



Carrying Forward the Legacy of Education



Dianna Ward

The Dianna Ward Interview by Jaye Vaughn

“My mother was one of the “Memphis State Eight,” that is, one of the eight students who integrated Memphis State University in 1959.” Her father was a mathematician. She followed in her dad’s footsteps, receiving a bachelor’s degree in mathematics. Then she pursued a joint master’s degree in statistics and in operations research from North Carolina State University.

Her parents were involved in the civil rights movement, encouraging their children to be all they could be. Dianna followed in her parents’ legacy as a lifelong advocate for all forms of equal rights. They accepted their children “as who we were even though, for me, that meant accepting the fact that I was gay from a very young age. They did

not have a blueprint for dealing with my sexuality. But what they did have was unwavering love for all of us. They never harmed any part of me, and they never said a disparaging thing about me. Not once.”

How does the cherished child of a loving, activist household turn out? The Spotlight interview for June of Dianna Ward tells her wonderful story. Be sure to check it out!



Dianna Ward with the Rozzelles Ferry Road building, her second redevelopment in the historic West End of Charlotte. Photo by Jeff Siner of the Charlotte Observer.

[Read the June Spotlight](#)

You are invited to participate:
Who inspired you to lesbian feminism?
Send us the name of your most significant Shero

with a brief reason why she inspires you.

Both she and you can remain anonymous if you want (just say so) since we will PUBLISH these here on our SLFAHP website.

Send submissions today to: slfainspired@gmail.com

Rose Norman got her inspiration from Nancy Finley. "At the time, Nancy Finley was the chair of the Sociology Department at my university. She said, 'Let's see who might be interested in starting a women's studies program.'

"She made feminism seductive, and she opened my eyes to structural causes of oppression. She walks the talk in all aspects of her life."

The Southern Lesbian Feminist Activist Herstory Project

We collect, archive, and celebrate oral and written stories of unsung, Southern, lesbian-feminist activists during the second half of the twentieth century. We are proud of our contributions to lesbian culture, strengthened by our collective voices.

Many of us recognized that the lesbian-feminist voices of southern lesbians had been omitted or marginalized in mainstream literature of the LGBTQ movement as well as from feminist history. We are the antidote to this omission. We worked with Duke University to set up archives, did interviews all over the south, and eventually collaborated with Julie Enszer to publish 6 issues of Sinister Wisdom, full of all our stories. Now we maintain our website and update it monthly, as you hear about through this newsletter. We are still gathering more Southern lesbian stories, interviewing, writing, editing, tracking and networking.

We are always ready to welcome new collaborators! If you would like to join the SLFAHP group, email us at SLFAHerstoryProject@gmail.com.



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