

Hubie Jones' Purpose-Driven Life

SSW alum, dean emeritus recognized for lifetime activism

IN 1953, HUBERT JONES was a sophomore at the City College of New York, studying under the preeminent black psychologist Kenneth Clark. One day, Clark walked into class and told his students about an idea he was working on: writing a brief on his studies showing segregation's psychological damage to black children, and filing it with a case that was being brought before the U.S. Supreme Court. The case was *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Clark's brief would eventually help lay the foundation for the court's landmark 1954 decision overturning segregation in public schools. But on that day, neither Clark nor his students knew if the justices would even allow it; the court had never before considered a social science brief as part of a case.

Jones is a leader, bridge-builder, and fearless advocate for urban children and racial equality in the city of Boston.

“Dr. Clark came back one day and said, ‘Okay. They’re going to do it,’” recalls Jones (SSW’57), dean emeritus of BU’s School of Social Work, who retired in 1993 and who has founded, led, or shaped more than 30 civic organizations in Boston both before and since his tenure at BU. “And then he said, ‘Here’s the brief. I want you all to read it and tell me what you think.’”

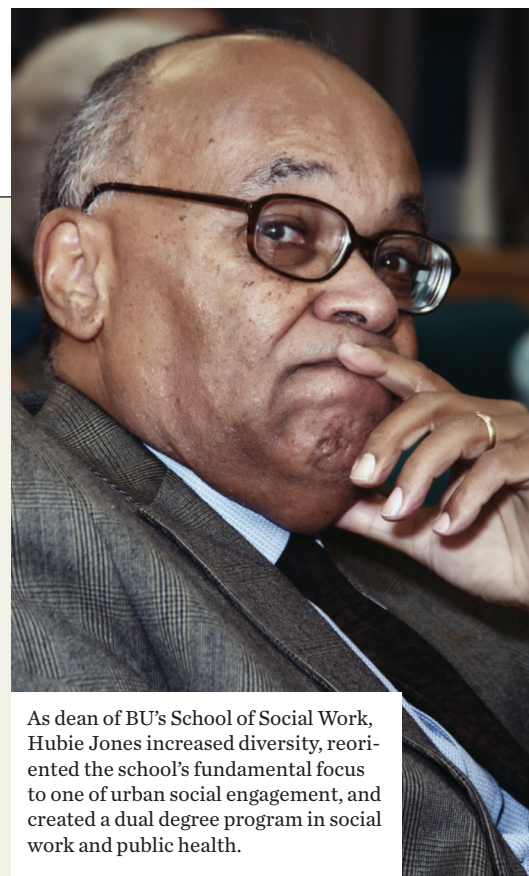
For the young Jones, it was a life-altering moment. “I mean, I really got it,” he says. “I saw a person who was an academic and a scholar who used his scholarship and his knowledge to advance social justice. And I began to think about social work as a profession that not only helped

people or families, but that had a commitment to social change and social action.”

Now 77, Jones has spent the last half-century living out that commitment, translating scholarship into civic action as a leader, bridge-builder, and fearless advocate for urban children and racial equality in the city of Boston. He was

recently awarded a \$50,000 Purpose Prize, a national award given to social innovators over 60 who are making a significant social impact in their encore careers. The prize, often called the MacArthur genius grant for baby boomers, recognizes one of the organizations Jones has founded in recent years: the Boston Children’s Chorus, a multiracial, multiethnic chorus of students ages 7 to 18 from Boston and surrounding suburbs who perform across the country and around the world. Jones, one of 10 Purpose Prize winners, 5 receiving \$100,000 and 5 receiving \$50,000, was chosen from a pool of 1,500 nominees.

BU is also recognizing Jones’ lasting legacy as an activist scholar: in January, the School of Social Work announced the establishment of the Hubie Jones Lecture in Urban Health. The lecture series, which is partially endowed and set to begin in fall 2011, will draw



As dean of BU’s School of Social Work, Hubie Jones increased diversity, reoriented the school’s fundamental focus to one of urban social engagement, and created a dual degree program in social work and public health.

FRANK POLITANO (CAS’71) of Berkeley Heights, N.J., recently received a patent for his invention of a consumption investment system. Former classmates can contact him at frank.politano@klgates.com.

JAMES G. SCANTLING (SMG’71) of Bloomfield, Conn., an attorney with McCarter & English, was recognized as one of Greater Hartford’s top attorneys by *Hartford Magazine*. James is a partner in the firm’s corporate practice group.

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JACK BERNSTEIN (SED’72) of Manhattan Beach, Calif., published his eighth business

book, *The Center of Gravity* (InterLingua Publishing, 2010). The book applies military theory to small and large businesses, Jack writes. Email him at interlingua@aol.com.

SZIFRA BIRKE (CAS’72) of Lowell, Mass., released the documentary film *Browsing Through Birke’s*, which she describes as a poignant and humorous film about her parents, who survived the Holocaust, and their success in the quirky landmark clothing store they ran for 50 years in Lowell. Learn more at www.browsingthroughbirkes.com.

PAUL CARY GOLDBERG (CAS’72) of Gloucester, Mass., showed his photographs in the solo exhibition *Eighteen Days in the Land of*

Israel at the Pucker Gallery in Boston, Mass., last spring. His work was also featured in the group exhibition *MMULTIPLES* at the Jane Deering Gallery in Santa Barbara, Calif. Paul taught a photography workshop in April at Florence University of the Arts in Florence, Italy.

JOAN M. GROSS (SED’72) of Shaker Heights, Ohio, a partner at Hahn Loeser & Parks, was elected to the Society of Benchers, an honorary society for graduates and associates at Case Western Reserve University’s School of Law.

IRIS OSTERMAN (CFA’72) of Lincoln, Mass., showed her paintings at the Bowery Gallery

national and global leaders in various areas of expertise to address urgent issues in urban health and social work. Since the 1990s, SSW has funded Hubie Jones Urban Social Work Scholarship awards for students, and its alumni association has honored graduates dedicated to the school's urban mission with the Hubie Jones Urban Service Award.

In a city of old grudges, sharp elbows, and historic racial divides, Jones has made inclusion his trademark, creating or transforming cultural, educational, and community institutions that anchor Boston's social landscape, from the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, where his leadership as director in the 1960s led to groundbreaking laws establishing special education and bilingual education in the state, to the pioneering service organization City Year, where he was a founding board member in the 1990s and has guided the agency from its Boston-based beginnings to one with global reach.

Jones founded the Boston Children's Chorus in 2003 with just 20 kids. Now with more than 350 students, the

group has performed in Japan, Mexico, and Jordan, as well as in major U.S. cities, and its annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Day concert in Boston is televised nationally.

EXPOSING ILLEGAL EXCLUSION

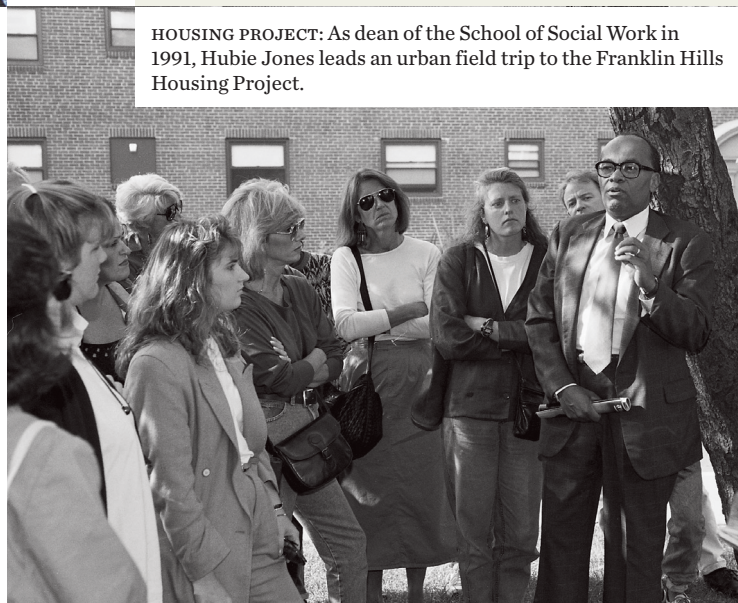
In 1968, Jones, then executive director of the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, began noticing a systemic pattern of children in Boston being turned away from school, and he took on the entrenched powers of the Boston public school system. "The school officials did what we knew they would do," says Jones, "which was to go into denial: 'There's no such thing as excluded children. We don't push kids out of school.' But we knew we had a problem that was endemic."

A task force led by Jones exposed the illegal exclusion from school of 10,000 children, either because they were physically or mentally disabled, had behavioral problems, did not speak English, or were pregnant. The 1970 task force report, *The Way We Go to School: The Exclusion of Children in Boston*, rocked Beacon Hill politics and ushered in the state's bilingual education law in 1971 and first special education law in 1972. The 1972 law, a first for any state in the nation, would become the model for the federal special education law passed three years later.

During his 16-year tenure at SSW, Jones would transform the school—turning over 80 percent of the faculty, increasing the school's diversity, and reorienting its fundamental focus to one of urban social engagement. He also established a dual degree program in social work and public health that has become one of the leading such programs in the country. And under him, the school created one of the first part-time degree study programs, opening the field of social work to older, nontraditional students. "I think I came to realize I could play a role in the education of a whole generation of social workers, and I would have a base from which to continue pushing for social change and social justice in this city," Jones says. "And that came to be a very important thing."

FRANCIE LATOUR

HOUSING PROJECT: As dean of the School of Social Work in 1991, Hubie Jones leads an urban field trip to the Franklin Hills Housing Project.



PATRICE FLESCH

KALMAN ZABARSKY

in New York, N.Y., last October. Email Iris at ikoarts@comcast.net.

1973

DAVID H. LEE (LAW'73) of Chestnut Hill, Mass., was named Boston Family Lawyer of the Year for 2011 by *Best Lawyers in America*. David is a founding partner of Lee & Levine.

STEPHEN M. POLITI (LAW'73,'74) of Lexington, Mass., published "State Responses to Declining Tax Revenues and Limited Tax Administration Resources—A Massachusetts Perspective 2001–2010," for a recent issue of the *Journal of State Taxation*. He is also the author and editor of the

2010 and 2011 *Guidebook to Massachusetts Taxes* and the editor of the *Massachusetts Appellate Tax Board Reporter*.

JEAN D. SIFLEET (LAW'73) of Clinton, Mass., published *IShift—Innovation Shift: A Practical Guide to Individuals Taking Control and Shifting Gears to Move Business Forward* (Infinity, 2010). Jean is a business attorney, a CPA, and an entrepreneur. Learn more at ishift.smartfast.com.

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DIANE "DEE" (ROSENZWEIG) BERGER (SAR'74) of Roslyn, N.Y., is principal of the Children's Learning Center at United Cerebral Palsy

Association of Nassau County in Roosevelt, N.Y., a school for 250 children with disabilities. In spring 2009, she was profiled in Cornell University's magazine *Enterprise*. Dee is a retired volunteer emergency medical technician, having served with the Glen Cove, N.Y., EMS for 14 years. She is pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership. Email Dee at jakeberger@aol.com.

JUDITH BRASSARD BROWN (CFA'74,'78) of Dorchester, Mass., recently showed her paintings at the Kingston Gallery in Boston, Mass. Visit www.judithbrassardbrown.com.

ELLEN GLICK (SON'74) of Ra'anana, Israel, who writes fiction as Elle Druskin, had her