

# 2019

Celebrating the People of Bloomington



## Gene Shipp Veteran of Three Wars

Gene Shipp, who turned 100 in March, is an Army veteran of three major wars: World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Drafted into a segregated Army, he retired from an integrated one.

Shipp was born in 1919 in Buena Vista, Georgia, and grew up raising cotton, peanuts, and livestock on his family's farm. At 21, he left home and joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). "When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, they just transferred all the young men from the CCC right into the Army," he explains.

Shipp reenlisted in 1945 and moved to Bloomington after retiring as a master sergeant in 1971.

Today he lives at Bell Trace Senior Living Community, attends church Sundays, and wears his uniform every Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

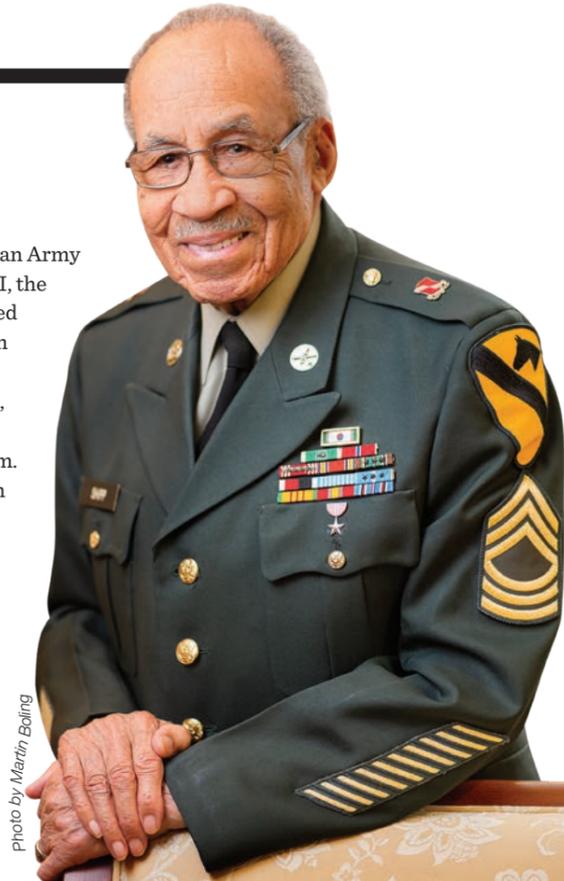


Photo by Martin Bolling



Photo by Rochey Margison



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## Günther Jikeli Influencer of Jewish Life

Indiana University professor Günther Jikeli was named one of the "Top 100 People Positively Influencing Jewish Life" this fall by New York City-based newspaper *The Algemeiner*. The international list includes journalists, politicians, entertainers, religious leaders, scholars, and Holocaust survivors. *The Algemeiner* describes Jikeli's work as "some of the most crucial research of the post-World War II era on the persistence of antisemitism."

Jikeli's scholarship involves conducting hundreds of interviews and studying large samples of social media posts. "Mostly what I look at is in the imagination of people and what they think Jews are—their projections, which have to do with their psyche," Jikeli says. "Then I look at what makes these beliefs dangerous."



Photo by Nino G. Cocchiarella

## Lillian Casillas Latino Community Advocate

Originally from Mexico, Lillian Casillas came to Bloomington in 1985 to attend Indiana University. Today, she helps other Latinos make this transition through IU-Bloomington's La Casa Latino Culture Center, which she has directed since 1994. "For Latinos, this place is a resource, but it is also a home," Casillas says.

Noticing that the greater Latino community in Bloomington was also coming to La Casa for assistance, in 1999 Casillas helped found El Centro Comunal Latino, which helps people connect with other Latino families and find resources ranging from social services to grocery stores.

"El Centro is helping them literally be part of the fabric of this community," Casillas says.



Photo by Martin Bolling

## Michael A. McRobbie Indiana University President

In 1996, Australian native Michael A. McRobbie was recruited to serve as IU's first vice president for information technology and chief information officer and as a professor of computer science and of philosophy, beginning early the next year. McRobbie's trajectory within the university was steady, and on July 1, 2007, he became the 18th president of the university.

McRobbie considers one his greatest accomplishments as president to be the academic restructuring of the university, which has involved the restructuring, merger, or formation of 10 new schools. "In particular, establishing schools in areas that are, I think, going to be necessary for the university to be a major research university in the future," he says. Those include the engineering and architecture schools and the school of public health.

## Don Griffin Jr. Realtor and Civic Activist

Raised in Bloomington, Don Griffin Jr. got into real estate sales right after college. Following more than a decade of success, during which he opened his own brokerage, Griffin grew disillusioned with the business. He closed his office and planned to become a chaplain. Then he decided what he really needed to change was his attitude. "I decided it's not going to be about money, but about helping people get to the next chapter in their lives," Griffin says.

Griffin also grew more engaged in politics. He started the Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus and, along with his wife, Nicole, created the annual City of Bloomington Black History Month Living Legend Award. "I want to always be reinventing myself," he says.



Photo by Martin Boling



Photo by Martin Boling

## Joel Stager Swim Coach And Researcher

"I study how things work optimally," says Joel Stager, 66, Indiana University kinesiology professor emeritus. "How do you swim 100 meters in 50 seconds? If we don't know how things work when everything goes right, how can we fix things when they go wrong?"

Stager directs the Counsilman Center for the Science of Swimming, a research institute within IU's School of Public Health, named for Stager's mentor, legendary IU swimming coach James "Doc" Counsilman (1920-2004).

When the swimsuit industry claimed that \$800 bodysuits introduced for the 2000 Olympic trials could enhance performance, Stager's team analyzed statistics and found that they made no difference at all. The story got major media attention. Another of the institute's investigations demonstrated the benefit of chocolate milk on exercise recovery.



Photo by Rodney Margison

## Tamara Lowenthal New Head of Lotus

Tamara Lowenthal took over as executive director of Lotus World Music & Arts Festival this spring after 20 years of involvement with the Lotus Education & Arts Foundation. She says she's particularly excited to add some dance education to the festival.

"Certain bands play music that has a culturally attached dance form," Lowenthal says. "Having more of that is something I would like to see. We have ideas for the future."

Lowenthal, who has a background as a traveling dance performer, began volunteering at the festival in its second year and has served as its volunteer coordinator since 2007.

## Tony Kale High School Sports Announcer

Tony Kale has been calling sports games since he was a teenager in Ellettsville. "In baseball season at Edgewood games, some of my buddies would say, 'Hey, do the play-by-play,'" Kale says. "I just had kind of a knack for it." He got his first radio job when he graduated from high school in 1986 and has kept at it ever since.

In addition to calling high school football and basketball games at WCLS-FM, he co-hosts the station's morning show and serves as its operations manager.

High school sports connect people to their communities, Kale says, even when they can't be present. "I try to paint a picture. I want people listening to feel as though they're there, smelling the popcorn."



Photo by Martin Boling



Courtesy photo

## Teresa Robeson Author of Kids' Book 'Queen of Physics'

Writer Teresa Robeson, 54, has loved math and science ever since the 1969 moon landing. "That and *Star Trek*," she says.

In 2011, Robeson stumbled upon the story of notable Asian American scientist Chien-Shiung Wu. "I was just fascinated by her," Robeson says. "She was a physicist and she's of my culture. I really wanted to tell her story."

Now, Robeson's first nonfiction children's picture book, *Queen of Physics: How Wu Chien Shiung Helped Unlock the Secrets of the Atom*, is set for mid-September release.

Robeson hopes her book will inspire children—especially girls—to become scientists. "Wu was the first female instructor ever hired by Princeton," Robeson says. "She was also the first female president of the American Physical Society."

## Tamara Brown Black Leader of Tomorrow

Eighteen-year-old Tamara Brown considers herself "an advocate for the people." She says, "I believe in advocating for those who can't advocate for themselves or who feel they can't advocate for themselves."

Tamara's advocacy started at home. "I grew up with two moms," she says. "I had to advocate for their parenting skills. I had to show I was well-rounded. And especially because—two black women. That was an ordeal."

A 2018 graduate of Bloomington High School North, Tamara was instrumental in the formation of Bloomington Students Against Assault Weapons. Now at Indiana University, she is deeply involved with No Lost Generation, raising funds for refugees and migrants who need resettlement.

A nonprofit management major, Tamara plans to focus on the plight of refugees after college.

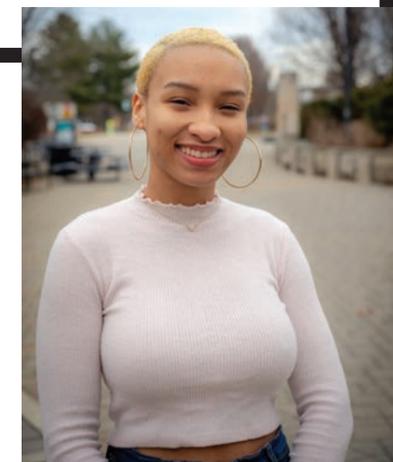


Photo by Rodney Margison



United we can do so much to protect and support one another. Thank you for uniting to keep our community strong and resilient.



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