



## Harry Owen Taylor

August 10, 1943 - January 25, 2017

Harry O. Taylor

Son, brother, father, grandfather, uncle, cousin, friend, teammate, coach, mentor, colleague, beloved . . . Harry Owen Taylor invested his life in others and is a loved, well-respected man in every phase of his life.

Harry was born August 10, 1943, in Pittsburg, Kansas, to Henry and Vessie Lee Hannah Taylor. He was raised alongside his brother, Winston and sister, Faye by their grandmother, Rose Woolridge Taylor, when his mother passed away. He is still close with friends from grade school and high school, missing only one reunion due to hospitalization. After graduating from Pittsburg High School in 1961, he pursued football scholarships to help him earn his Associate of Arts degree from Garden City Community College in 1964. He then went on to complete a Bachelor's degree in Social Science in 1968 and then his Masters in College Student Personnel and Guidance in 1972 at Emporia State University (ESU). One of the first African-Americans hired at Missouri State University (MSU), Harry spent over 26 years shepherding students through their college experience as an academic advisor at MSU, where he also taught student success classes and was instrumental in helping to implement the University's Black History Month celebrations and the University's Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR) sessions.

Following his stint of coaching inter-collegiate football while at ESU and MSU, he became an passionate supporter of women's collegiate sports during his time at MSU, Harry recruited, coached and supported a variety of women's sports, including basketball and women's intermural football. Upon retiring from MSU, Harry loved people so much that he returned to work as an adult case manager at Pathways Community Behavioral Healthcare for the remaining 13 years of his career.

If you gave him five minutes, Harry became invested in your life--whether you were on one of his teams, his wife's student, a hotel clerk, or a server in a restaurant. A passionate advocate for people on the margins, one of Harry's favorite quotes was, "Take what you have with what you are, make something of it, and never be satisfied," a sentiment he used to help shape the lives of his children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and the thousands of individuals he supported during his long career as an academic advisor to college students and as a community social worker. When he wasn't spending time with family or mentoring the countless individuals who came into his life, Harry played competitive softball well into his 50's or he would be on the creek bank fishing. He appreciated all types of music but most certainly his favorite was listening to smooth jazz. Always an avid sports fan he enjoyed his OU Sooners and the Kansas City Royals games and certainly he was delighted to see his Royals win the World Series in 2015.

Harry is survived by his wife of 17+ years, Debra; his children, Renee Taylor Tyms, Teresa Taylor Williams, Amanda Marie Taylor and Rev. Sarah Lowenberg; his grandchildren, Trent Taylor, Marcus Williams, Terin Williams, Kevin Tyms and Melisa Lowenberg, his grandson by choice, Rev. Dan Reed and great-grandson Isaiah Anderson-Taylor, along with numerous nephews and nieces; and the many students and community members he assisted during his long career.

A service of Thanksgiving for the life of Harry Taylor is planned for Saturday, March 11, 2017, at 2:00 p.m. at South Haven Baptist Church, 16800 Bel-Ray Blvd., Belton, MO 64012. Attendees are asked to wear either crimson and cream (OU colors) or KC Royals colors. A reception will follow. In lieu of flowers/plants we request donations in Harry's memory to Street Medicine KC. Kindly mark gifts with Harry's name.

There are no measures for the blessings we receive. Only by imagining how our lives might have gone if they had not come to us, can we begin to appreciate their brilliance and power.

True love is such a blessing – if you found it may you always know it as the wondrous gift it is. Epiphany by Robert Sexton

# Previous Events

## Service

MAR 11. 2:00 PM (CT)

South Haven Baptist Church  
16800 Bel-Ray Blvd  
Belton, MO 64012

# Tribute Wall

BP

“ Little did I know that the day I stepped foot on the then SMS campus that I would meet a man who would not only become my first academic advisor, football coach and very close life long friend. That was 44 years ago and I will be forever grateful to this man who taught me some many many valuable life long lessons. One of the many things that made this man so remarkable to me was that he always new when to lend a shoulder and more importantly when to give me a good swift kick in the back side. I have always and will always treasure both the bond and friendship we have always had and will cherish it for all of my days. I hope to see you again in a few miles my old friend, but until then I wish you nothing but eternal peace.

*Bob Pype*

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**Bob Pype** - February 19, 2017 at 09:47 AM



“ 6 files added to the album Family Pictures



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**Faye Smith** - February 16, 2017 at 12:09 AM

FS

“ 4 files added to the album Family Pictures



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**Faye R. Smith** - February 15, 2017 at 11:51 PM

CF

“ *Reflections*

*It's funny the impact people have on your life even when you don't realize it. Harry Taylor probably didn't know the positive influence he had on me. I met Harry in grade school. He was the first Negro I ever knew. I observed his ethic and the strength of his character. That influenced me to never be prejudiced or racist. Long before Martin Luther King gave his 'I Have a Dream Speech' where he stated people should be judged by the 'content of their character'. Harry had already set the example.*

*Clinton Frederick Scottsdale, AZ*

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**Clinton Frederick** - February 05, 2017 at 09:59 PM

HC

“ Harry and I spent several years working in the Academic Advisement Center at Missouri State and became friends there. He was the Attendance Counselor when I first met Harry when I walked over to give him the attendance reports that were about a month late. He was a forbidding figure sitting at his desk with a scowl on his face. Never again was I late with my reports.



A few years later I found myself working as an Academic Advisor in the Academic Advisement Center with Harry. He taught me many lesson about serving our students. Harry would go to the ends of the Earth to help a student...Well all the way to the president. His heart of gold saved so many student's educational goals.

He was a great friend and colleague and will be missed by so many the touched.

*Rest in Peace, Buddy.*

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**Harry Cook** - January 31, 2017 at 08:31 PM

TC

“ Never met a bigger ou fan or anyone who knew more about the football team. Rest in peace Harry.

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**Troy Cole** - January 30, 2017 at 06:16 PM

CD

“ Hugs and Prayers for Debra and family. Larry and I meet Harry and Debra in Sunday School class several years ago and always enjoyed his wisdom and caring manor. We are so sorry to hear of Harry's passing but are comforted in knowing he is in the arms of our Lord.

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**Connie Davis** - January 30, 2017 at 05:07 PM

DG

“ *Diane Gaehle lit a candle in memory of Harry Owen Taylor*



**Diane Gaehle** - January 30, 2017 at 12:34 PM

Henry Pratt

“ *Henry Pratt lit a candle in memory of Harry Owen Taylor*



**Henry Pratt** - January 30, 2017 at 12:12 PM

Henry Pratt

*A Mentor, Coach and most of all Dear Friend!! Touched many Lives with guidance and Truth!! You will be missed!!*

**Henry Pratt** - January 30, 2017 at 12:14 PM

BD

*Will always have good memories of Harry and working the table at Missouri State basketball games. Appreciated his friendship!*

**Brent Dunn** - January 30, 2017 at 01:07 PM

GL

“ *Harry was a long-time friend and former classmate for over 60 years. He was a wonderful man who will be missed by many, many people who loved and admired him. He may be gone, but he will never be forgotten. May he rest in peace.*

**George Lampe** - January 30, 2017 at 11:23 AM

GW

“ Loved the man b/c even though not knowing him personally, only meeting him a few times, he always had a smile and a kind word. Our deepest condolences.

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**gary walton** - January 30, 2017 at 09:41 AM

SO

“ Harry was a blessing, always encouraging me pushing me to be my best. Playing cards at Pathways on break were in told many stories of his life. It was never dull when talked about his life but there was always a lesson in his stories to learn. He was the warmest kindest person you could know. I told him if I could have picked a dad I would have chosen him. And his spiritual walk with God was amazing he shared his walk with God. And sports oh my. I was not a sports person but I soon became one everything I know about sports is from Harry. The Sooners soon became a spot favorite of mine. My last message he sent me I will treasure. To know Harry was to love him. May you Rest In Peace.

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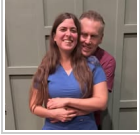
**Sonja** - January 29, 2017 at 11:03 PM

JK

“ I had the pleasure of playing on one of his women's flag football (Bod Squad). I recently found Coach Taylor on Facebook and was surprised he remembered me. He certainly was a fond memory of my college years!

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**Joyce Kitka** - January 29, 2017 at 10:58 PM



“ *Harry is one of the most warm and welcoming people I have ever known. I first met Harry in the Jesus Crusaders class at South Haven. He made me feel like a treasured friend from day one. I needed that because I was in a painful time in my life. When I was around Harry, I felt good. He was just one of those people.*

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**Vince Tucker** - January 29, 2017 at 10:43 PM