

campaign in 1984. He actively engaged with diplomats from many African countries here in Washington, DC as well as at the United Nations in New York. He was a consultant for the European Union and UN Commission for Human Rights. He served as the principal organizer for the Trans-Atlantic Conference on Racism and Xenophobia in the US and Europe sponsored by the European Union.

Bob Cummings' passion for Africa and her Diaspora and his always alert consciousness of their enduring linkage was well known. His commitment to nurture this passion and consciousness is shared strongly by his wife, academic colleague and partner in life and scholarship, Mel, and it is something they have cultivated in their two children, Dr. Samori Cummings and Attorney Samir Cummings.

Our prayers and love go to Mel, Samori, Samir and all the members of the immediate and extended family. We honor and celebrate the life and achievements of an extraordinary human being, a great scholar, teacher and mentor, an energetic and courageous administrator, a generous international public servant, a committed activist, a friend; and we commit to continue and build on the monumental and proud legacy of Robert J. Cummings.

Submitted by Mbye Cham, Howard University, April 12, 2007.

Editor's Note: A Robert J. Cummings Memorial Scholarship fund has been set up in his name at Howard University, Department of African Studies.

ELLIOTT P. SKINNER

Elliott Percival Skinner, a resident of Watergate South since 2000, passed away peacefully on April 1, 2007. He will be greatly missed by his wife of 25 years, Dr. Gwendolyn Mikell, his children Victor, Gail, Touray, Sagha, and Luce, 7 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, 4 siblings, and a host of uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, nieces, in-laws, and other relatives, colleagues and friends.

Dr. Skinner was Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology - Emeritus, of Columbia U in New York City, where he taught for 40 years. Born in Trinidad and Tobago, he arrived in the United States just in time to serve in the U.S. Army in the European Theater of Operations from 1943 to 1946; he attended the U of Neufchatel in Switzerland prior to returning home. He received his BA from the U College of New York U, and received his MA in Anthropology as well as his PhD in Anthropology (1955) from the Graduate Faculties of Columbia U. In 1966 he was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson as the United States Ambassador to Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) and served until 1969. In 1968, while serving as Ambassador he was

awarded the Commandeur de l'Ordre National Voltaïque by the President of the Republic of Upper Volta.

He served as Chairman of the Anthropology Department at Columbia from 1972 to 1975. In addition, he has held a number of prestigious fellowships including a Guggenheim and the Fulbright 40th Anniversary Distinguished Fellowship at the U of Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire (1987). He was the former Chairman of the Association of Black American Ambassadors, a member of the Board of Trustees of the U of Bridgeport, a member of the Council of American Ambassadors, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations since 1976. He was a prolific writer, and the author of over twelve books beginning with *The Mossi of Upper Volta* (1964), including *African Urban Life: The Transformation of Ouagadougou* which won the Herskovits Award for the best book on Africa in 1975, as well as *African Americans and United States Policy Toward Africa, 1850-1924, Vol. I* (1993).

Submitted by the African Studies Program at Georgetown University, April 4, 2007.