

Cynthia Yancey, MD: Fundraising Chair

Leroy Simpson, Member

Tracey Rice Johnson, Member

Our programming is made possible through the
support of our generous funders.



Mt. Zion
Missionary
Baptist Church
of Asheville, Inc.

