



Diversity & Inclusion Moment

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Walter E. Massey

A Varied Career Path

- He was born in 1938 in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.
- He was a Ford Foundation Fellow at Morehouse in 1958.
- He earned his Ph.D. in Physics from Washington University in St. Louis in 1966.
- He has been awarded 41 honorary degrees.
- Massey has served as:
 - Head of the National Science Foundation,
 - Director of Argonne National Laboratory, &
 - Chairman of Bank of America.
- He has also held administrative posts at:
 - The University of California,
 - The University of Chicago,
 - Brown University, &
 - The University of Illinois.





Joining U of I Amid Turbulent Times

Project 500 Protests

- In 1968, the Special Educational Opportunities Program (Project 500) was an effort by the University of Illinois to offer equal educational opportunities for Illinois residents and bolster the enrollment of underrepresented groups.
- There was poor communication from the school regarding project benefits.
- The new students protested the lack of clarity over financial support and insufficient housing assignments.
- 248 students were arrested following the protest.





Joining U of I Amid Turbulent Times

Project 500 Protests

- “Negroes Riot At U of I; 248 Held” was the banner headline in the Midwest’s biggest newspaper on Sept. 11, along with a story that claimed that “black militants went on a rampage in the building. They destroyed furniture, slashed draperies, defaced portraits of university officials and broke glass.”
- The Tribune said police estimated damage to the Union at \$50,000, including a marred portrait of University of Illinois President David Dodds Henry.
- The student-published Daily Illini, however, said that university officials actually claimed the damage was no more than \$5,000.





Joining U of I Amid Turbulent Times

Project 500 Protests

- The protest occurred on Massey's first day on campus and led to campus unrest throughout the entire year.
- Massey was Chair of the Black Faculty and Staff Association became involved in various academic and extracurricular programs for black students, including pre-college science programs and an advisor to the Black Students Association.





A Lifetime of Accomplishments

Massey's Academic Career

- In 1970, he joined Brown University as an Associate Professor, studying changes in sound waves in superfluid helium.
- In 1975, he was appointed Dean of Brown University.
- In 1977, he was the founding Chairman of the National Society of Black Physicists.
- In 1979, he became the Director of the Argonne National Laboratory.
- In 1990, he became the Director of the National Science Foundation.
- In 2016, Dr. France Cordova, the current director of the NSF, credited Massey's role in securing both approval and funding for the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO) project nearly 25 years before.

