



## HONORARY STREET NAME SIGN APPLICATION

City Hall, Room 205  
200 East Wells Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

PLEASE NOTE: A \$100 PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY THIS FORM  
(Checks should be made payable to "City Treasurer")

### 1. Applicant information:

Applicant's Name Tanzanique Carrington

Organization or Company Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. - Epsilon Kappa Omega Chapter

Street Address PO Box 18603 City/State Milwaukee Zip 53218

Telephone 414-467-6138 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email lindajlucas@gmail.com

*contact person - Linda Lucas - information above*

### 2. Honorary Street Name Request

Street name requested Gloria Ford Gilmer, Ph.D.

Location of proposed designation: (for example, West Main Street from North 12<sup>th</sup> Street to North 15<sup>th</sup> Street)

6th and Highland Avenue *(6th - 8th St)*

### 3. Required Submittals:

- Refer to Chapter 113-3, Milwaukee Code of Ordinances (attached)
- A typed statement containing no fewer than **500 words** describing the significance of the person, place, or event being honored. The statement should indicate why a particular section of street has been requested for the honorary designation.

### 4. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:

My application consists of the following items necessary to complete the application. Please check:

- ☒ \$100 fee (check made payable to "City Treasurer").
- ☒ Completed Application Form.
- ☒ Autobiography or statement regarding the person, place, or event being honored.

Signature

*Tanzanique Carrington*

Date

*4/6/24*

Printed Name

*Tanzanique Carrington*

## **Gloria Gilmer's Mathematical Venture**

**April 6, 2024**

**(Soror Jill Gilmer)**

Gloria Ford Gilmer was always intrigued by numbers as a young girl growing up in Baltimore. Realization was beginning to set in as she worked in her after-school job in her father's corner grocery store. Counting, measuring, waiting on customers, giving change at the checkout and keeping inventory on the shelf. She saw that there was math in it all. Math was everywhere. Even in one's culture.

One of the things she said was, "Education is the gift of influence, the ability to inspire. Never forget to pave a way for the next generation. We must lift as we climb." And that's what she did: teach others to enjoy and excel at math.

She's a woman of many firsts: the first black high school math instructor for the Milwaukee Public Schools, the first black math instructor at Milwaukee Area Technical College, where she taught for 14 years, and the first black woman to earn a PhD from the School of Education at Marquette University.

**(Soror Imani Ortiz)**

Dr. Gloria Ford Gilmer, PhD became an academic scholar of global acclaim, an authority in the field of Ethnomathematics. Dr. Gilmer called Ethnomathematics, "the math of the people." Her daughter, Jill Gilmer said, "Ethnomathematics is a way of looking at the practical applications of math within your own culture. Dr. Gilmer would use cultural examples as a way to engage the students in the subject matter. For instance, she said there's math in basketball, because athletes must estimate the proper angle to shoot the ball at. There's math in choosing your route from your house to your school. There's math in almost every aspect of life."

In 2024, another first was added to Dr. Gilmer's name. She became the first Black woman mathematician to have her research archived at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Her research took her across the globe and enabled her to

develop textbooks and other classroom materials for students from pre-school to college.

**(Soror Liddie Collins-Siegrist)**

Dr. Gilmer lived a long and fruitful life. She died in 2021 at the age of 93. She was a wife, a mother, a researcher, an educator, and a faithful servant in the Episcopal Church. As a Pearl member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., she was active in our organization for 74 years. In addition, she served in leadership roles with the YWCA, the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women and the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.

In her early days, her gift for math was tapped by the United States Army. She estimated exterior ballistics and bombing trajectories. This led many people to call her “The 4<sup>th</sup> Hidden Figure.” This was a reference to the famous movie about three black women scientists who worked at NASA in the 1950’s.

An honorary street sign on the campus of MATC would serve as an inspiration for younger minds to follow. An extraordinary venture that began in simplicity as a young girl, minding the corner store after school for her father, led to a life of excellence, relevance, curiosity and meaning.

##

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ARCHIVAL MANUSCRIPT/MIXED FORMATS (COLLECTION)

## Gloria Ford Gilmer papers

[Full Record](#)[MARC Tags](#)

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Personal name

[Gilmer, Gloria Ford, 1928-2021.](#)

Main title

Gloria Ford Gilmer papers.

[Request this Item](#)[↓ Item Availability](#)LCCN Permalink <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2023086576>

Description

61,200 items.  
xx digital files (xx GB).  
175 containers plus 1 oversize.  
xx linear feet.

Access advisory

Open to research.  
Restrictions may apply to unprocessed material.

Local shelving no. 0324P

Oversize 8:10

Digital files (Unprocessed ac. 25205)

Biography/History  
note

Mathematician, educator, social activist, and pioneer in the field of  
ethnomathematics.

LC Subjects

Educators.  
Mathematicians.  
Social activists.

Notes

Collection material in English.

Acquisition source

Gift, Jill Gilmer, 2023.

LCCN

mm2023086576

Other standard no.

MSS86576

Repository

Library of Congress Manuscript Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA  
dcu <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.home>

Type of material

Archival Manuscript/Mixed Formats (Collection)

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## Item Availability

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Request in Manuscript Reading Room (Madison LM101). Material stored  
offsite--advance notice required for retrieval.

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Manuscript Reading Room (Madison, LM101)

CALL NUMBER

Digital files (Unprocessed ac. 25205)

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Manuscript Reading Room (Madison, LM101)

CALL NUMBER      **Processed : 01/xx/2024 (LM130 : Unprocessed ac. 25422)**

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**OV 1**

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"The idea," Gilmer later wrote, "was to determine what the hair braiding and hair weaving enterprise can contribute to mathematics teaching and learning what mathematics can contribute to the enterprise." Meticulously researched in hair salons and in beauty magazines, hair braiding became the metaphor Gilmer was most known for, one that linked the beauty of natural hair to the politics of inequitable access to mathematical knowledge, and to the economics of community business. It still resonates.

## Conclusion

Mathematicians often use power as a synonym for an exponent's multiplier effect. Gilmer offered her own definition of mathematical power: the ability to "discern and investigate through a variety of mathematical methods the mathematical relationships observed in patterns and structures in one's own surroundings." Other intersections of math and power structured much of her life and career: the inequitable distribution of educational resources by race and class, the underrepresentation of minorities in professional mathematics spaces, the earning power math skills can bring to individuals and communities, the hegemony of a mathematics curriculum that purports to be culture neutral, the geopolitical consequences for a nation falling behind in STEM education. Gilmer also held her own kind of power, an influence born of a radical empathy and charismatic extroversion, and the ability to view deeply ingrained issues like institutional racism as just another problem to solve, if she could only make the right calculations.

What makes Gilmer's work particularly compelling is how relevant it remains. Jill Gilmer has said that she wishes her mother's views had been more widely understood and embraced, particularly her underlying beliefs that the capacity to learn is within everyone and that each person has something to contribute. Like a good teacher, much of Gilmer's legacy can be found in the ways she inspired people to increasingly higher levels of achievement. Yet, of course, inequities still persist in mathematics achievement. "It feels like we're kind of still back where we were," Jill has said, "trying to figure this thing out. So that's a little bit frustrating but, that's the beauty of having her papers at the Library of Congress. Maybe the word will get out and we'll start to realize it's not as hopeless as it looks, there's work in this area that's already been done."

**Figure 4.**

Gilmer in front of the US Supreme Court and Library of Congress during Barack Obama's 2009 presidential inauguration.



## Receipt of Street Naming Fee

Date:	4/10/24
Received Of:	Linda Lucas
Received By:	LME
Check # (If Applicable):	1221
Amount Received	\$100.00