

CHARLESTON COASTAL ASS

Quarterly
MAGAZINE

Leading
The Lowcountry
Into The Future

PRESENTED BY
YOUNG BLACK
ENTREPRENEUR
MAGAZINE

MAYNARD EATON

THE CELEBRATION OF A LEGEND

THEMAYNARDREPORT.com

MAYNARD EATON

THE CELEBRATION OF A
LEGEND

THEMAYNARDREPORT.com



06.16.23

MAYNARD EATON

THE CELEBRATION OF A LEGEND

Powered by NobleSol Art Group

Section 1

"EMMY WINNER OPENED DOORS FOR BLACK JOURNALISTS"

By Rebecca McCarthy—Atlanta Journal Constitution

Section 2

Family Life

Section 3

Newsmaker & Trailblazer

Section 4

Riveting & Robust Political Prowess

Section 5

Quintessential Civil Rights Journalist

Section 6

Scholar, Educator & Mentor

Section 7

Good Times, Great Friends & Joyful Endings

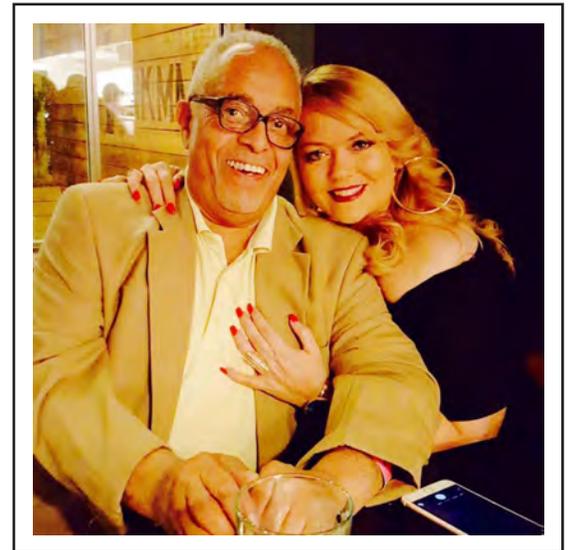


Fred & Bessie Leake

Contributing Writers
Rebecca McCarthy
Heather Gray
Dr. Benard Lafayette
Mayor Andre Dickens
Jelani Cobb
Robin Eaton

Photo credits

Faith Swift, John Stephens,
Arthur Usherson, Robin Williams Eaton



"Maynard was truly one of a kind...he could walk with Icons and Celebrities, while making regular folks feel just as special. I will love him and laugh with him until the end of time."

—wife Robin Williams Eaton



Maynard Eaton, Melba Eaton & Michelle Eaton-Dixon

PROGRAM

PROCESSIONAL “ I WANT JESUS TO WALK WITH ME”, FEATURING MILKSHAKE, TRUMPET

CLERGY & FAMILY

INVOCATION: REV. OLIVIA D.A. MAXWELL

PASTORAL PRAYER, SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTIONS: REV. DARRYL WINSTON
OLD TESTAMENT- PSALM 23
NEW TESTAMENT - I THES 4:13-18

PASTORAL REMARKS AND MUSICAL SELECTION: REV. JASPER WILLIAMS

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION, ATLANTA CITY COUNCILMAN MICHAEL JULIAN BOND

COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS:
DR. CHARLES STEELE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SCLC
DR. BERNARD LAFAYETTE, CHAIRMAN, SCLC

VIDEO TRIBUTE
“CELEBRATION OF A LEGEND”

FRIENDS & FAMILY REFLECTIONS:
DENNIS GOMEZ, FRIEND
BERNIE HARTMAN, FRIEND
OKEEBA JUBALO, FRIEND & COLLEAGUE
MYA EATON-FULLER, DAUGHTER
MAYNARD EATON. JR., SON
HOWARD WILSON, COUSIN
“A WIFE’S TRIBUTE”—MRS. ROBIN WILLIAMS EATON “HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW”

WORDS OF COMFORT : REV. DR. GERALD DURLEY
RECESSIONAL SELECTION: “A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE”—MILKSHAKE, TRUMPET

MAYNARD EATON
LEGEND



CITY OF ATLANTA

55 TRINITY AVE, S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-0300

TEL (404) 330-6100

ANDRE DICKENS
MAYOR

June 16, 2023

To the Eaton Family:

On behalf of the City of Atlanta, I convey my deepest sympathies to the family, friends, and colleagues of Mr. Maynard Eaton.

As a community, we join you in honoring the legacy of a dedicated, trailblazing journalist who made a remarkable impact on Atlanta and our nation. His influential contributions will forever be remembered and continue to shape the media industry.

Maynard was one of our nation's first African American primetime television journalists. He informed Atlantans through his insightful political coverage from Atlanta City Hall and the Georgia State Capitol. An 8-time Emmy winner, his veracity for in-depth reporting transformed journalism and captivated audiences nationwide. He was a vivid storyteller who shattered glass ceilings and worked to inspire future African American media professionals through his teaching roles at Clark Atlanta University and Hampton University.

Maynard was a voice for the voiceless and will remain a part of Atlanta's history and heritage. Beyond his professional achievements, he is celebrated for being a loving husband, father, and mentor. His dynamic work paved the way for African American journalists and revolutionized the media, public relations, and journalism professions. His memory will continue to inspire others for generations to come.

On behalf of the people of Atlanta, please accept our heartfelt condolences. Our thoughts and prayers are with your family.

Sincerely,

Mayor Andre Dickens

June 7, 2023

Dear Robin Williams Eaton & Family:

We were very sorry to learn of Maynard Eaton's passing. On behalf of the entire Columbia Journalism School community, please accept our heartfelt condolences. Maynard Eaton was a trailblazer in the field of television news reporting and his distinguished career has left a profound impact on generations of alums.

It is our hope that during this difficult time you will lean on the love and strength of those who knew him best, but if there is anything we can do at CJS, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,



Jelani Cobb
Dean and Henry R. Luce Professor
Columbia Journalism School

“EMMY WINNER OPENED DOORS FOR BLACK JOURNALISTS” By Rebecca McCarthy—Atlanta Journal Constitution



As a broadcast and print journalist, Maynard Eaton uncovered and told unforgettable stories about both famous and forgotten people, winning awards for his work. During a varied career, he ran political campaigns, hosted talk shows and pushed for advancing civil rights. He served as spokesman for the SCLC, as the president of the Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, and he taught journalism students at Clark Atlanta and Hampton universities, serving as a mentor to many.

He had handled so many professional challenges over the years, Eaton thought he could overcome one more. After a March 15 diagnosis of lung cancer, he planned to take chemotherapy, get better and return to Hampton University to teach this fall. But he couldn't pull off this final assignment. He died Tuesday night at the age of 73.

“We never thought he would be alive only for a couple of months,” said Robin Eaton, Maynard's wife.

Maynard Eaton was reared in Orange, New Jersey. He was the son of Johnsie Leake Eaton and Jack Eaton. His mother was a staunch Democrat and an independent pastry chef, and his father was a union truck driver. Maynard delivered newspapers, and his father drove him on his Sunday route, “provided that Maynard read the paper to him and knew what was in it,” Robin Eaton said. “That started his love of storytelling and journalism.”

Maynard Eaton graduated from Hampton Institute in 1971, now Hampton University, where he co-captained the baseball team. He earned a master's in journalism from Columbia University and took a job at WVEC-TV in Hampton, Virginia, as the station's first African American reporter. While working at WPLG-TV in Miami he was sent to cover an independence celebration in the Bahamas. The stadium announcer was reading the names of celebrities at the event. When he announced, “Maynard Eaton!” the audience roared. “Who the heck are you?” a nearby radio announcer asked Eaton. The Bahamas received Eaton's Miami station broadcast, and he was the first male Black reporter Bahamians had seen.

Eaton came to Atlanta to work at WXIA-TV, Channel 11, in 1978, where he covered city politics, the Capitol and other subjects. There, said his former colleague Evelyn Mims, "Maynard was ... very passionate in his storytelling. His words came alive, he went deep. He was a deep thinker about everything."

During his career, he received eight Emmy Awards for television news reporting. He was honored for his political commentary for WTLK-TV and WATL-TV in Atlanta; for his work as a reporter for World News Monitor; as southeast field producer for USA Today and BET television; and as a writer for Ebony Journal and Prime Time, two locally produced television magazine shows.

Tom Houck, a civil rights activist and journalist, met Eaton on his first day on the WXIA job and watched his multi-faceted career unfold in Atlanta. Always, Houck said, "Maynard was a joyous person. He really wanted the struggle for civil rights to move forward."

"Maynard reported on me and so many others in the movement," said former SCLC Chairman Bernard Lafayette. "He made sure that not only were my words being communicated but our mission in the movement and the reasons for those words and mission were communicated."

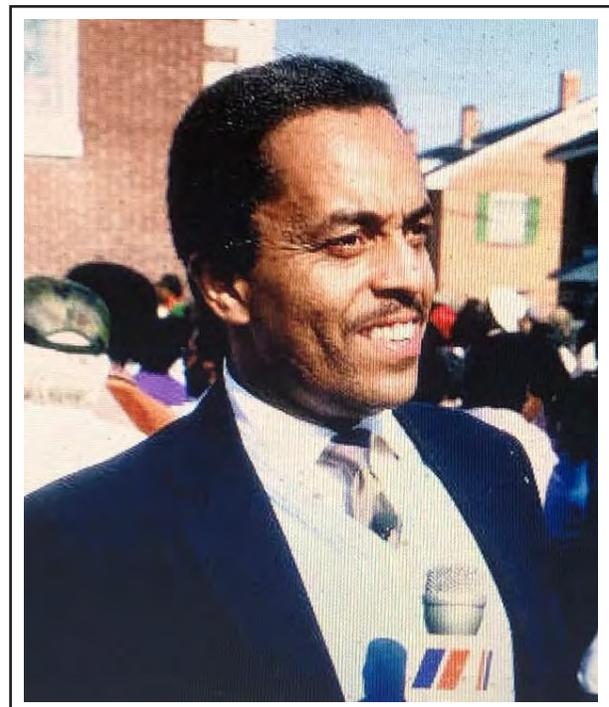
Taking a break from journalism, Eaton helped run political campaigns, and he served as spokesperson for the SCLC.

"MAYNARD EATON WAS A FIRST-RATE JOURNALIST WHO COVERED MAJOR STORIES IN MIAMI AND ATLANTA FOR DECADES. HE KNEW THE LEVERS OF POWER AND HOW SIFT THROUGH THEM TO EXPLAIN AN EVENT OR A TREND. HIS INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY WAS VALUABLE IN AN ERA OF RAPID CHANGE." DICK WILLIAMS, "GEORGIA GANG" PRODUCER, WPLG/WXIA/FOX-5

Stan Washington, the editor of The Atlanta Voice, hired Eaton as a freelancer to write a weekly column, "Politics 411." Washington said Eaton had great skills as an interviewer and had the kind of charisma that made people want to share information, knowing Eaton would be discreet. "He loved covering politics, loved finding out how the mechanism worked," Washington said. "He had so much insider information because he took the time to cultivate relationships."

The Atlanta City Council issued a statement saying that "Maynard Eaton was instrumental in shaping journalism and the communications field, particularly in Georgia politics. He worked to ensure that the experiences and perspectives of Black communities were heard."

Robin Eaton said, "I think his most enduring legacy is the students and young people who were influenced by him. He opened those doors and laid a foundation for other Black journalists. And he was so excited to be at Hampton, helping the next generation."





Family Life

A self-proclaimed "Jersey Guy" Maynard often waxed poetic about his childhood in Orange, New Jersey. His early years growing up at 217 N. Day Street were spent in a large duplex with his little sister Melba, mother Johnsie and dad Jack Eaton. Family would occasionally come to stay on the other side of the duplex, then they would eventually establish residences up and down various points on the East Coast.

In the Summers all the cousins would gather to go to the family farm owned by Grandpa Fred and Grandma Besse Leake in Wadesboro, North Carolina. Cousin Myron Leake remembers that Maynard would imperiously tell the other kids that they needed to pick the beans, and when they traveled to town to sell the vegetables Maynard would say, "I get to ride in front with grandpa... I'm in charge, so the rest if you have to ride in the back of the truck." These childhood adventures closely bonded the cousins to Maynard until the day he died.

Maynard recalled that city life in his neighborhood was very diverse. He fondly remembered his Italian friend Fred DeMayo and Jewish friend Bill Winkler. He often talked about his high school friend Dennis Gomez.

During college years at Hampton Institute and Columbia University he was married and had two beautiful daughters Michele and Nicole. During his first television job in Miami he welcomed daughter Mya and his namesake Maynard Junior.

He has always maintained a very close relationship with his family on both the Eaton and Leake sides. The apple of his eye has always been his little sister Melba, who he enjoyed almost daily lively and robust conversations with...the child-like humor, teasing and beauty of their relationship was precious to him until the end.



Maynard was preceded in death by parents Jack Eaton, Johnsie Leake Eaton and grandson Matthew Emmanuel Dixon. In addition to his wife Robin, Eaton is survived by his sister Melba Eaton, his children Michelle Eaton-Dixon, Nicole Eaton, Mya Eaton-Fuller, Maynard Eaton, Jr., as well as grandchildren Divine Jordan Dixon, Richelle Aleeah Dixon, Keanu Amari Dixon, Leilani Cierrah Dixon, Heaven Sylvia Dixon, Alexis Kingdom, Kiana Eaton, Jahleel Eaton, Iyana Eaton, Natalia Eaton, Whitney Eaton, Mikayla Reid, Jamahl Smith, Jahvani Smith, great grandchildren Ayviana Martin, Damani Martin and nephew Alex Eaton.



“WE STARTED OUR CAREERS TOGETHER IN THE 70’S AS YOUNG
ASPIRING TELEVISION NEWS REPORTERS. HE LEFT AN INDELIBLE
MARK ON EVERY LIFE WHOSE PATH HE CROSSED....”

CHUCK GOMEZ, EMMY AWARD-WINNING COLLEAGUE AT WPLG MIAMI

MAYNARD EATON

LEGEND



“A GOOD LEADER LEAVES TRAILS, BUT A GREAT LEADER LEAVES TRAILBLAZERS. HAMPTON UNIVERSITY JOURNALISM PROFESSOR MAYNARD EATON DID BOTH.”
-EUGENE DANIEL, ANCHOR, WVEC-TV, NORFOLK, VA

NEWSMAKER & TRAILBLAZER

Eaton began his career in 1971 after graduating from Hampton Institute's Mass Media Arts Program, as WVEC-TV's first African American newsman. He went on to earn his Masters degree at Columbia University's School of Journalism in 1972.

An EMMY Award-winning television news reporter, Eaton was in the vanguard of America's first Black news reporters on prime time television, and was distinguished as one of the Country's most influential media professionals.

He worked as reporter and anchor at WPLG-Miami, then went on to WXIA-TV in Atlanta, where spend the bulk of his career as reporter, print journalist, political consultant, executive editor and PR professional.

He conducted innumerable high-profile interviews throughout his career, including heads of state, political luminaries, renowned entertainers and athletes, and Civil Rights heroes. He most recently hosted Newsmakers Live, his own show Talk to ME, wrote feature articles for the Spelman Messenger, and NABJ's Black News & Views.

Known for his news reporting at Atlanta City Hall, as well as under the gold dome of Georgia's Capitol, Maynard Eaton provided unprecedented news content and coverage.

Eaton garnered numerous awards and accolades during his illustrious career. In 2008 he was named Journalist of the Year by the Rainbow/PUSH civil rights group. From 1978 to 1986, Eaton was a multi-award winning political reporter for WXIA-TV in Atlanta.



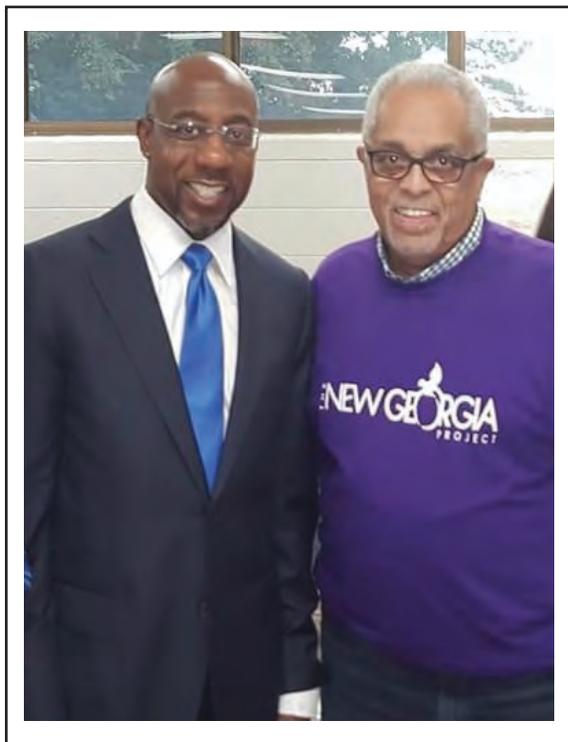
He won eight EMMY Awards for television news reporting/writing, while at WXIA, WPLG-TV in Miami and WVEC-TV in Hampton. He was also honored for his work as a political commentator for WTLK-TV and WATL-TV in Atlanta; a producer/reporter for World News Monitor; southeast field producer for USA Today and BET television; and writer/talent for Ebony Journal and Prime Time, two highly regarded and locally produced television magazine shows.

In addition to honors in broadcasting, Eaton won two Atlanta Association of Black Journalist awards for his excellence in writing and reporting, including the Journalist of the Year award in 1985 from the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists (AABJ) and several significant honors from the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ).

He received honors from Communication Excellence to Black Audiences (CEBA), and three writing awards from the Associated Press. He landed an honor with the National Newspaper Publishers Award (NNPA) in 2007; a coveted Gannett News Service reporting award and, for many years, was named on the list of prestigious individuals with Who's Who in Black Atlanta. Eaton also wrote cover stories for that prestigious publication on Ambassador Andrew Young, civil rights icons Rev. Joseph Lowery, Rev. Ralph David Abernathy and Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin.

RIVETING & ROBUST POLITICAL PROWESS

“Politics are like the weather...it changes everyday”—Maynard Eaton



When he wasn't in front of the camera reporting on or writing about politics, Eaton would consult candidates on the most effective ways to present themselves and communicate with the press. Much to the amazement of his friends and colleagues, he worked behind the scenes with both Democrats and Republicans. In an increasingly polarized media industry, he often asserted that good journalism was non-partisan. Eaton claimed he was an Independent because he was "an independent thinker."

Eaton served as Deputy Press Secretary for former Georgia Lt. Governor Mark Taylor during Taylor's second term, and served as a media advisor/writer to other prominent Democratic political figures, including Mayor Shirley Franklin, Macon Mayor C. Jack Ellis, and then-Atlanta Mayoral Candidate Kasim Reed.

Working across political parties, Eaton served as Press Secretary for GA Republican Congressional candidate Dr. Deborah Honeycutt in 2008 and campaign consultant to Republican Presidential candidate Steve Forbes in 1999-2000. In more recent years Eaton consulted a diverse array of candidates and organizations, such as the New Georgia Project.

Eaton was a potent progenitor of political news dialogue in the new millennium, regularly appearing as a political analyst on the Bill Campbell Morning Show broadcast on WAOK-AM, and a panelist on Atlanta This Week, a TV news talk format showcasing prominent journalists of the day. He laid firm groundwork for others who would follow in his footsteps.

Taking the art of interview and dialogue to another level, Eaton spearheaded Newsmakers Live, which became popular and known for Eaton's intense and revealing interviews of prominent personalities and political figures.

His institutional knowledge and connectivity to the Black Press was golden to those who sought to build a political bridge to that audience.

"Rose Scott, host of WABE's "Closer Look," met Eaton in the late 1990s when she was starting her journalism career in Atlanta. "He was an outstanding journalist and I think just as significant, Maynard understood the importance of the Black press in not just reporting about social change or issues, but also staying connected to Black community."

QUINTESSENTIAL CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNALIST

I have been blessed for a number of years to have Maynard Eaton as a friend and activist colleague. For decades, both Maynard and I have been involved in the civil rights movement across the southern United States and the United States country overall, and that is how we met. It is difficult for me to acknowledge that he passed on May 23, 2023.

Maynard sought every conceivable way to educate the public about the history and movements for justice. His work for fairness, equity and racial justice along with his editorial skills were major reasons that he became the editor of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) National Magazine. His initiatives in this mission have been profound. He importantly reached out to scholars and activists across the south and the country for their article contributions and I have been honored to be one of those writers he reached out to.

The United States and the world overall have been blessed to have the presence of Maynard Eaton in our communities. To state he has made a difference is an understatement. His unrelenting mission, work and education, with, to repeat, a focus on demands for justice, have made a huge contribution to our Civil Rights Movement. Thank you, Maynard Eaton, for all your profound contributions. Our world is vastly improved thanks to you.

HEATHER GRAY

Correspondent-SCLC National Magazine
Justice Initiative



“MAYNARD MASTERED HIS CRAFT. HE NEVER LET ANYONE RETREAT OR BACK DOWN FROM ANSWERING THE TOUGH QUESTIONS. WITH ALL OF HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS, HE REMAINED STEADFAST AS A RESPECTED AND TRUSTED FRIEND AND WAS VALUED BY ME PERSONALLY AND BY THE MOVEMENT. MAYNARD WILL DEFINITELY BE MISSED BY ME AND THE MOVEMENT..”

**DR. BERNARD LAFAYETTE
CHAIRMAN, SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SCLC)**

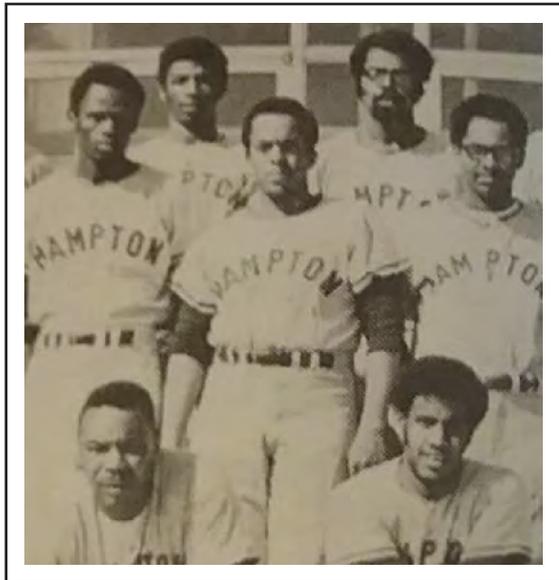


Scholar, Educator & Mentor

May 2, 2023 was the last day that Eaton met with his students at Hampton University. His career had come full circle, having started at Hampton Institute's Mass Media Arts program under mentor Dr. William Kearney, graduating in 1971. He went on to receive his masters in journalism at Columbia University in New York City in 1972.

Clark Atlanta's Mass Media Arts program students benefited from his real-world experience in television and print journalism from 1989-2020. Teaching on ZOOM during the pandemic was not ideal and Eaton decided to wait until the classroom opened again to resume his professorship.

Eaton returned to academia at Hampton University in the fall of 2022 as an Endowed Professor at the Scripps Howard School of Journalism & Communications. Coaching, mentoring and shaping young journalists was one of the greatest joys of his life....as well as a powerful and poignant end to his life.



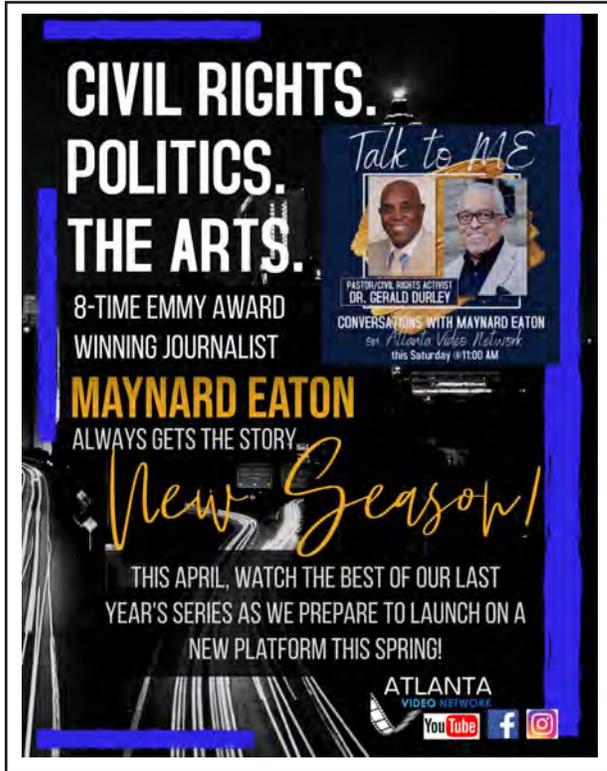
HAMPTON
UNIVERSITY

“THE PASSING OF MAYNARD EATON IS A TREMENDOUS LOSS TO THE ENTIRE HAMPTON UNIVERSITY FAMILY. EQUALLY, HIS IS A LOSS TO THE MEDIA PROFESSION AND SOCIETY,” SAID HU PRESIDENT DARRELL K. WILLIAMS. “IN THIS ERA WHEN THE MEDIA HAS THE POWER TO INFLUENCE OUR BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS, PROFESSOR EATON’S BODY OF WORK REMINDS US TO PURSUE AND PROTECT EXCELLENCE AND FAIRNESS IN OUR EXCHANGE OF IDEAS, THOUGHTS, AND INFORMATION.”

“HE BEGAN EVERY CLASS PERIOD ASKING US ABOUT WHAT’S IN THE NEWS. I LOVED PROFESSOR EATON, AND EVERYTHING HE’S TAUGHT ME WILL STICK WITH ME.”

—SIDNEY GREENE, HU STUDENT

GOOD TIMES, GREAT FRIENDS & JOYFUL ENDINGS



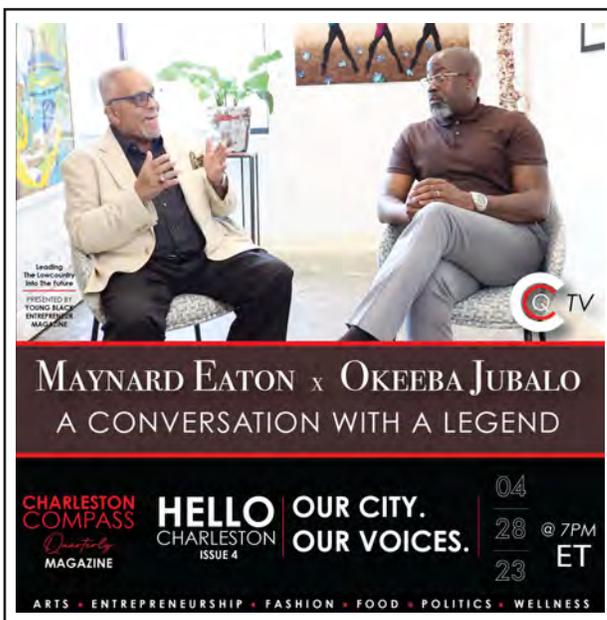
In addition to his ubiquitous presence as THE man on the scene when it came to news, Eaton also enjoyed life and good friends over the years. In Miami, he and friend Bernie Hartman founded a nightclub called Bacchus II, the first Black nightclub on Miami.

In Atlanta, you would find Maynard at legendary nightspots Cisco's and Mr. V's Figure 8 in between newscasts. Eaton trail-blazed Black media with good friend RDW Jackson, the ad-man who made Eaton's editorial space in publications, such as the Atlanta Voice possible. Jackson also helped lay the foundation for Eaton's Newsmakers Live show, hosted by Jim Welcome, which took place in various nightclubs until 2019. Eaton also launched media platforms Georgia Power and The Maynard Report website and newspaper column in 2016 with friend and partner Okeeba Jubalo.

While the bulk of his life and career was spent in Atlanta, he moved with his wife Robin Williams Eaton to her ancestral home in Indiana during Covid-19. There he created his talk show TALK TO ME with producers Rick Clear & Mark Abrams, remotely from the Midwest.

He and Robin got married in a joyful Jazz Second-line wedding in New Orleans in 2017. As tandem journalists, they also worked on many projects as partners in Eaton Media Group. They traveled extensively during their 7 years together, even taking a cross country road trip on Route 66 to California in the summer of 2022, shortly before they moved to Virginia for his professorship at Hampton University.

In March 2023 he found out he had cancer. His final interview was conducted with close friend Okeeba on April 21, 2023 in Charleston, SC for Charleston Compass magazine, one month prior to his death.





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE INCREDIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF KINDNESS, SUPPORT AND LOVE DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME:

THE EATON FAMILY, THE LEAKE FAMILY, THE INGRAM FAMILY,
THE GREEN FAMILY, THE WILSON FAMILY
THE DIXON & FULLER FAMILIES
THE WILLIAMS, HILL & PAUL FAMILIES

EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH-ATLANTA, GA
THE CHAMBERLIN-FORT MONROE, VA
THE KOKOMO ALEHOUSE, INDIANA & MANUEL'S TAVERN, ATLANTA, GA

THE CITY OF ATLANTA
SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (SCLC)
HAMPTON UNIVERSITY-PRESIDENT, STAFF & ALUMNI
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY-ALUMNI
WVEC-13-NORFOLK
WXIA-TV-ALIVE-ATLANTA
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION
THE ATLANTA VOICE
THE KOKOMO TRIBUNE
THE KOKOMO LANTERN

CLERGY: REV. RAPHAEL WARNOCK, REV. JASPER WILLIAMS, REV. DR. GERALD DURLEY,
REV. DARRYL WINSTON, REV. DR. MICHAEL CARSON

HONORARY "PALLBEARERS": RDW JACKSON, DARREN SMITH, TY COLLINS,
BERNIE HARTMAN, DENNIS GOMEZ & JERRY PAUL

MUSICIANS: "MILKSHAKE" MAYFIELD, MYRNA CLAYTON, JODY MAYFIELD, ROBIN WILLIAMS EATON
PROGRAM DESIGN & EDITORIAL; OKEEBA JUBALO @ NOBLE SOL ART GROUP & EATON MEDIA GROUP

MAYNARD EATON

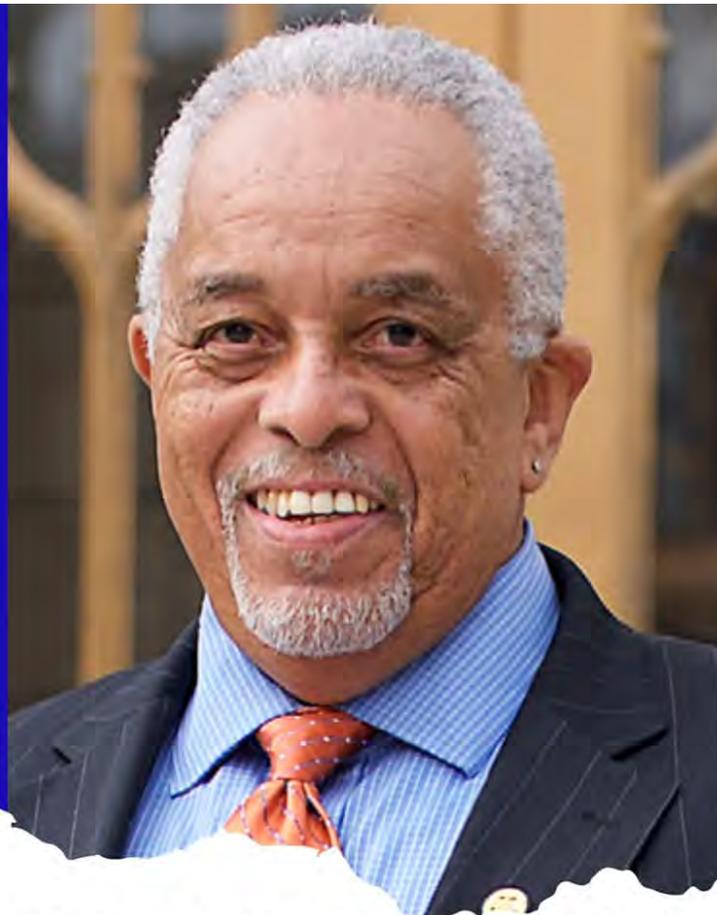
LEGEND

MAYNARD EATON

THE CELEBRATION OF A
LEGEND

THEMAYNARDREPORT.com





MAYNARD EATON

Cheers!
TO A LEGEND

06.16.2023 — 2:00-4:00 PM
AFTER THE MEMORIAL SERVICE

MC: Rick Clear-plus Jazz w/ Jody Mayfield & Myrna Clayton

Cheers by: Shirley Franklin, Shelley Wynter, Rich Foster, RDW Jackson, Darren Smith, J'Lyn Furby, Eaton Family & more!



"Atlanta's Quintessential Neighborhood Bar"
602 N. HIGHLAND Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30307