



City of Alexandria  
Office of Historic Alexandria  
*Alexandria Legacies*  
**Oral History Program**



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**Interviewer:** *Phylis J. Adams*

**Transcriber:** *Valerie Davison*

**Abstract:** Born in Alexandria in 1930, Christine Howard talks about growing up in the 300 block of North Patrick Street. Her mother, who owned a restaurant at the corner of North Fayette and Queen Street until it closed during the Great Depression, believed strongly in education, and Christine and her nine siblings all achieved education beyond high school. Christine attended Parker-Gray School and talks about Ebenezer Baptist Church as well as Hopkins House and other recreation centers for young people in the city. She earned her undergraduate degree at West Virginia State College and her master's degree from the University of Virginia, and she taught in the Alexandria schools while the schools were segregated and throughout the process of desegregation and later. She was Principal of Jefferson-Houston Elementary School for 14 years and was active in the Urban League, the Alexandria Community YMCA (now the Campagna Center), Hopkins House, and the Commission of Equal Opportunity.

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<b>Introductions</b>	
Phylis J. Adams:	Would you please give us your name?
Christine Howard:	Christine Howard.
P.J.A.:	And your address, please.
Christine Howard:	South Fayette Street, Alexandria, Virginia.
P.J.A.:	All right. Tell us where you were born.
Christine Howard:	I was born in Alexandria, Virginia, on April 24, 1930.
P.J.A.:	Now were you born at home, or were you born in a hospital?
Christine Howard:	I was born in the Alexandria Hospital, located on the corner of Duke and Columbus Street, here in Alexandria.
P.J.A.:	Now if I remember correctly, when we talked before, you told me that you were the first in your family to be born in Alexandria Hospital? Is that correct?
Christine Howard:	That's correct. The rest of my family was born—my sisters were born at home. I had a brother who was born in Baltimore, Maryland. But the others were born at home.
<b>Parents and Childhood</b>	
P.J.A.:	Please tell me about your parents—who they were, and all about them.
Christine Howard:	My father was a construction worker, and my mother was a domestic worker. She also owned and operated a restaurant here in Alexandria, on the corner of North Fayette Street and Queen Street.
P.J.A.:	Was your mother born here in Alexandria, also?
Christine Howard:	No. Both my parents were born in Stafford, Virginia.
P.J.A.:	Do you remember when they moved to Alexandria?
Christine Howard:	No.
P.J.A.:	Tell me a little bit about your early childhood—where you spent it.
Christine Howard:	My early childhood was spent on the 300 block—I lived at 307 North Patrick Street. That's where I spent my early childhood. There were ten in my family. I had seven sisters and two brothers. A large family. So we did a lot of family things. My parents were not very rich people; in fact, we were poor, but we didn't know it.
P.J.A.:	When did you discover that you were poor?

Christine Howard:	After I became an adult. [Laughter]
P.J.A.:	Right. So life was really pretty good growing up.
Christine Howard:	Life was good. Life was good. We had all the things we needed. We were happy. We were a happy family. My mother was a mother that loved her children. Ten children. A lot of children, but she loved every one of them, and we knew it. We knew it.
P.J.A.:	You spoke about your parents. Give me their names.
Christine Howard:	My mother was “Winnie” Elizabeth Powers Tyler. And my father was Ezekiel Powers. My father died when I was six years old, so I don’t know too much about him. My mother married when I became a young adult. There’s a picture of my mother and stepfather.
P.J.A.:	That’s very interesting. If you have some other photographs, maybe we could see them, or maybe photocopy them for the exhibit.
Christine Howard:	But that’s my mother and stepfather. My stepfather was Gaines Tyler.
P.J.A.:	So you say life growing up on Queen Street—
Christine Howard:	Patrick. I lived on Queen Street when I was very, very young. I think I was about six years old when we moved from Queen Street to Patrick Street. My first six years I lived on Queen Street.
<b>Typical Day</b>	
P.J.A.:	Tell me what a typical day might be like in your household.
Christine Howard:	We were late sleepers. My mother always complained that we always slept late. Even after growing up to be young adults, we still slept late. But we’d get started. My mother was very religious. You started each day with her reading the Bible. From that, George read scripture from the Bible. Every morning, before leaving the house. We’d get up. She’d have breakfast prepared, and we’d be very independent. Everybody had their breakfast, and got ready for school. We loved school. Because she talked about three things a lot: religion, hard work, and education. So school was always a very important part of our lives, because she emphasized that. I think [unclear] the majority of my family missed very few days from school. So we would go to school, and school ended at 3:00 at that time. You’d come home, and, of course, you had school clothes, you had play clothes, and you had church clothes. You’d change your clothes, you’d do your homework, you had chores that you had to do—setting the table, getting ready...[Interruption] Getting the table set for dinner and

	things like that. You'd go and visit your friends, on that block. You didn't go any further than the block; you played with your neighbors there. People that we grew up with—my friends were Teresa Bentley, Martin Charity, Maddie Page, and [unclear]. After that we ate dinner around 7:00 in the evening. By that time my mother would come home, and we'd have dinner.
P.J.A.:	Did you all eat together?
Christine Howard:	Yes, we ate together. As I told you before, before we had dinner we always had to call my brother. He spent a lot of time at the Elk's lodge. But she would call him to come home, so the family could have dinner together. That was my oldest brother, Hamilton. We did that daily. We always had to call over there.
P.J.A.:	What was the procedure for washing the dishes?
Christine Howard:	Well, my sister Evelyn and I had the responsibility of clearing the table, washing the dishes, putting them away. I didn't mind washing dishes; I always hated washing the pots and pans. And I had a tendency of trying to hide them in the oven, but that didn't last very long before my mother caught up with me. I don't know why, but I hated doing the pans. [Laughs]
P.J.A.:	Why is it that the other children didn't have to do dishes?
Christine Howard:	They were older, and they had jobs.
<b>School</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now tell me about going to school in Alexandria. What was that like?
Christine Howard:	That was a joy. We loved school. We had a lot of activities when I went to school, because it was during World War II, and they had the USO there, on the corner of Wellington and Patrick. At the end of the War, it was changed to a recreation center for blacks, and we spent a lot of time there because they had so many nice activities. We had sports, and I took ballet lessons there. I took tap lessons there. They had gymnastics. They would have activities on weekends, like they would cabaret and parties, always some type of activity. I lived there on Patrick Street, so we would walk there like. Then we had Hopkins House. It was just a house. But these were places that had wonderful activities for young people, all the time. Those were two places that your parents allowed you to walk to when they weren't around, because they knew you were well supervised. They were just wonderful places for young people to go.
P.J.A.:	Tell me about Hopkins House.
Christine Howard:	The Girl Scouts, and the Brownies, craft classes, all kinds of

	activities for young people. And they hired people who were well-qualified to operate and run these places. Hopkins House was run by [Unclear's] wife. Of course, everybody knew... Bunny Ford, and Sarah Mickey Cowl ran the recreation department, and Morrie Seibert. —those were people who were really concerned about young people. They just had wonderful activities. Supervised. Well organized.
P.J.A.:	What elementary school did you attend?
Christine Howard:	I attended at that time—it was Charles—it was known as Parker-Gray. See, Parker-Gray was an elementary school and a high school. The elementary school was on the lower level, and the high school was on the second floor.
P.J.A.:	Now tell me about some of your teachers, when you were in school—the ones you remember the most.
Christine Howard:	I remember Reverend Atkins, the math teacher, who was a wonderful man and a wonderful teacher. Miss Susie Anderson, who taught biology. A very nice lady. Miss Mabel Smith taught math. Those were three teachers I remember from my high school. Elementary school was Mrs. Alma Maury, one of my first-grade teachers. I had Mrs. Helen Day as a teacher.
P.J.A.:	What are some of your fondest memories about school? Are there any that are just more prominent than others? Any one event? Any two events?
Christine Howard:	I was very active in high school. I played on the basketball team. Another favorite person of mine was Miss Ruby Johnson. She was the basketball coach. I played on the basketball team, and I was a member of the Student Council. I brought some of these photographs to share with you.
P.J.A.:	Good.
Christine Howard:	These were some of my activities in school. Here I am, in Student Council.
P.J.A.:	Which one is you?
Christine Howard:	Here I am.
P.J.A.:	Cute little picture. [Laughs] Now what year is this?
Christine Howard:	Forty-six. 1946. Here's another one. The school newspapers.
P.J.A.:	The Girl Reserves.
Christine Howard:	Here I am.
In:	Did you like school?

Christine Howard:	Oh, boy. Of course. And again—here—the dramatic club. And the chorus. I'm in here, for the chorus. And here I am with the basketball team.
P.J.A.:	Now is this the picture that's on display at the resource center?
Christine Howard:	It probably is.
P.J.A.:	It looks like one that's there. I'd like to look at that a little bit more. All right. Now that you graduated from Parker-Gray, tell me about your college career.
<b>College</b>	
Christine Howard:	I attended West Virginia State College as an undergraduate student, and majored in...When I attended West Virginia State, I planned to become a physical education teacher. But I wasn't able to take swimming, so I changed my major to sociology—sociology and history. After finishing—I finished in three years and a half, and when I finished West Virginia State, I worked in a nursery school for about a year and did substitute work. I substituted for about a year; after that I was given a permanent position at Charles Houston Elementary School, and went back to school and became certified to teach in the elementary school. I taught at Charles Houston until they integrated schools. Once they had integrated schools, I was transferred to Princeton School. Princeton School. Well Prince Street School—Prince Street was closed. I went to Minnie Howard, until they decided to close Minnie Howard and change it to ninth grade. I was transferred to [unclear], and I worked there for a couple of years, and decided to take a sabbatical. I took sabbatical leave and attended the University of Virginia, and received my master's. In Alexandria, at that time, they allowed you to take a sabbatical and paid you 75% of your salary. You had to return to the system, and stay for five years.
<b>Integration</b>	
P.J.A.:	What are your recollections about the school system when they were integrated? About the schools when they were integrated? What do you recall?
Christine Howard:	I recall that, as a teacher, when I went to Princeton School I think I had about four black children in my class. And the thing that I did when I went to Princeton School—the first thing I did was I listed the children in my class and their telephone numbers. I called all of the parents and I said to them, "I will be your child's teacher this year, and I am black. I want you to know that I want you to be very, very active in my classroom. At any time, I encourage my parents to participate in their child's education,

	totally.” And I didn’t have one parent to say to me anything other than, “Well, Miss Howard, we are behind you 100%.” I had not one parent to complain, during the whole time I taught their children.
P.J.A.:	So did you see the integration as a smooth one?
Christine Howard:	It was a smooth one for me. And I was not surprised, because the children were very young. I was at the elementary level. It was much more difficult at the high-school level. Young children, they don’t care. They have not learned how to be unpleasant at that age. I think your most difficult situation was at the junior high or the high school level. I didn’t have any problem at any of the schools.
P.J.A.:	You didn’t?
Christine Howard:	I didn’t.
P.J.A.:	That’s very good. That’s commendable.
Christine Howard:	The parents were very cooperative.
P.J.A.:	And you attribute not having any problems at any of these schools to what?
Christine Howard:	Parents were interested in their child getting a good education. Their concerns were, “Can this lady teach?” Not so much that I was black; could I teach their children, and teach their children well?
P.J.A.:	That’s probably another reason why there were no problems.
Christine Howard:	Absolutely.
<b>Administration</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now tell me about your period as an administrator in the school system of Alexandria.
Christine Howard:	I loved what I did. I loved the work. I loved working with teachers, and I think the most important part of that job, that I loved the most, was that I had an opportunity to interview and get the very best teachers in my school. That’s why my school was successful; because I had the best—in all areas, not just teachers. I had the best custodians; I had the best cafeteria workers; I had the very best of everything. I think this is why I was successful.
P.J.A.:	Tell me about some of your successes as an administrator.
Christine Howard:	I have never been one who felt that tests [were] a good thing. But I always say to my teachers, “If this is what they’re going to use to measure us by, we’re going to do well.” And we did. Our test scores just went up, up, up every year. We had no problems. And

	it's because we didn't teach tests. We taught children, and we taught them well, at every grade level.
P.J.A.:	And what school was this?
Christine Howard:	Jefferson-Houston.
P.J.A.:	How long were you principal of Jefferson-Houston?
Christine Howard:	Fourteen years. I was an assistant principal at MacArthur for a couple of years. But it was just a wonderful fourteen years, just great. And the key is the teacher. That is the key to the success of any school. You can have all the computers in the world, you can have all the equipment. But it's that teacher, that personal contact that children have with good teachers, that makes the difference in their lives.
P.J.A.:	Now you've talked a good deal about parental involvement and good teachers. And if I remember correctly, you told me a little bit about your mother working for a person named Minnie Howell [Howard?].
Christine Howard:	Yes. Minnie Howell [Howard?]. Minnie Howell [Howard?] was a very active person in the leadership of Alexandria for many, many years. She was a great educator, and she emphasized education. In fact, her son was a member of the school board. One son was a lawyer here in Alexandria, [unclear] lawyer here in Alexandria. My mother worked for her. My mother was a domestic worker and worked for her, and she always said to her, "Winnie, you educate those children. You educate those children." Of course, she didn't have to tell my mother that, because my mother had already decided that. But she encouraged her, and did everything she could to help her do that.
<b>Family</b>	
P.J.A.:	You said there were ten of you. Ten children.
Christine Howard:	Ten children.
P.J.A.:	And all of them—
Christine Howard:	All of them have high-school educations and beyond. Beyond that. College. I have a sister who went to Martha Washington for cosmetology. Another, my older sister, went to Martha Washington for a seamstress, and another sister attended Carter Peating for typing. Three sisters attended Tuskegee, and my sister Evelyn and I, we went to West Virginia State. Marian, Gladys, and Mary went to Tuskegee. So she was successful. It worked.
P.J.A.:	Tell me a little bit about your mother's philosophy, also.
Christine Howard:	My mother believed that we could be anything you wanted to be,

	but you had to work hard and you had to have the best education possible. She only had a fifth-grade education. My mother was not uneducated. I felt she was very educated, because she had an awful lot of common sense. She encouraged her children to work hard, get education, and own property.
P.J.A.:	I wanted you to talk to me a little bit more about that part of her philosophy, about owning property. Because for a woman, I guess during her time, to believe in the value of that was quite remarkable. Tell me about that.
Christine Howard:	Yes. I found that out. She purchased one home, at 307 North Patrick Street, and through that home every one of her children who wanted to were able to purchase their home; to use that home to help them to purchase their places.
P.J.A.:	All ten.
Christine Howard:	Seven.
P.J.A.:	That's wonderful.
Christine Howard:	I think that's just amazing that she did that.
P.J.A.:	That was remarkable. So she was a very enterprising, resourceful person.
Christine Howard:	Yes. A lot of energy.
P.J.A.:	Not formally educated, but very intelligent.
Christine Howard:	Very intelligent.
P.J.A.:	Very resourceful.
<b>Restaurant</b>	
P.J.A.:	You mentioned that your mother owned a restaurant—and that's another thing I find fascinating—
Christine Howard:	Yes. [Laughs]
P.J.A.:	—that a woman, at that time, in this city, owning property, owning a business, managing a household with ten children—
Christine Howard:	Yes.
P.J.A.:	Tell me a little bit about her business.
Christine Howard:	I was very young, so I don't remember too much about the business. But my older sisters always talked about how good the food was, and how they would help out in the restaurant and things like that. But I was really surprised. Yes.
P.J.A.:	Now why did she close the restaurant?

Christine Howard:	The Depression.
P.J.A.:	Because of the Depression.
Christine Howard:	Yes.
<b>Childhood Games</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now as you were growing up—tell me about the games that you and your friends played as children.
Christine Howard:	As children. Hopscotch. Double-Dutch. Statues.
P.J.A.:	How do you play Statues?
Christine Howard:	The person would take your arm, twirl you around, let you go, and you had to stand there. Then they would select the person that had the best—could stay in it, like a statue—the longest.
P.J.A.:	That sounds like fun.
Christine Howard:	It was. And, of course, marbles. We used to play marbles in Teresa Bentley's yard. She lived about three doors down, and she had this huge yard in the back, and we used to play marbles. And skating. We used to skate. As we became older, we used to skate from one end of town, uptown, to "out on the hill," as we called it.
P.J.A.:	And where was "out on the hill?"
Christine Howard:	"Out on the hill" was where [unclear] School was.
P.J.A.:	And there were no reservations about your going that distance.
Christine Howard:	No. After you reached a certain age, you were allowed to do that.
P.J.A.:	And you felt safe doing it.
Christine Howard:	Certainly. There were no cars on the street. We skated in the streets.
<b>Discrimination</b>	
P.J.A.:	Let me ask you this. Did you feel discrimination, as you were growing up?
Christine Howard:	You know, the first time I really felt discrimination was when I went to Virginia State, during the summer—
P.J.A.:	Virginia State University?
Christine Howard:	Virginia State University. I was going there to take some summer courses, and I went into [unclear], and there were two fountains. I thought nothing about signs being up, so I just went over to get water, and, of course, I was reminded that I was drinking from the wrong fountain. But here in Alexandria—I grew up there on Patrick Street. There were whites that lived across the street from

	us. We spoke respectful of each other—I'll go back to elementary school, because when we reached fifth—I think it was fourth grade, we had to walk past Prince Street School, Jefferson School, Washington & Lee School—they were all white schools, and Prince Street School, to get to [unclear]'s Grove...summer, winter, whatever; hail; rain. We were walking from Patrick Street, out to [unclear] Street.
P.J.A.:	Do you remember ever having any feelings about that? Passing all those schools?
Christine Howard:	Yes! We would get real upset. Nellie, Jean Butler, and all of us, we would fuss, especially when it was snowing. All these schools we had to pass. Yes.
P.J.A.:	You mentioned Nellie. Who is Nellie?
Christine Howard:	Nellie Condry was my best friend. She was Nellie Brooks at that time. She's in here. And Jean Butler. Nellie lived in what we called Sunnyside. Jean Butler lived on Henry Street. But the three of us were the best of friends. We went through elementary school and high school together. Here we are in a class picture. In fact, I was a bridesmaid for Nellie. Jean, Nellie, Christine. [Laughter]
P.J.A.:	That's really cute. I would say it looks like the Three Stooges, but that wouldn't be nice, would it? [Laughter]
Christine Howard:	Yes. But we would fuss during the winter months.
<b>Black Businesses</b>	
P.J.A.:	Do you remember any other African-American businesses when you were growing up, in the city of Alexandria?
Christine Howard:	Yes. Russell's. Russell's Restaurant, on the corner of Queen and Henry. It was owned by the Russell family.
P.J.A.:	Do you remember a hotel in Alexandria that was owned by African-Americans?
Christine Howard:	No. The only hotel I remember when I was growing up was the George Washington Hotel, there on Washington Street.
<b>West Virginia State</b>	
P.J.A.:	Let's talk a little bit about the first time you went away, to West Virginia State as an undergraduate. Did you have any difficulty leaving home?
Christine Howard:	Yes, I did. You know, when you're growing up, and you're a teenager, and you think you're ready to just take off and be on your own—you arrive at college, away from home, for a long time, for the first time in your life, and tears flow! I cried for a

	<p>week. And, of course, my sister, Evelyn, was a senior. So she didn't have to be at West Virginia State at the same time I did. She was supposed to come later. So I called my mother and I said to her, I said, "Mom, tell Evelyn to come down here or I'm coming home on the next train. I'm lonely down here." [She said,] "Now you know better than that! You're there, and you're going to stay, and Evelyn will come when it's time for her to go. You will not come home." And see, I knew when my mother gave orders, she meant just what she said. [Laughs] But I met some good friends. We're still friends. Evelyn Bankett was my roommate. And a guy we called Bookie. We stayed long friends. So I got used to it. But I'll tell you, it was difficult. I really cried. I really did.</p>
P.J.A.:	Do you remember how much tuition was?
Christine Howard:	Oh, tuition was about \$500 a semester. We worked in the library. I think tuition, for my mother, was probably about \$250, after they deducted what we—we worked in the library.
P.J.A.:	When you say "we," was that your sister?
Christine Howard:	My sister Evelyn.
P.J.A.:	Now West Virginia State was one of the historically black colleges and universities?
Christine Howard:	Yes. It was a [unclear] college when I attended. It was not a university. It was West Virginia State College.
P.J.A.:	But there have been some changes.
Christine Howard:	Oh, yes. It's almost predominately white now.
P.J.A.:	Is it?
Christine Howard:	Yes. And it is a university.
<b>Religion</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now you've talked about your mother's religious beliefs, and how religion impacted your family. What was the faith of your family?
Christine Howard:	Baptist.
P.J.A.:	And what church did you attend?
Christine Howard:	We attended Ebenezer Baptist Church. That was the only church we attended. We lived right around the corner. We spent as much time at that church as we did at our house. Yes.
P.J.A.:	How often did you go to church?
Christine Howard:	Oh, we attended, always, Sunday morning service. And at that time we had Sunday School in the evening, after church. Most

	churches had it in the morning, and then go into service. But we attended morning service, and Sunday School. Then we attended BTU...Baptist Training [Union]. That was a training program for people. So on Sundays we were in church for three services, and we sang in the junior choir. The junior choir.
P.J.A.:	Now outside of the services at your church, what other activities were provided by your church?
Christine Howard:	At that time, we did not have an education building. So most of our services were just training. We didn't have a lot of social activities, like they have now in churches. It was strictly training classes—BTU—prayer meetings on Tuesdays. Most of our social activities, as I said before, were at Hopkins House and the [unclear] Street Recreation Center. The church was strictly religious training.
<b>Family Activities</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now as you were growing up, in your family, did you go on picnics? Did you go to a lake, swimming, during the summer? What kind of entertainment was there?
Christine Howard:	During the summer the Sunday School always had a summer outing, and you would go to the beach—Sparrows Beach, in Maryland. Everybody in Alexandria looked forward to that. That was one of the activities that the church did provide, through the Sunday School—the summer beach outing.
P.J.A.:	Well, tell me about Sparrows Beach.
Christine Howard:	It was just sand and water. They didn't have anything like rides. It was just sand and water. But we were so happy to be there. And, of course, they did have a boat, and most of the adults would go out on the boat. But other than that, you would think it was paradise.
P.J.A.:	Did you go swimming when you went to Sparrows Beach?
Christine Howard:	We would go in the water, yes. Oh, yes. We looked forward to that. We had a lot of fun. It was just a fun time—for a family. The whole family.
P.J.A.:	Was there anyplace in the city, here, where you could go swimming?
Christine Howard:	No. When I became a teenager, we used to go to Fort [unclear]. Even as a teenager, they had no swimming facilities here in Alexandria. When we wanted to go to the pool, we would ride the bus to Fort [unclear].
P.J.A.:	So the bus was the mode of transportation?

Christine Howard:	Yes.
P.J.A.:	Did you ever go to Washington?
Christine Howard:	As a young adult, we would go to Washington. That's where we would shop. We did our shopping there, in Washington. We'd walk all over Washington—walk from 14th Street, there in front of the post office. If we were going to [unclear], we walked. We didn't bother to get the trolley, we walked. Going to Kann's or Hecht's, or any of these stores, we would walk. Of course, Woodies [Woodward & Lothrop], I think, and Garfinkel's, and Lord & Taylor's and places like that were almost the last places to integrate. But Kann's and Hecht's and [unclear], they sort of integrated—
P.J.A.:	So you were able to go into those stores.
Christine Howard:	Yes. Easily.
P.J.A.:	But not so easily into Garfinkel's or Lord & Taylor's.
Christine Howard:	No. And the monuments and all those places—we would go visit them, walking all over Washington.
P.J.A.:	As a young adult or teenager—were there entertainers who came to Alexandria, that performed here?
Christine Howard:	The Elks parade that they would have every year—I don't remember too many entertainers. As I say, my mother was very religious. We didn't do too much.
P.J.A.:	Did you have television?
Christine Howard:	When I became a young adult. In my childhood, we had a radio.
P.J.A.:	And what were your favorite radio shows?
Christine Howard:	What did we watch? Some of those. <i>Amos &amp; Andy</i> . <i>The Shadow</i> . We didn't even listen that much. We played—
P.J.A.:	....games.
Christine Howard:	...games.
P.J.A.:	Did you have a record player?
Christine Howard:	In the later years. The later years.
P.J.A.:	Were there certain things your mother thought that girls should do in life, as opposed to boys? No, she didn't?
Christine Howard:	No, no she didn't.
P.J.A.:	She thought you should do whatever you wanted.
Christine Howard:	Whatever you wanted.

P.J.A.:	Did your mother pass down to you any stories, or traditions that you still hold onto?
Christine Howard:	No. My mother didn't talk too much about her parents. No. She didn't talk too much about her parents.
P.J.A.:	So you didn't know your grandparents?
Christine Howard:	No. In fact, I think my grandparents were dead when I was born.
<b>Community Organizations</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now tell me about some of the organizations you've been involved with.
Christine Howard:	I served on the board for the Urban League; Hopkins House; the Alexandria Community Y [YMCA]. Of course, it's called the Campagna Center now, but when I was on the board it was the Alexandria Community Y. What else? The Urban League [unclear]. The Office of Equal Opportunity.
P.J.A.:	What were some of your accomplishments while you were working with these boards; with these organizations? They may have been individual accomplishments, or accomplishments with the group or the board.
Christine Howard:	Well, one I think that was special to me was getting the Head Start program in Jefferson-Houston School and the Alexandria Community Y. It is still one of the most outstanding Head Start programs in the country. Elizabeth Anne Campagna worked very, very hard (we worked together) to get the Head Start program housed in the Jefferson-Houston kindergarten building. That's something I'm very proud of.
P.J.A.:	I've heard about that Head Start program.
Christine Howard:	Yes.
P.J.A.:	What about your role on the board of the Office of Equal Opportunity?
Christine Howard:	That was one of the activities that we participated in, to get the Head Start—that happened in Alexandria, with the board.
<b>Special Students</b>	
P.J.A.:	Now as you think of the young people that you taught, or who came through your school as you were serving as an administrator—do you remember any of those students in particular that you took a special interest in? Or maybe who you saw develop into just a wonderful person? Anyone in particular?
Christine Howard:	There are so many students who have developed into wonderful

	people, who moved through Charles Houston School, that we are very, very proud of. So many of them. Shirley Tyrell; Frieda Bell; Peggy Weber; Walton Barber.
P.J.A.:	Are you in contact with any of these former students now?
Christine Howard:	No. I see them. So many of them.
P.J.A.:	I know Shirley Kennedy Tyrell. She speaks very highly of you.
Christine Howard:	Oh.
P.J.A.:	She says she was your pet.
Christine Howard:	No, she wasn't. [Laughter] She was a good student. She was a good student. Shirley was a talker. Tryphene Miller; Vivian Stuart; Katrina Dunlop. They used to [unclear]. Oh. Leonard Armstrong, who used to own the restaurant down there on Queen Street. So many.
P.J.A.:	So many of them.
<b>Advice</b>	
P.J.A.:	If you had an opportunity to tell young people today anything you thought would be, perhaps, like a seed that you could plant, and that might not grow right now but might start later, what would you tell them?
Christine Howard:	I think I would say to young people today, "Once you're successful, don't forget that you have a responsibility to the young people coming behind you; that you have a responsibility to look back, and always make sure that you help someone else along the way." I think that's important.
P.J.A.:	That is. Very important.
Christine Howard:	You know? Once you make it to the top, that's great. But how many other people can you help crawl up there with you? That's more important. [End]