

Wayne G. Davis Obituary July 10, 2020

Today we celebrate the life of Wayne G. Davis, born on August 29, 1938, in New York City to the late Sirlester Carl and Ione Veasey Davis and was introduced to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as a member of Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City.

Wayne received his early education in New York City and as a high school senior was selected to New York's "All Metropolitan Basketball Team." In 1960, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Connecticut where he also co-captained the Basketball and Track and Field Teams. At UConn Wayne met and in August 1962, married the former Lois Waters of Washington, D.C., who had been pursuing graduate studies in the School of Chemistry. After graduation, Wayne served for three and a half years abroad and stateside in the U.S. Army. He was honorably discharged in 1963 as a First Lieutenant.

Wayne served in the FBI for twenty-five years. His appointment was historically significant in that then FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was under pressure by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and the Department of Justice to racially integrate the professional federal law enforcement ranks of the Bureau. Prior to 1962, the FBI had no African-American Special Agents who had attended the FBI Academy. Wayne and three other African Americans broke through the barrier when they graduated from the FBI Academy.

In August 1963, three days before his twenty-fifth birthday, Wayne entered on duty as a Special Agent of the FBI. After completion of three months of training at the FBI Academy, Wayne had permanent assignments in Detroit, Michigan; Newark, New Jersey; and Washington, D.C., as well as numerous special assignments.

In 1964 during his initial assignment to the Detroit FBI Division, Wayne was recognized by Director Hoover for outstanding accomplishments in criminal investigations and received favorable mention in a 1964 interview of Hoover that appeared in the now defunct New York Journal American Newspaper. In 1969, while assigned to the Washington, D.C. Field Division, Wayne was again recognized by Director Hoover for investigative excellence in the domestic intelligence field. In December 1970, he was promoted to supervisory duties at FBI Headquarters.

From 1970 to 1985, Wayne was elevated to the increasingly responsible positions of Unit Chief; Assistant Special Agent in Charge; the rank of Inspector; and Special Agent in Charge of FBI offices in Indianapolis, responsible for the State of Indiana; Detroit, responsible for the State of Michigan; and Philadelphia, responsible for the eastern half of the State of Pennsylvania and a portion of southern New Jersey, respectively. Wayne's promotions to Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit and Philadelphia Offices made him one of the highest ranking black agents in a well-earned position of authority in the FBI and commemorated his remarkable career. While assigned as head of the Michigan FBI Division, Wayne was the subject of a highly complimentary article in *Ebony* magazine.

Wayne championed the importance of the FBI reflecting the nation it served and maintaining a diverse workforce. After Hoover's death, in 1972, Wayne was appointed as one of the executive managers in FBI Headquarters to lead efforts in hiring women as Special Agents and recruiting more agents of color. Throughout his career, he mentored Special Agents of color who joined the Bureau after him and advocated for women agents.

Wayne was the 1986 recipient of the Attorney General's Award for Equal Employment Opportunity for his success in providing an atmosphere of fairness in FBI offices he headed as Special Agent in Charge. He was also a graduate of both the Federal Executive Institute, an executive training center for governmental leaders, and the FBI's National Executive Institute, the FBI's premier executive training initiative. On February 28, 2008, in connection with their celebration of African-American History Month, Wayne was honored by the United States Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York, as a recipient of their "FBI Trailblazer" Award. Since retiring, Wayne has been an active member of the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI.

Following retirement from the FBI in November 1988 until the end of December 1998, Wayne was employed as Director of Corporate Security for Rohm and Haas Company. Rohm and Haas was a Philadelphia-based multi-national manufacturer of specialty chemical products.

Although Wayne's responsibilities in the FBI and the private sector were substantial and his accomplishments many, he'd be the first to say, as he did on many occasions, his job, positions, and titles on the door were what he did, not who he was. Wayne, an avid, award-winning photo hobbyist, was Vice Chairman of the Lower Merion Civil Service Commission and an honorary member of the "Commissioners" social club. To those who knew and loved him best, Wayne was always a loving husband and father and a loyal friend with a quick wit. For the last eleven years, his principal role was as a devoted and involved grandfather.

Wayne, a long-time member of Grace Baptist Church of Germantown in Philadelphia, leaves to cherish his memory his wife Lois of Ardmore, PA; daughters Adrienne of St. Louis, MO; Cheryl of Wynnewood, PA; brother Carl of New York City; two grandchildren, Blake Davis Hotek and Elias Carlyle Davis Hotek; and son-in-law Adam Hotek.