



Smithsonian

Anacostia Community Museum

Walter Pierce Ontario Lakers Collection

ACMA.06-104

ACM Staff

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Anacostia Community Museum Archives
Title:	Walter Pierce Ontario Lakers Collection
Date:	1960-2000
Identifier:	ACMA.06-104
Creator:	Pierce, Walter C, 1946-1991
Extent:	2.42 Linear feet (2 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Walter C. Pierce (1946-1991) was a civic leader and founder of the Ontario Lakers Youth Organization in Washington, DC. The collection includes correspondence, certificates, flyers, proposals, newspaper clippings, political posters, city council resolutions, basketball tournament programs, and other items documenting Pierce's activism and activities of the Ontario Lakers.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

The Walter Pierce Ontario Lakers collection, Anacostia Community Museum, Smithsonian Institution, gift of the Pierce Family.

Restrictions

Use of the materials requires an appointment. Please contact the archivist at acmarchives@si.edu.

Conditions Governing Use

The Walter Pierce Ontario Lakers collection are the physical property of the Anacostia Community Museum. Literary and copyright belong to the author/creator or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, and to obtain permission to publish or reproduce, contact the Museum Archives.

Biographical / Historical

The Ontario Lakers Youth organization was founded in 1964 by Walter C. Pierce (1946-1991) and his brother Ronald, in the Adams Morgan section of Washington, DC. Walter created the organization to provide the local youth with recreation and jobs. Youths from Adams Morgan joined the club's football, baseball, and basketball teams and competed against other teams throughout the city. The strength of their programs led to the creation of the Ghetto Invitational, a citywide basketball tournament. In addition to sports, members of the Ontario Lakers created a community garden, hosted community dances, participated in activities ranging from kung fu to tie-dye, took field trips around the region, and performed yard work and sold Christmas trees to raise fund for their activities.

Much of the Ontario Lakers programming took place at the Community Park West. This park was once a lot owned by a developer who planned to erect a luxury apartment building on the site. The land's history as a burial ground prevented initial building construction; in the interim, Pierce organized neighborhood youth to clear the lot and transform the space into a much-needed community park. This instigated a multi-year legal battle with developers, historic groups, and Congress before the lot was ultimately designated a public park in 1978.

Mr. Pierce was involved in numerous civic activities and served as the chairman of the Adams Morgan Organization (AMO). Prior to his untimely death in 1991; Walter C. Pierce was recognized by several organizations, including the Washington, D.C. City Council, for his dedicated service to the community. After his death, the large and heavily used green space that he helped to turn into a public park was renamed Walter Pierce Park, in his honor.

See Also

[Oral History Interview with Ronald and Mary Pierce](#)

See Also

[Ghetto Invitational Championship Trophy](#)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Activists
- Basketball teams
- Parks -- Washington (D.C.)
- Political posters
- Youth groups

Types of Materials:

- Certificates -- 20th century
- Fliers (printed matter)
- Grant Proposals
- Newspaper clippings

Names:

District of Columbia. Department of Recreation

Places:

Adams Morgan (Washington, D.C.)