

Mr. Ellis M. Johnson

Mr. Ellis Marvin Johnson grew up in Augusta, having attended its public schools. He holds degrees from Paine College and Ft. Valley State University and did further study at Seton Hall University, Montclair State College, Harvard University and Augusta State University, where he received his administration certification. Mr. Johnson studied choral conducting and piano with Emily Remington. His early career saw him teaching music and mathematics in public schools of Richmond County. Mr. Johnson later pursued a career in counseling and served as a counselor and consultant of the Richmond County School System.

He retired as the Director of Counseling Services of Aiken Technical College. Prior to his retirement as a tenor, he sang with the Augusta Choral Society, and was often a featured tenor soloist. He was the first African American to serve as its president. He also sang with the Augusta Opera and was a soloist with the Augusta Symphony. In 1997, he was named Opera Man of the Year. In 1998, he received the Greater Augusta Arts Council's Annual Volunteer of the Year Award, and in 2007 he was awarded the President's Award, in recognition of distinguished service to the arts community. He retired as music director of the Augusta Chorale in 2007, a position he held for 20 years. Currently he serves on the board of directors of the Jessye Norman School of the Arts, and with the Morris Museum Music Advisory Committee.

He was a founding member of the Westobou Festival and coordinated its Choral Artists Series during its first year. Mr. Johnson is a regular judge for The Augusta Chronicle's "Brightest and Best Award." He has been a member of Elim Baptist Church for 62 years where he has served as pianist, organist, choir director, minister of music, Sunday school teacher, trustee, deacon, coordinator of Golden Agers, and chair of numerous other church activities. increasing knowledge and diversity within the community. He was a man of faith, a man of vision, a man of music.