Dr. Gene E. Gary-Williams, retired educator, touched many lives and was loved and respected by her former students, faculty, professional colleagues, friends and family. She will be remembered with fondness and gratitude for her willingness to mentor and help those who wanted to make a difference.

Gene Gary-Williams received the Bachelor of Science Degree from Spelman College, and completed the Physical Therapy program and a Master’s Degree at the University of Iowa. She later received the Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Maryland at College Park, and a Master of Divinity Degree from the Howard University School of Divinity.

Dr. Gary-Williams was the founding Director of the Physical Therapy program at Howard University, which in 1974 was the first PT program offered by a historically black college or university (HBCU), and the founding Chairperson of the Department of Physical Therapy at Howard University.

Later, she chaired the University’s Physician Assistant program, and served as Associate Dean of the College of Allied Health Sciences at Howard. She spent a year as a Fulbright Fellow in Nigeria, and soon after her return was appointed Dean of the former College of Allied Health Sciences.

Her work has touched other schools. After retiring from Howard, Dr. Gary-Williams established a PT program at Ross University in the Caribbean nation of Dominica, helped revitalize the PT program at Tennessee State University, and assisted in the creation of an orthotic and prosthetic program at Alabama State University.

In her long career of physical therapy practice, teaching, administration and service, most notably her service was exemplified in her participation with the National Society of Allied Health (NSAH). She served as President of the NSAH, was honored as a Fellow and later served as Executive Director. Dr. Gary-Williams was an authentic educator and service to HBCUs was a particularly important aspect of her career. “Other institutions will never be able to accommodate all the students of color who want to enter the health professions,” she said. “HBCUs help us meet that need in an efficient and equitable manner.”