



THE OKLAHOMA EDUCATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST FOUNDATION HONORS

Ed Coffey



The Ed Coffey Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of one of education's staunchest defenders. Ed Coffey died at the age of 74 in 1991. For 18 years, he was principal at Tulsa's Webster High School. For 18 years, he WAS Webster High School.

"He was a great administrator," said former Webster coach J.V. Haney. "He was a great motivator of teachers. He made you want to teach." Haney served in several capacities while working under Coffey for 12 years. Haney was basketball coach, athletic director, classroom teacher and dean of boys. "Under Mr. Coffey, there were two rules," Haney said. "The first, and most important, was the students. The second was his faculty. "If education today would follow those two principles of philosophy, we would not have any trouble."

Coffey was a firm and fair man, a gentleman of the first order. He commanded respect on his campus, and beyond. Few called him Ed. Most called him Mr. Coffey. "He was a mighty special man," said Bill Allen, who served Coffey as basketball coach, athletic director and assistant principal. "He did a lot of things for a lot of people, and didn't want credit for any of it. He just very quietly helped a lot of folks. Not just in their school business, but in their personal life, as well."

Coffey was born into education. His father was a longtime principal and superintendent. Coffey, himself, took his first teaching job in 1938, at Drumright. He moved to Tulsa in 1950 as a science teacher at Wilson Junior High. After one year as

assistant principal at Bell Junior High, he served as principal at Hamilton and Wright junior highs before moving to Webster in 1966.

"He was a very caring person who was very concerned about education," said Gene Hart, who coached and taught under Coffey for 18 years. "He got the things done that bettered Webster High School and the westside community. He was a genuine asset to the westside community. And everyone loved him." Haney said. "He got things done. He was a one-of-a-kind administrator," Hart said. "You couldn't ask for a better administrator, a better boss, or a better friend. He was one of a kind."

- Adapted from *Tulsa World* December 8, 1991