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Public Information Office

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Virginia Lacy Jones, Dean and Professor, Atlanta University School of Library Service, was presented the highest award of the American Library Association, its "Honorary Membership" on Tuesday, July 20, during the Centennial Conference of ALA in Chicago.

Mrs. Virginia Lacy Jones received a B.L.S. and B.S. in Education from Institute, M.S. in L.S. from the University of Illinois and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

Mrs. Jones has been active in professional organizations. In the ALA, she has served as Councilor, member of the Executive Board and Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Opportunities for Negro Students in the Library Profession. She was a member of the Board of Directors of the Library Education Division. Executive Council member of Beta Phi Mu; Secretary - Treasurer and President of the American Association of Library Schools; in 1967, she was appointed by President Johnson as a member of the President's Advisory Committee on Library Research.

The citation presented to Mrs. Jones reads:

From the beginning of your career at Hampton Institute you have devoted yourself to the education of Black youth to serve all our citizens through the library profession. As Dean of the School of Library Science at Atlanta University since 1945, you have quietly but forcefully insisted upon opening doors of opportunity to library service which were closed to four-fifths of the minority citizens in your area of the country. Over that thirty year period you have trained and encouraged the majority of Black librarians working today, including many in leadership positions.

add 1. Virginia Lacy Jones - Honorary Membership

In your pursuit of excellence for librarianship you have conducted institutes, persuaded foundation officials pressured state library associations to drop discriminatory practices, and insisted that your students demonstrate both commitment and scholarship. Your graduates have reflected that same dedication to equal access to libraries, integrity in behavior, belief in the dignity and worth of librarianship, high standards of performance, and perseverance which have been the hallmarks of your own distinguished career.

Not only your students but your professional colleagues, Black and White, have spoken of your gentle suggestions at appropriate times in their own careers that they seek positions which would represent broader experiences for them and advancement for the profession. Your students speak especially of your vision in the earlier days that segregation was not forever, and that they should prepare themselves for the time when segregation would no longer be a way of life for Black Americans.

Pioneer among Black librarians in service to the American Library Association, you have served as a Councilor 1946-50 and 1950-59, and a member of the Executive Board, 1971-76. In periods of turmoil and controversy you have always had a positive approach to the problems of the profession and the Association. Frequently, when strident voices were raised, yours has been the voice whose perceptive comments went to the heart of the issue under discussion and lifted the whole level of discussion to a higher plane.

Your colleagues in library education have honored you with election to the presidency of the Association of American Library Schools, which you also served as Secretary-Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors. When ALA awarded you the Melvil Dewey Medal in 1973, you were cited as being one who had "fought valiantly to maintain quality professional education even as the man for whom this medal is named." Your broad view of all areas of librarianship has enabled you to serve effectively as a surveyor, consultant, and advisor to foundations, government agencies, and associations.

In gratitude for your creative leadership in the integration of American librarianship and society, and for your many contributions to its own growth and development, the American Library Association grants you its highest award of

Honorary Membership
Chicago, July 1976.