

# Julius Henry Taylor

## He had been longtime head of Morgan State's physics department and an avid golfer

By Frederick N. Rasmussen, The Baltimore Sun

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Dr. Julius Henry "Jute" Taylor, who was a physics professor at what is now [Morgan State University](#) for 37 years and also headed the department, died Aug. 27 of [heart failure](#) at his Windsor Hills home. He was 97.

The son of a brick mason and a homemaker, Dr. Taylor, one of six children, was born and raised in Cape May, N.

He was a 1932 graduate of Middle Township High School, where he played basketball, was a champion pole vaulter and played trumpet in the high school band.

While attending high school, he met his future wife, Patricia Spaulding, who was four years his junior. "He often told the story about thinking that he 'had it made in South Jersey with a high school diploma, a pretty woman by his side, a car, and a trumpet in his hand,'" said his daughter, Trena Taylor Brown of Baltimore.

But his future wife, whom he married in 1937, insisted that a condition of their marriage was that he go to college and earn a degree.

Although he had arrived at Lincoln University in Lincoln, Pa., with only \$50 in savings, he managed to pay his tuition by playing the trumpet at night in bands.

After earning his bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1938, Dr. Taylor thought he would be teaching high school science and believed he could get a better position if he could teach physics in addition to chemistry.

After enrolling at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), where he took several physics courses, he was encouraged by the Penn faculty to continue his graduate education in physics.

Subsequently, he went on to receive his master's degree and a doctorate in 1947 in solid state physics. "He was the second African-American to receive a Ph.D. from that institution and one of the first African-Americans in the nation to receive a Ph.D. in physics. He was also a Rosenwald Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania," his daughter said.

During the 1940s, he published scholarly papers under contract with the [U.S. Navy](#), and in 1945, he became chairman of the physics department at West Virginia State College, now West Virginia State University, in Institute, W.Va.

In 1949, Dr. Taylor joined the faculty at what was then Morgan State College at the insistence of then-president Dr. Martin David Jenkins, who wanted to establish a physics department.

Dr. Taylor began building the physics department and became its first chairman in 1954 after earning tenure as a professor.

During his years at Morgan, Dr. Taylor mentored several students who went on to earn doctorates in physics, "an accomplishment that he was extremely proud of," his daughter said.

Respected by both his colleagues and students alike, he was called "Doc Taylor" or "Prof Taylor." He was known for his engaging smile, quick wit and helping hand.

In 1955, Dr. Taylor served as an editor for "The Negro in Science," a book addressing prominent African-American scientists and their research. During his time at Morgan, he served as a liaison to [NASA](#) Goddard Space Flight Center and the National Science Foundation, along with several other scientific societies and committees.

He also established dual-degree programs in engineering through cooperative arrangements with engineering schools at [New York University](#), [Cornell University](#) and the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Dr. Taylor lectured at American University before his retirement in 1987, when he became professor emeritus at Morgan State University and continued teaching part time until 1999.

After his retirement, Dr. Taylor continued mentoring students in Baltimore's junior and senior high schools, where he nurtured, influenced and encouraged minority students to pursue advanced degrees in the sciences.

Dr. Taylor maintained a steady flow of scholarly research publications on x-ray diffusion, electrical and optical properties of semi-conductors and other critical areas of science. He presented papers at professional meetings and published widely in journals, including Physics Today, The American Journal of Physics, The Physics Teacher and the American Physical Society. He also contributed more than 20 articles to an edition of the Grolier International Encyclopedia.

Dr. Taylor was the recipient of two honorary doctorate degrees in science from Grambling State University and from Lincoln University, where he had been named Alumnus of the Year in 1963.

In 1976, he received a Distinguished Service Citation from the American Association of Physics Teachers. He had been a member and president of the executive committee of the Chesapeake Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers as well as a section representative.

In addition to Dr. Taylor's academic achievements, he was an avid golfer up until age 95.

"He was such a good senior player that golfers at the Forest Park Golf Course where he frequented, did not want to be paired with him as they didn't want to get beaten by someone in their 80s," his daughter said.

He served as the first coach of the Morgan State College golf team, which won the CIAA Championship under his leadership.

One of the original team members who is now a professional golfer, Rodney "Binx" Watts, wrote, "As my golf coach at Morgan, Doc holds a special place in my heart and in the hearts of all the young minds he touched."

As a result of his playing and coaching careers, Dr. Taylor was inducted into the African-American Golf Hall of Fame.

One of Dr. Taylor's favorite sayings, family members said, was "You don't know how to live until you know how to give. Be blessed to give. Be blessed to receive."

He served on the board of the Maryland Academy of Sciences and chaired its Scientific Council during the period when the [Maryland Science Center](#) was being planned.

In 1975, he was appointed as Commissioner of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission by Gov. [Marvin Mandel](#) and also served on the Governor's Science Advisory Council.

He volunteered for numerous organizations, including serving as president of the Traveler's Aid Society of Central Maryland.

Dr. Taylor had been a member of Grace Presbyterian Church since his arrival in Baltimore and, as recently as last month at the age of 97, was still driving himself to church and back once a month.

He was also a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

"He left us with the grace, class and dignity with which he lived his life," said Wes Hairston, a Windsor Hills neighbor.

Dr. Taylor's wife, who had been an executive assistant to five presidents of Morgan State University, died in 1997.

Dr. Taylor donated his body to the Maryland State Anatomy Board, family members said.

In addition to his daughter, Dr. Taylor is survived by his son, Dwight S. Taylor of Pikesville; a grandson; and two great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 1 p.m. Oct. 22 at Morgan State University, 1700 E. Cold Spring Lane. *In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that contributions be made to the Morgan State University Foundation, for the Dr. Julius Henry Taylor Scholarship Fund. Checks should be made payable to the Foundation, specifying the scholarship fund on the memo line. Mail to Morgan State University Foundation, 1700 E. Cold Spring Lane, 201 Truth Hall, Baltimore, Md. 21251.*

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