

Oseola McCarty

September 1999 Calendar

Oseola McCarty -- the humble washerwoman who became the University of Southern Mississippi's most famous benefactor -- passed away Sept. 26, 1999, after a bout with cancer. Oseola McCarty was born, reared and started her education in Mississippi. When she was in the sixth grade, McCarty left school to care for her ailing aunt and never returned to school. For more than 75 years, she earned her living as a laundress. She did laundry for three generations of some Hattiesburg, Miss., families.

Arthritis in her hands forced her to retire in 1994. Since then, McCarty, who never married or learned to drive, and who rarely left her home except for weekly trips to the grocery store, has appeared on every major TV network and been written about in most national publications because of her donation of \$150,000 to the University of Southern Mississippi.

In 1995, McCarty was honored for her philanthropic work by the White House and received a Presidential Citizens Medal from President Clinton. She also holds a Community Heroes Award from the National Urban League, the Premier Black Woman of Courage Award from the National Federation of Black Women Business Owners, and the Achiever Award



from the Aetna Foundation. Among her other awards are honorary degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi and Harvard University.

A collection of McCarty's views on life, work, faith, saving, and relationships can be found in her book, *Simple Wisdom for Rich Living*, published by Longstreet Press in 1996.

Community-based dentistry is Dr. Dennis Mitchell's passion and focus. As an assistant professor of clinical dentistry in the departments of Community Health and Periodontics at Columbia University's School of Dental and Oral Surgery, he oversees the school's Harlem component of the Community DentCare Network. In addition to his responsibilities at Columbia, Dr. Mitchell is an attending dentist and director of research and community dentistry at Harlem Hospital Center Department of Dentistry.