



# GRINDSTONE AWARD



**2009**

## **The Reverend Leroy McCreary**

home and from worshipping in a building too small for the size of the congregation to a new sanctuary constructed on the North End of Berea in 2003. Also, he is finishing a two-year term as President of the International Council of Community Churches, bringing honor to Berea through his work with this national organization.

Some of his other accomplishments include:

- Founder and current President of the North End Foundation of Berea, a non-profit, 501c3 organization that brings free computer training and other social and academic activities to the citizens of Berea targeting the citizens in the north end of Berea.
- An elected member of the Berea Board of Education from 1979 to 1989 where he served as Berea's representative to the Polaris Career Center Board.
- A Charter and current member of the Berea City Club, an organization which raises funds for numerous projects in Berea.
- On the Board of Directors of the Berea Community Development Corporation, an organization created to expand economic opportunity throughout Berea by planning activities to support and create jobs and implement business and neighborhood development.
- A trustee since 1995 of the Southwest General Health System Board and now is serving as Chairman of the Board of the Southwest General Health Center. In this position he has supervised numerous internal improvements to the main hospital, the acquisition of several large units of diagnostic and surgical equipment and also has participated on the selection committee for the last two CEOs of the hospital.
- A Charter member of the Berea City School District Educational Community Foundation, which raises funds and provides scholarships for students from the district.
- Chaplain, advisor and representative to the Berea Police Department. An avid gardener and great fisherman he resides in Berea along with his wife Elaine of 39 years. They have two married daughters, Tina Manning and Nicole Batson and three grandchildren.

Berea is a better community because of Reverend Leroy McCreary's hard work, dedication, kindness, advice and wise counsel, and also his unselfish commitment to making our schools, our hospital, his church, and our town a better place to live.

A gentleman. A man of honor. A man of truth. And a man with unusual personal skills in leading people to higher levels. This best describes our 42nd Grindstone Award winner Reverend Leroy McCreary.

Born in a tiny rural community, Safford, Alabama and one of ten children of a separated family Leroy at the age of 17 came north to Cleveland to live with an aunt and uncle and attend college. After the unexpected death of his mother he returned to Safford to get two of his sisters that were in elementary school. At the age of 18 he rented an apartment in the same building where he had been living with his aunt and uncle so he could raise them and put them through high school. Later he returned to Safford to bring to Cleveland two brothers who were living with relatives.

After 37 years of federal service Reverend McCreary retired from NASA Glenn Research Center as Chief, Operations Office of the Office of Human Resources. With Glenn supporting a flexible work-school schedule he attended and graduated from Cleveland State University with a B.A. degree. Also, Glenn provided him a leave of absence to accept an academic scholarship and attend and graduate from Case Western Reserve University's School of Applied Social Sciences (SASS) with a Master's Degree in Social Administration. His wife, Elaine, supported them while he attended graduate school full time. Later he enrolled in and graduated with a Master's Degree from Ashland Theological Seminary.

In 1975 Reverend McCreary was selected as Pastor of the People's Community Church. Under his leadership he has led the church from renting worship space in Baldwin Wallace College Chapel to a permanent church

Presented April 21, 2009

Crown Plaza Hotel, Middleburg Heights, Ohio