



Jinnett B. Kirk Shirley

age 94, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2013, in Friendship Village Care Center, Tempe, AZ.

She was born in Banner, Oklahoma to H. Dale Barnes and Vivian Steenrod Barnes January 31, 1919. She described Banner, where she spent her early years, as a town with only a grain elevator and maybe a market, and that's it.

She graduated from Oklahoma A&M in Stillwater, OK, in 1941.

She later went on to earn an M.A. at [Arizona State University](#), an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, Chapman College, 1972 and Educational work at Univ. of CA at Berkley and Arizona State.

Jinnett Married Joe E. Kirk January 31, 1937, and resided in Stillwater to complete her B.A. degree in 1941 before moving to Missouri. They were blessed with two daughters, Judith and Joan.

In 1946 Joe and Jinnett moved to Arizona where Jinnett embarked on what was to become a stellar career pioneering a pathway for women in the work place. She began by applying at Phoenix Technical High School, the first desegregated high school in Arizona, as a substitute teacher. Instead she was offered a full time teaching position and later became a Counselor. In 1955 she moved to Phoenix College as Dean of Women.

In 1965 President of Mesa Community College, John D. Riggs asked Jinnett to accept the position of Dean of Students at the new Mesa Community College. She is quoted as saying, "Nowhere have I ever worked with a staff that is so collectively dedicated to its students as those at Mesa Community College... it has been a truly exciting interlude in my life."

During her career as Dean of Students at MCC she directed Financial Aid, the AWARE program, Veterans Services, Child Care Services Program, Career Exploration, advising and counseling numerous other groups where she fostered the importance of education and interaction between the multicultural populations at MCC. She was also instrumental in starting MCC's Nursing Program.

Her home was always open to students to enable them to get acquainted with each other and form an identity with the College. She provided a home for select students who needed a home during the school term. Many of them became life-long friends and

indeed family.

Jinnett and Joe's home was also always open to dignitaries, family and friends who needed transitional or temporary housing while they were in the Valley.

She remained at MCC until her retirement in 1979. Upon her retirement the College honored her by naming the Student Union building after her: The JINNETT B. KIRK STUDENT CENTER. Student Scholarships became her passion. She established scholarships for: JINNETT B. AND JOE E. KIRK LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP FUND, JINNETT KIRK AND JOE SHIRLEY SCHOLARSHIP FUND, NURSING SCHOLARSHIP, and THEATER OUTBACK PROGRAM. She was quoted as saying, "There is nothing I would rather have spent my life doing than working with students." Her whole life was one of caring and service.

In 1987 she married longtime friend and colleague, Joe Shirley, and began a new chapter in her life that included Garden Parties at their home on Camelback Mountain. Extensive traveling included a trip to Rome and an audience with the Pope, visits to Joe's home in Ensenada, as well as attending the Shirley Family Reunion held at the Shirley Plantation in Virginia.

Her many awards and honors include:

Don Carlos Humanitarian Award, Tempe Community Council
AWARE AWARDS TO WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT Minerva Award, presented by the
renowned Humanitarian, Marlo Thomas

Professional Organizations

Past State President Delta Kappa Gamma Society

State First Vice-President American Assoc. of Univ. Women AAUW

Past President, Vice President and Secretary of the Arizona Women Deans,
Administrators and Counselors, National Association Women Deans,
Administrators and Counselors, and member of the National Board.

Community Organizations

Member of Altrusa Club, past President of Phoenix and C-M-T Altrusa Clubs,
International Relations Chairman.

Member of Mesa Community Council Board

Past member of Phoenix Community Council Board, Chairman of Committee on Aging.

Past member of Governor's Commission on the Status of Women.

Church Related

Past member of State Commission on the Ministry, Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, Elder, choir member and director, Co-chairman of Community Christian Church and the World Committee. She successfully combined a demanding career with the joy of family life and community service.

Survived by daughters Judy Crum and Joan Hancock. Sons-in-law, Vern Hancock and the late James Crum; and foster son the late Ferris "Rocky" Crane.

Four Granddaughters: Stephanie (Ron) Pollard, Orange, CA,; Teri Walsh, Downey CA; Kathy (Jim) Peterson , Placentia, CA; Jinnett Hancock, Phoenix, AZ Four Great Grandsons Johnathan Pollard, Stephen Pollard, Justin Peterson, Jeremy Peterson
Celebration of Life to be held at 11:00 am, Saturday, September 21, 2013 at:
Community Christian Church, 1701 S. College Avenue, Tempe, AZ 85281, 480-967-5266
Memorials to: Scholarship Donations payable to MCCF, and mailed to Mesa Community College, Attn: Office of Development, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Mesa, AZ 85202 www.mesacc.edu/give-tribute

Memories and condolences may be made by visiting the online obituary guest book at www.obits.azcentral.com arrangements entrusted to Queen of Heaven Catholic Mortuary.