



**JOHNSON**  
**COLLEGE PREP**

A CAMPUS OF NOBLE STREET CHARTER SCHOOL

6350 S. Stewart Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60621  
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Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

## **Noble Englewood College Prep is now Johnson College Prep.**

Linda Johnson-Rice, CEO of Johnson Publishing accepted the honor of naming our campus for her late parents, John and Eunice Johnson College Prep. John and Eunice Johnson were pioneers in African-American business having started Johnson Publishing in the 1940's. Their civic commitment mirrored their professional success as leaders in the African-American community. In his autobiography, John Johnson pointed to his high school education as a pivotal moment in his life which set the foundation for his success. Coming from a background with a number of barriers, Johnson was able to overcome them all and achieve success. He was known for saying, "Failure is a word I do not accept", which is now Johnson College Prep's mantra. The campus name was chosen by a group of African-American entrepreneurs, lead by Mr. Martin Nesbitt, who collectively matched a donation from the Pritzker Foundation.

The Johnson legacy shares strong alignment with Noble's mission and exemplifies the value of receiving quality schooling. In fact, it was the promise of gaining access to a high school education for her son that found John Johnson's mother heading north on a train to Chicago. Without pillar or post, his mother set out on a journey that made Johnson's realization of the American Dream possible. The title of his infamous autobiography, "Succeeding against the Odds", captures the essence of John Johnson's success and connects directly to our incoming scholars who will overcome numerous "odds" to succeed in academia and in life. By naming our school after this dynamic family, JCP scholars will be reminded daily that the hard work of education *the Noble way* can and will pay off.

In high school, Johnson demonstrated leadership in academic excellence, student council, and his role as yearbook editor. It was his work with the yearbook and school paper that inspired him to pursue a career in journalism. Johnson was invited to speak at a Chicago Urban League function for African American students with notable academic records as a high school senior. It was here that John met Harry Pace, president of Liberty Insurance. Mr. Pace would provide the college scholarship that enabled Johnson to attend the University of Chicago. While in college, John worked for Pace's company and rose quickly within the organization.



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In 1941, John and Eunice Johnson were married. They later adopted two children. Johnson won a number of awards and served in a number of positions in the civic and business communities. He was the vice president of the National Urban League, the national vice chairman of the United Negro College Fund, and served on the boards of various businesses, including Greyhound. He won a number of awards for his contributions to the African American community and was tapped for his talent on several international missions in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He represented the United States of America at independence ceremonies in Africa during the 1960s. He also served on the advisory board of Harvard Business School.

In 1996 President Clinton awarded Johnson and 10 other recipients, including African American civil rights activist Rosa Parks, the Medal of Freedom Award. Clinton praised Johnson for giving African Americans a voice through his publications, *Ebony* and *Jet Magazine*. His magazines emphasize African American successes and portray history in a manner that still engenders pride. Clinton called Johnson a “humble man” who continues to inspire young African Americans to succeed against the odds and to take advantage of their opportunities. It is in this spirit that Johnson College Prep, the tenth campus of Noble Street Charter School, will change the lives of the students who enroll. Like Johnson, students will be taught to approach their education with relentless perseverance and utilize education as a tool to shape the bright futures ahead of them.

Yours in College Preparation,

Dr. Garland L. Thomas (Formerly Johnson)



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