Guide to the Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Papers
Acc.# 2007.03

Processed by Julie M. Sawnor
Undergraduate Inter SUNY Buffalo
June 12, 2008
Edited by Stephanie Ball
February 2020

Schuyler C. Townson Library
RMSC Museum & Science Center
657 East Avenue
Rochester NY 14607
585.697.1947
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Dr. Charles T. Lunsford papers, 2
Collection Summary

Title: Dr. Charles T. Lunsford papers
Creator: Lunsford, Charles T., 1892-1985
Dates: 1919-1984
Extent: 0.75 cubic feet (3 boxes, 1 oversized drawer)
Language: English
Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Abstract: This collection consists of the papers of Dr. Charles T. Lunsford, the first licensed, Black physician in Rochester, New York. The materials are dated between 1919 and 1984. The papers are comprised of awards, correspondence, photographs, a textbook, and a medical license.
Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition:

This collection was donated to the RMSC Museum & Science Center by Dr. William M. Davis Jr. on January 31, 2007, accession # 2007.03.

Custodial History:

The RMSC Museum & Science Center acquired this collection from Dr. William M. Davis Jr. Dr. Davis was a personal friend of Dr. Lunsford. He received this collection of personal objects directly from Dr. Lunsford.

Preferred Citation:

Dr. Charles T. Lunsford papers, [ box#:folder# ]. RMSC Museum & Science Center, Rochester, NY.
Restrictions

Conditions Governing Use:

Copyright is held by the RMSC Museum & Science Center but may also be held by the authors, or their heirs or assigns. Researchers must obtain written permission of the copyright holder and the RMSC Museum & Science Center before transmission, reproduction, publication, or presentation (public display, performance, internet presentation, etc.) for images from the collection. Quotations used must be cited as above.

Conditions Governing Access:

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this collection. Please contact the Archivist to make an appointment at 585.697.1947.
Biographical Note

Dr. Charles T. Lunsford, 1891 to 1985, was Rochester, New York’s first licensed Black physician and first Black member of the Monroe County Medical Society. Born in Macon, Georgia, Lunsford moved to Rochester in 1921 after graduating from Howard University Medical School in 1920 and interning at the Freedman’s Hospital in Washington, D.C. His first office was located at 574 Clarissa Street and he later moved his practice to 718 South Plymouth Avenue. He was also on the staff of Rochester General Hospital and St. Mary’s Hospital. Lunsford surrendered his medical license in 1978 after he was accused of keeping inaccurate records and prescribing diet pills without cause, even though he denied any wrongdoing. He died at Strong Memorial Hospital of complications from pneumonia.

During his life, Dr. Lunsford treated both of Rochester’s Black and white populations in the City’s poverty areas. He said, in a July 2, 1968 Times-Union article entitled “Ratio: One Doctor, 10,000 Residents,” that he was still working 12 to 20 hour days as a general practitioner at the age of 76. He was a physician who did not go into medicine to get rich, but rather to render service, and he did so by charging only what his clients could afford and by making house calls when other practitioners no longer did this.

Dr. Lunsford was also a well known civil rights advocate, not only for African Americans, but for other underrepresented groups as well. Along with Reverend Rose and Dr. Van TuyLevy, a dentist, he fought, successfully, for the admission of the first Black student to the University of Rochester Medical School and Dental Dispensary. He helped to integrate the workforce of companies such as Eastman Kodak and the guestrooms of the local YMCA. During World War II, Lundford helped overturn an American Red Cross policy of not accepting blood donations of Black donors. Dr. Lunsford was also a key witness when a state legislative committee on discrimination held hearings in the 1930s. He was heavily involved in the NAACP and became its president in 1941 and hosted a reception for Martin Luther King Jr. when he was in Rochester.

Dr. Lunsford has been given many recognitions and awards both during and after his life. He was awarded the Rochester Museum & Science Center’s Civic Medal for Community Service in 1974 and was awarded the NAACP’s Man of the Year award. School # 19 on Seward Street is named the Charles T. Lunsford School and the Rochester City Council renamed Plymouth Park “Lunsford Park” in 1986 in recognition of his work.
Scope & Content

The collection consists of the papers of Dr. Charles T. Lunsford, the first licensed, Black physician in Rochester, New York. The materials date between 1919 and 1984. The papers are comprised of awards, correspondence, photographs, a textbook, and a medical license.

The collection contains Dr. Lunsford's New York State medical license, certificate of recognition from the United Church Ministry, newspaper clippings, and Resolution number 71 and a related program. The collection also includes group photographs of the 1920 senior medical class of Howard University and the intern group at the Freedman’s Hospital in Washington, D.C., photographs of Dr. Lunsfords home, with patients, and posed studio photographs.
Arrangement

This collection consists of four boxes divided into five series:

Series I: Recognition and photographs, 1951-1984
Series II: Newspaper clippings, 1968
Series III: Oversized, 1920-1921, 1976
Series IV: Three-dimensional objects, 1967-1982
Series V: Miscellaneous, 1919

Related Materials

Albert R. Stone negative 40.332.8849, “Men from Bureau of Weights and Measures.” This photograph was taken in Plymouth Park which was renamed Charles T. Lunsford Park in 1986.

Albert R. Stone negative 40.332.7053, “Orphans Enjoying Lunch.” This photograph is of Isabella Dorsey, Thomas Dorsey, a group of children from the Dorsey Home, and Charles Lunsford.

Local History–Vertical File–Biography–Lunsford, Charles. RMSC Museum & Science Center, Rochester, N.Y.

Subject Headings

- Physicians
- Hospitals–Medical staff
- African-American physicians
- New York (State)–Rochester
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
## Container List

### Series I: Recognitions and photographs, 1951-1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title, Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Resolution no. 71, May 17, 1973 [2007.03.12A]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Resolution no. 71 with program, May 17, 1973 [2007.03.12B]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>United Church Ministry Inc., certificate of recognition, 1984 [2007.03.13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Black &amp; white photograph of Charles Lunsford and companion, undated [2007.03.08]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Two 8x10 photographs of Dr. Lunsford, undated [2007.03.09a-b]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Colored newspaper photograph of Dr. Lunsford with patient, February 27, 1972 [2007.03.10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Four Kodacolor prints of Dr. Lunsford's home, 1951-1952 [2007.03.11a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Two black &amp; white group photographs, undated [2007.03.15a-b]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Black &amp; white 8x10 studio portrait of Dr. Lunsford, undated [2007.03.16]</td>
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</table>

### Series II: Newspaper clippings, 1968

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings, July 2, 1968 [2007.03.20a-b]</td>
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### Series III: Oversized, 1920-1921, 1976

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>New York State medical and surgical license, October 7, 1920 [2007.03.17]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Internes 1920-1921 Freedman's Hospital, Wash. D.C.” photograph, 1921 [2007.03.18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>“1920 Senior Medical Class, Howard University, Wash. D.C.” framed photograph, 1920 [2007.03.21]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“In Gratitude to Charles T. Lunsford, MD” plaque, June 18, 1976 [2007.03.07]</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Series IV: Three-dimensional objects, 1967-1982

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>7th Day Adventist Community Service award, 1978 [2007.03.01]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Association of Former Interns and Residents of Freedmen's Hospital, undated [2007.03.02]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eastern Region Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity award, April 17, 1982 [2007.03.03]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eureka Lodge No. 36 certificate of appreciation, September 27, 1980 [2007.03.04]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospitality Club Eldorado Temple testimony, 1967 [2007.03.05]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Antioch Baptist Church years of service award, 1972 [2007.03.06]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Series V: Miscellaneous, 1919,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title, dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Leather toilet kit, undated [2007.03.19]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A: Legacy Finding Aid

The Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Collection

 Arranged and Described by

Julie M. Sawnor
Undergraduate Intern. SUNY Buffalo
June 12, 2008

Schuyler C. Townson Research Library
Rochester Museum and Science Center
657 East Avenue
Rochester, N Y 14607

For an appointment, contact Lea Kemp:
Phone: 585-271-4552 x315
E-mail: Lea_Kemp@rmsc.org
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Series 3 – Oversize .......................................................... 4
Series 4 – Three-Dimensional Objects ................................... 5
Provenance

The Rochester Museum and Science Center acquired this collection in 2007 from Dr. William M. Davis, Jr., who resided at 24 Sandy Lane in Pittsford, NY at the time of the donation. Dr. Davis was a personal friend of Dr. Lunsford. Dr. Davis directly received this collection of personal objects from Dr. Lunsford at some point in time.

Biographical Note

Dr. Charles T. Lunsford, 1892-1985, was Rochester’s first licensed black physician and first African American member of the Monroe County Medical Society. Born in Macon, Georgia, Lunsford moved to Rochester in 1921 after graduating from Howard University Medical School in 1920 and interning at the Freedman’s Hospital in 1921 in Washington D.C. His first office was located at 574 Clarissa Street and he later moved his practice to 718 South Plymouth Avenue. He was also on the staffs of Rochester General Hospital and St. Mary’s Hospital. Lunsford surrendered his medical license in 1978 after he was accused of keeping inadequate records and prescribing diet pills without cause, even though he denied any wrongdoing. He died at Strong Memorial Hospital of complications from pneumonia.

During his life, Dr. Lunsford treated both of Rochester’s black and white populations in the city’s poverty areas. He said in a July 2nd, 1968 Times Union article entitled “Ratio: One Doctor, 10,000 Residents” that he was still working 12 to 20 hour days as a general practitioner at the age of 76. He was a physician who did not go into medicine to get rich, but rather to render service, and he did so by charging only what his clients could afford and by making house calls when other practitioners no longer did this.

Dr. Lunsford is also well known as a civil rights advocate not only for African Americans, but for other underrepresented groups as well. Along with Reverend Rose and Dr. Van Tuyl Ley, a dentist, he was responsible for the admission of the first black to the University of Rochester Medical School and Dental Dispensary, the first black blood donors to the American Red Cross and the first black employees at Eastman Kodak. He was heavily involved in the NAACP and became its president in 1941 and participated in several landmark struggles between 1920 and 1940. He challenged Rochester’s largest businesses, such as Eastman Kodak and Bausch & Lomb, with discriminatory hiring and admissions. He was also responsible for having the YMCA accommodate African Americans. The American Red Cross stopped turning away black donors in 1944 after Lunsford wrote to them and told them that he had secretly sent lighter skinned African Americans who looked white to give blood.

Dr. Lunsford has been given many recognitions and awards both during and after his life. In addition to all of the plaques and certificated found in Accession 2007.03, he was awarded the Rochester Museum and Science Center’s Civic Medal for Community Service in 1974, had a five hour testimonial dinner on DR. Charles T. Lunsford Day in 1978, and was awarded the local NAACP’s Man of the Year. Rochester School #19 on
Seward Street is named the “Charles T. Lunsford School” and the Rochester City Council renamed Plymouth Park “Lunsford Park” in 1986 in recognition of his work.

**Scope and Content**

The Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Collection is a small collection that contains important award plaques, letters, photographs, a textbook, a toilet kit, and a medical license that were significant to Dr. Lunsford’s life. The collection has great local African American historical value, as Lunsford was the first licensed African American doctor and general practitioner in Rochester, NY. All objects are library materials except for the toilet kit, which is a historic material.
Series 1: Recognitions, Photographs

Box 1 Folder 1 Acc.2007.03.12A Resolution No. 7.1 Dated May 17, 1973 by Commissioner Serrano of the Rochester, NY Board of Education. Resolved, that the Primary School No. 19 be renamed the Dr. Charles Terrell Lunsford School.

Acc.2007.03.12B Resolution No. 7.1 with Program

Acc.2007.03.13 United Church Ministry, Inc. Certificate of Recognition, 1984

Folder 2 Acc.2007.03.08 Full length black and white photograph of Dr. Charles T. Lunsford with unknown companion

Folder 3 Acc.2007.03.09A-B Two 8” x 10” black and white portrait photographs of Dr. Lunsford, facing left and right

Folder 4 Acc.2007.03.10 Colored newspaper photograph of Dr. Lunsford with a young patient, dated February 27, 1972.

Folder 5 Acc.2007.03.11 A-D Four badly faded Kodacolor prints taken in 1951 and 1952 show Dr. Lunsford’s house and several unidentified people outside his house.

Folder 6 Acc.2007.03.15A-B Two 8” x 10” black and white group photographs of people at a party. One includes 11 women standing around a dining table. The second includes 12 people, including two Mexican musicians

Folder 7 Acc.2007.03.16 Black and white 8” x 10” Studio portrait of Dr. Lunsford, Muser Studio, Rochester, NY

Series 2: Newspaper clippings (Legal size)

Folder 8 Acc.2007.03.20A-B Newspaper clipping describing tribute paid to Dr. Lunsford and Rev. Murphy Greer: Doctors both, one of Medicine, one of Christianity. Dr. Lunsford is 78 and still caring for many patients. Photocopy included with originals. Newspaper clippings about Dr. Lunsford: “One Doctor, 10,000 Residents”, Tuesday, July 2, 1968? Times Union.

Series 3: Oversize

Box 2 Folder 1 Acc.2007.03.17 License to practice medicine and surgery in the State of New York. Dated October 7, 1920. License No. 15936 Charles T. Lunsford, M.D. Given by the University of the State of New York.

Folder 2 Acc.2007.03.18 Photographic montage of “Interns 1920-1921 Freedmens Hospital, Wash. D.C.”

Folder 3 Acc.2007.03.21 Framed photograph of the “1920 Senior Medical Class, Howard University, Wash. D.C.”
Series 4: Three-Dimensional Objects

Plaques
2007.03.01  Community Service Award Presented to Charles Lunsford, M.D. 1978 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church
2007.03.02  Assn. of Former Interns and Residents of Freedmen's Hospital
2007.03.03  Presented to Charles T. Lunsford by the Eastern Region Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. for His Many Years of Service and Contributions to His Region and Fraternity, April 17, 1982.
2007.03.05  Testimony to Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Presented by the Hospitality Club Eldorado Temple #32 1967
2007.03.06  To Chas. Lunsford For Years of Continuously Striving Relentlessly Searching for Cures Has Turned A Doctor Into A “Great Doctor”, Antioch Baptist 1972
2007.03.07  In Gratitude To Charles T. Lunsford, MD, for 57 Years Physician and Fighter for Human Rights Presented By the Citizens of Rochester, New York With Love June 18, 1976

Misc.
2007.03.14  Textbook owned by Dr. Lunsford. *Urology* by Edward L. Keyes, Jr. M.D. Ph.D., 1919
2007.03.19  Leather toilet kit belonging to Dr. Lunsford.
The Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Collection, Revised October 2014
Box 1
Series 1: Recognitions and Photographs

Folder 1
Acc. 2007.03.12A Resolution No. 7.1, Dated May 17, 1973 by Commissioner Serrano of the Rochester, N.Y. Board of Education. Resolved, that the Primary School No. 19 be named the Dr. Charles Terrell Lunsford School.

Folder 2
Acc. 2007.03.12B Resolution No. 7.1 with Program
Acc. 2007.03.13 United Church Ministry, Inc. Certificate of Recognition, 1984
Acc. 2007.03.08 Full length black and white photograph of Dr. Charles T. Lunsford with unknown companion. (Maxwell Grand Photographer, I.B.P.O.E.W., 34 Centre Park, Rochester, N.Y.)

Folder 3
Acc. 2007.03.09A-B Two 8"x10" black and white portrait photographs of Dr. Lunsford, facing left and right

Folder 4
Acc. 2007.03.10 Colored newspaper photograph of Dr. Lunsford with a young patient, dated February 27, 1972

Folder 5
Acc. 2007.03.11A-D Four badly faded Kodacolor prints taken in 1951 and 1952 show Dr. Lunsford's house
Acc. 2007.03.15A-B Two 8"x10" black and white group photographs of people at a party. One includes 11 women standing around a dining table. The second includes 12 people, including two Mexican musicians. (Dr. Lunsford is 5th from left.)

Folder 6
Acc. 2007.03.16 Black and white 8"x10" studio portrait of Dr. Lunsford, Muser Studio, Rochester, N.Y.

Folder 7
Series 2: Newspaper clippings (legal size)
Acc. 2007.03.20A-B Newspaper clippings describing tribute paid to Dr. Lunsford and Rev. Murphy Greer: Doctors both, one of Medicine, one of Christianity. Dr. Lunsford is 78 and still caring for many patients. Photocopy included with originals. Newspaper clippings about Dr. Lunsford: "One Doctor, 10,000 Residents", Tuesday, July 2, 1968? Times Union.

Folder 8
Box 2
Series 3: Oversize

Folder 1
Acc. 2007.03.18 Photographic montage of "Internes 1920-1921Freedmens Hospital, Wash. D.C."
### Box 3
#### Series 4: Three Dimensional Objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acc. 2007.03.01</th>
<th>Community Service Award Presented to Charles Lunsford, M.D. 1978 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acc. 2007.03.02</td>
<td>Assn. of Former Inters an Residents of Freemen's Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc. 2007.03.03</td>
<td>Presented to Charles T. Lunsford by the Eastern Region Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. for His Many Years of Service and Contributions to His Region and Fraternity, April 17, 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc. 2007.03.04</td>
<td>Certificate of Appreciation Presented to Dr. Charles Lunsford at the Eighth Annual Community Awards Presentations of Eureka Lodge NO. 36 F. &amp; A.M. (Price Hall) For Outstanding and Dedicated Service to the Community of Rochester, N.Y. Sept. 27, 1980, Lawrence Cresswell, Worshipful Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc. 2007.03.05</td>
<td>Testimony to Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Presented by the Hospitality Club Eldorado Temple #32 1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc. 2007.03.06</td>
<td>To Chas. Lusford For Years of Continuously Striving Relentlessly Searching for Cures Has Turned A Doctor Into a &quot;Great Doctor&quot;, Antioch Baptist 1972</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Box 4
#### Series 5: Misc.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acc. 2007.03.19</td>
<td>Leather toilet kit belonging to Dr. Lunsford. (One item missing.)</td>
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</table>