THE CUBA FAMILY ARCHIVES FOR SOUTHERN JEWISH HISTORY AT THE BREMAN MUSEUM

MSS 250, CECIL ALEXANDER PAPERS

BOX 1, FILE 10

BIOGRAPHY,

2000

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October 2, 2000

Mr. Stephen Castellanos, FAIA
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
C/o AIA Honors and Awards Department
1735 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006-5292

Dear Mr. Castellanos:

It is my distinct privilege to nominate Cecil A. Alexander, FAIA for the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award. Mr. Alexander is a man whose life exemplifies the meaning of the award. He is a distinguished architect who has led the effort to foster better understanding among groups and promote better race relations in Atlanta. Cecil was a co-founder, with Whitney Young, of Resurgens Atlanta, a group of civic and business leaders dedicated to improving race relations that has set an example for the rest of the nation. Cecil was actively involved with social issues long before Mr. Young challenged the AIA to assume its professional responsibility toward these issues.

In 1958, Cecil was appointed Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal by then-Mayor William Hartsfield. This was the first on-going bi-racial committee in Atlanta, and at Cecil’s insistence, members were drawn from black, white, male and female community leaders. This leadership role in often-controversial issues has been a hallmark of this courageous architect. He sponsored the first black members of the Commerce Club and AIA Atlanta.

He has often been cited for fostering better human relations in all facets of public life, even though his stands were not without risk both personally and professionally. His pro bono work often excluded him from related work. Nevertheless, his career has been marked by the design of numerous award-winning projects including an AIA Honor Award for his own home. Major projects include the Coca-Cola Headquarters, Bell South Headquarters, Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium and the Carrier Dome.

His civic commitments are unparalleled. His architectural background led to his appointment as Chair of the Building Committees for Clark College and Clark Atlanta University, two historically black educational institutions. He also served on the Building Committee for the Martin Luther King Center for International Studies. He was a founding member of the President’s Council of Spelman College.

Cecil has been an advisor to Mayors, Governors and Congressmen. He was an advisor to Mayor William Hartsfield and Mayor Ivan Allen. He served on Governor Jimmy Carter’s Housing Committee and several committees for Governor Frank Harris. He co-chaired the committee to elect John Lewis to Congress and in 1985, along with Rep. Lewis led a delegation from the Black/Jewish Coalition of Atlanta at the 20th commemoration of the march from Selma to Montgomery.

Clearly, Cecil is an architect that exemplifies the best that Whitney Young, Jr. advocated. In summary, Cecil A. Alexander, FAIA is a distinguished and honorable man worthy of this high honor.

Sincerely,

Ben R. Danner, FAIA
Director, South Atlantic Region

Ben R. Danner, FAIA
1877 Ardmore Road, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
Telephone: 404-352-3811
E-mail: bend@sizemorefloyd.com

Biography
Cecil A. Alexander F.A.I.A.

Atlanta was the strategic center of the racial turmoil generated in the South by the Civil Rights Movement. A dedicated group of citizens, male and female, black and white, allied with the mayor and supported by the media, united to lead the city through that dangerous period peacefully and, in the end, to achieve enduring racial harmony and justice. Cecil Alexander was a leader in this group, readily risking the enmity of the white majority of that time, to stand for what he saw was right.

He was born in 1918 into a family that settled in Charleston before the American Revolution and came to Atlanta before the Civil War. The South of his youth was a completely segregated place where white dominance and often violent mistreatment of black citizens was an accepted fact and was viewed as a fair assertion of white supremacy. Alexander, however, emerged not only as a prominent architect, but as a citizen whose vision for his region made him a vocal advocate for civil and human rights for Blacks, long before it was even grudgingly accepted.

What caused Alexander to turn away from his traditions? As a Marine dive bomber pilot in World War II combat, he began to question why the rights and freedoms he fought for were denied to his black comrades in their own country. After the war, while a student in Harvard’s Master in Architecture program, he met and formed an enduring friendship with Conrad Johnson, a fellow student. Conrad had been a pilot with the Tuskegee Airmen. Their common experience as combat pilots bridged any separations related to race. They related to each other just as friends. Finally, Alexander’s wife, Hermione Weil, who was from the segregated city of New Orleans, rejected any evaluation of people except on the basis of character, regardless of race. Her death in a car wreck caused by a drunken sixteen year old, led Alexander to form the Committee toCombat Drunken Driving resulting in more stringent state laws. His present wife, Helen Eisemann, has the same strong feelings regarding character as the only factor. These women encouraged Alexander in his search for racial equality and opened their homes to all races.

How did Alexander pursue his aims? Atlanta’s urban renewal program in the 1950’s was floundering. Under pressure from the business community, the reluctant mayor appointed a Citizen’s Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal. Alexander’s outspoken advocacy for eliminating slums while president of the Atlanta Chapter A.I.A. led the mayor to appoint him chairman. This was Atlanta’s first on-going biracial committee. In order to make it effective, Alexander pressured the mayor to enlarge the group’s membership. The mayor, convinced that the white leaders in Atlanta would not serve on a biracial committee, at first refused to move. Finally he relented, sending out invitations to over seventy black and white, male and female leaders. Only one refused. This then-powerful group, under Alexander’s aggressive leadership, promoted the clearance of five slum-infested areas and took seriously the relocation of persons evicted by clearances into new affordable private and public housing.

In addition to urban renewal-related clearances, the network of Atlanta’s highways evicted some 16,000 persons. Again Alexander was called as chairman of the Housing Resources Committee, to house these people. Their biracial group was the catalyst for the creation of some twenty-two thousand units for low-income occupation. Both of these programs were controversial and passionately contested. His advocacy for relocating minorities into formerly all white areas in all sections of the city subjected Alexander and his family to threats of violent reprisals. He was not deterred. As chairman of these two committees, Alexander was called on to mediate racial conflicts unrelated directly to urban renewal. This led to his appointment by Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr. as a member of the Coordinating Committee whose function was to anticipate and resolve racial differences in Atlanta. Under Alexander’s leadership (including a meeting at his home) a strategy was devised and implemented to gain acceptance of the just-enacted 1964 public accommodations law by the majority of Atlantans.

Alexander’s architectural career led to his service on several significant building committees. These included The Martin Luther King Center and the predominantly black institutions of Clark College and Clark Atlanta University, where he served as chairman. He also chaired the building committees of Marist School and the Southern Center for International Studies.

While Alexander served as Vice Chairman of the Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission, it conceived, planned and obtained a favorable vote for an Atlanta transit system (MARTA.) This system has enabled workers, mainly minorities without private transportation, to hold jobs throughout the region. At a national level, Alexander successfully urged President Lyndon B. Johnson to create a nationwide committee to change the attitudes of whites so as to gain acceptance of the voting rights and public accommodation laws enacted by Congress in 1964 and 1965. Alexander served on this committee as a representative from Georgia. All of these positions were pro bono and during Alexander’s terms, his firm did not accept any related architectural commissions.

Alexander also participated in two significant international situations. Mayor Allen asked him to host the Atlanta visit of the United Nations Civil Rights Commission. The visit coincided with a widespread Ku Klux Klan demonstration against civil rights. By skillful planning (and, he says, luck) Alexander led the group around the city and to meetings with key Atlantans without confrontation with the Klan. Except for some skepticism by the Russian delegates, the Commission gave the city a good report.
In an entirely different direction, Alexander had been asked postwar by Mayor William B. Hartsfield to design a tower for a Japanese bell given to Atlanta by the U.S. Navy. On seeing the bell was not a ship’s bell, as he thought, but a temple bell, Alexander persuaded the Mayor that it should be returned to the Japanese as a gesture of friendship. Through research, Alexander discovered the bell came from a temple in Yokosuka. Subsequently, the Navy took back and returned the bell ceremoniously to the Japanese through the Atlanta Rotary Club. It was received with rejoicing and created good will.

The subsequent mayor, Ivan Allen Jr., credits Alexander as one of the people responsible for his election when he ran against the racist segregationist, Lester Maddox. Allen continued and greatly expanded the city’s move toward racial equality and good will. Maddox would have destroyed all previous progress and halted any move toward accommodations. While President of the Atlanta A.I.A., Alexander, against strong though limited opposition, brought in the organization’s first black member. The new member was soon made welcome. He also co-sponsored as members in an elite downtown business club, its first black members. These included Maynard Jackson, later mayor of the city.

At a time when the traditional ties between Jews and Blacks were strained, the American Jewish Committee formed The Black-Jewish Coalition. Congressman John Lewis and Alexander were made co-chairs. This group sponsored a trip to Israel and Kenya to inspire greater understanding between Blacks and Jews. They urged President Reagan to exert his influence to end apartheid in South Africa, and lobbied in support of continuing the Voting Rights Act. Alexander and Lewis led a delegation to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Edmund Pettus Bridge incident in Selma, Alabama.

Two events will further define Alexander’s commitment. He served on the admissions committee of the board of an elite Atlanta preparatory school when the board refused to adopt a policy for integrating the school as proposed by the admissions committee. Alexander resigned. Only the intervention of a powerful member of a bank board prevented Alexander’s firm from losing a commission to design a forty-story tower for the bank because the C.E.O. was incensed by Alexander’s actions at the school.

In another instance, a potential mob was threatening to riot over the killing of a young Black by an Atlanta policeman. Mayor Allen asked Alexander to accompany him to the scene. The two men walked among the crowd while the Mayor shook hands with every individual and expressed his concern and sympathy. They then met with small groups in a shopping center until 4:30 AM. The Mayor’s courage and initiative averted a potential riot.

During his 38 years as a principal with his firm, Finch, Alexander, Barnes, Rothschild and Paschal (FABRAP), Alexander was involved as a designer and administrator on many significant projects. These include The Coca Cola Company headquarters, Southern Bell headquarters (in an equal joint venture with SOM, Phipps Plaza whose tenants include Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord & Taylor and Tiffany & Co., The Georgia Power Company headquarters and the Culbetro Pavilion at the New York World’s Fair. Throughout his career, Alexander assisted minority firms and individuals.

Presently, Alexander continues in active practice with the firm of Alexander-Weiner Architects. In an equal joint venture with the minority firm, R.L. Brown Architects, they have on their boards a major multi-use project. He continues his community involvement. His effort includes active membership in the Black-Jewish Coalition and board membership with Clark Atlanta University, The Atlanta College of Art, and the Southern Center for International Studies.

In 1968, Alexander brought together a group, including Whitney Young, to form “Resurgens”, a biracial civic organization. Still active in this effort, he is now working with his son to restructure membership to include the great influx of Asians and Hispanics who have moved into the Atlanta area.

In 1995 Alexander designed a new flag for Georgia, eliminating the Confederate battle flag now include on the state flag. He is working now with the Governor and members of the Legislature to adopt this flag and rid the state of a symbol recalling slavery. Another of his efforts is the preservation of a steel truss bridge built in 1903 over the Chattahoochee River. This bridge was named for his late wife. Recently Alexander created and served for two years as Director of the Continuing Education Program at Georgia Tech’s College of Architecture.

Alexander has received brotherhood awards from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, The American Jewish Committee, two A.I.A. Ivan Allen Awards for Service to the Community, the Community Service Award from the Jewish Temple, the Greek Archdiocese Award, Kiwanis’, “Man of the Year” Award, the Yale Medal, and two Distinguished Flying Crosses from the Marine Corps.

In evaluating the qualifications of Cecil A. Alexander, F.A.I.A., it must be emphasized that his early efforts in civil rights took place in a dangerous, antagonistic and potentially violent era. His efforts have had a lasting effect on his community and at 82 years of age, he continues to be active as an architect wedded to quality and a citizen committed to the public interest.
Cecil Alexander was appointed by Mayor Hartsfield as First Chairman of the biracial Citizens Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal. This Committee was expanded by Alexander from seven members to over seventy of Atlanta’s most influential citizens. Under his leadership, the Committee served as catalyst for clearing five slum areas and relocating five thousand families. Alexander was personally subjected to physical threats during his efforts to accomplish zoning for minorities.

Elected President, Atlanta Chapter, A.I.A. During his term, he integrated the Chapter.

Alexander initiated a biracial civic organization named “Resurgens*” (Atlanta’s motto). As a given, then memberships in civic organizations were passed down within firms which, until recently, excluded minorities from belonging. The purpose of Resurgens was to bring together business and professional people across racial lines to enhance profitable associations. While not per se brotherhood/sisterhood organizations, many strong friendships developed.

*Whitney Young was a founding member.

Mayor Allen appointed Alexander to the Coordinating Committee charged with mediating racial differences. A major effort by him working with The American Jewish Committee, Partners for Progress (a female group), and the legal counsel for Sears Southeastern Operations, was preparing Atlanta’s restaurants, hotels, and other public facilities to accept the open public accommodation laws. One, though a very significant, incident occurred. Lester Maddox, who built this incident into his later election as Governor, pulled a pistol on two black men attempting to enter his segregated restaurant. However, with that exception, these momentous changes went smoothly.

Mayor Ivan Allen appointed Alexander Chairman of Atlanta’s Housing Resources Committee. Dr. Benjamin Mays, President of Morehouse College, and Dr. Sanford Atwood, President of Emory University, served as Vice Chairmen. During a three-year effort, the Committee assisted in creating 26,000 low-income housing units, exceeding the Mayor’s goal by 10,000. Again, Alexander and his family were subjected to threats.

Chair of first successful effort to secure meaningful support for the United Negro College Fund from the major corporations and professional firms of Atlanta.

Vice Chairman, Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission. This organization proposed, had engineered and helped well the concept of rapid transit, called MARTA. The transit system has been a major factor in making jobs available for minorities.

Served as Acting Chairman of the Atlanta Community Council. This biracial organization was charged with assigning priorities for the community support of various welfare-oriented programs. It also initiated “Metropole,” bringing
together law enforcement organizations from all Atlanta’s metropolitan areas. The Housing Resources Committee, which Alexander later chaired, was initiated by the Council and taken over by the City under Alexander’s leadership.

Mayor Allen’s Coordinating Committee on which Alexander served and played a major role was formed to mediate and resolve racial differences. It also played a major role in preparing Atlanta to accept open public accommodations. (The initial strategy session, attended by the Mayor, lawyers, restaurateurs and hotel/motel operators, was held at the Alexander’s home.

Clark College, Executive and Building Committee, Chairman

Appointed by Governor Jimmy Carter to Georgia’s Housing Committee to encourage creation of statewide low-income housing.

Chairman of the Atlanta Council for International Visitors

Vice Chairman, World Wild Life Fund

Appointed by Mayor Maynard Jackson to serve on the City of Atlanta Ethics in Government Committee.

Board of Southern Center for International Studies. Served on Executive Present Committee and Chair of Building Committee (during restoration of historic house).

Board of the Martin Luther King Center. Served on the Building Committee during the design and construction of the Center.

Board of Atlanta University

Served on Board of Atlanta Crime Commission. Prime concern victims’ rights.

Co-Chaired initially with Congressman John Lewis The Black-Jewish Coalition. The purpose of this committee is to mediate any differences between the two groups and to take public stands against actions, groups or individuals threatening either or both groups.

Founder and first President, Georgia Foreign Trade Zone

While still in the hospital recovering from injuries suffered in a collision with a sixteen-year-old with 0.29 blood alcohol in which his wife was killed, Alexander organized a Committee to Combat Drunken Driving. This Committee promoted and had adopted tough DUI laws for the State and Alexander spoke at numerous high schools using a video of this wreck to make vivid the results of drinking and driving.
Co-Founder, Sci Trek Atlanta Museum of Science and Industry. Primary goal is encouraging students to pursue careers in science and technology.

Clark Atlanta University Executive and Chairman, Building Committee

* Alexander served on the Merger Committee which brought these two predominantly minority institutions together.

**PRESENT ACTIVITIES**

- Board, Clark Atlanta University
- Board, Black-Jewish Coalition
- Member, Atlanta Jewish Committee
- Board, Southern Center for International Studies
- Revitalizing “Resurgens” broadening membership to include Asiatics and Hispanics
- Promoting new flag which Alexander designed in 1995 for the State of Georgia eliminating the Confederate Battle Flag
- Alexander is still practicing architecture. His firm’s, Alexander/ Weiner Architects, major commission, a multi-use development on an abandoned rapid transit park and ride site, is in an equal joint venture with R.L. Brown, a minority firm.

**RECOGNITIONS**

- 1944 Distinguished Flying Cross (2)
- 1957 Fellow, American Institute of Architects
  - National Conference of Christians and Jews Brotherhood Award (2)
  - A.I.A. Atlanta, Ivan Allen Award (2) for Service to the Community
- 1980 The Greek Diocese Medal
- 1982 Yale Medal
- 1984 Kiwanis “Citizen of the Year”
  - American Jewish Committee Brotherhood Award
- 1984 Distinguished Public Relations Award “for his outstanding contribution to the State that reflects great credit on it.”
- 1985 The Temple Centennial Award
- 1985 Resurgens Brotherhood Award
- 1988 ORT Award
- 2000 Listed in *Atlanta Business Chronicle* as one of “100 leaders who as an architect and civic leader most profoundly affected the business climate of Atlanta in the 20th Century.
Open-Housing Debate Erupts In Talks to Jaycees Here

BY ALEX COFFIN

The open-housing bill pending before the U.S. House of Representatives would mean a property owner could be put into jail for what he thinks.

The bill puts the burden on the homeowner, but "the only way he can avoid the burden is to do right."

These were among the views expressed by J. Marion Crain, president of the Atlanta Real Estate Board, and Cecil Alexander, chairman of the mayor's Housing Resources Committee, at a debate before the Atlanta Junior Chamber of Commerce Thursday.

Neither "won" the debate, which probably left the pro and con sides at about the same place as before the meeting.

Both Crain and Alexander "wrapped the flag around" their arguments. Crain emphasized the inherent right of a man to sell to whom he wishes and spoke of the concept of a man's home being his castle. Crain also spoke of the severe penalties attached to the bill and said they could be used somewhat arbitrarily.

Alexander countered with the argument that the right to buy where one wishes is as important as the right to sell. The Atlanta architect also argued that the law is needed to relieve the "pressure" being built up among Negroes moving into the inner city.

Crain said that the bill would hurt real estate men by encouraging persons to sell property themselves rather than to use brokers.

Crain said "open housing" is a catch phrase and misused because "there is no closed housing." He said any man can buy if he has the money, a house if available, and the owner is willing to sell.

Alexander disagreed that the real estate men would be hurt badly and quoted the Rev. William Holmes Borders by saying that there are black and white people, but all money is green — and if the real estate men provide a service, that service will be used. "All this bill denies is discrimination," he said.

He said an "open society" doesn't exist and Negroes are discouraged from buying with arguments "that you wouldn't be comfortable here" and in being denied loans in certain cases.

Alexander said the Atlanta Real Estate Board isn't a part of it, but that white and Negro real estate men are using great pressures in the Cascade Heights area, where Southwest Atlantans for Progress are working for racial balance.

Crain declined to discuss the morality of the question. "Terrorists, of course, are everyone's own problem. If you make it a federal issue, you're going overboard," said Crain.

When asked whether the real concern isn't to whom a man might have to sell to, but to whom his neighbor might sell to, Crain said, "Individuals have a feeling for their neighbors. At least, I hope he does."

Conditions faced by the committee

CubaFamily Archives
June 5, 1976

Mr. Cecil A. Alexander
2322 Mt. Paran Road, N. W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30327

Dear Cecil:

Thank you for your gracious letter of May 26. When a good friend like you takes the time to write me a word of encouragement, in light of the discouraging happenings around us, it gives me the stamina to continue to represent the people of the 5th District to the best of my ability.

Would like to talk with you when I am back in Atlanta sometime soon.

Sincerely,

Andrew Young
Member of Congress

Ym
The Yale Medal

Awarded to

Cecil A. Alexander, '40

In Atlanta the name Cecil Alexander is synonymous both with service and with Yale. During his long and distinguished career as an architect and citizen of Atlanta, urban renewal, community relations, racial justice, music, and education—all have received his full and caring attention and earned him the Brotherhood Award of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

How Cecil has made time within this staggering agenda for Yale, is a southern mystery, but the time and commitment have been total. The Yale Club of Georgia, the Alumni Board, the University Council, the School of Architecture, and several Yale presidents have been grateful recipients of his generous and wise counsel. Through his good efforts, Yale's historic ties with the colleges and universities of Georgia have been greatly strengthened.

For his service to Yale, large and small, public and private, the Association of Yale Alumni proudly confers the Yale Medal to an alumnus who exemplifies in his life the purposes of a liberal education, Cecil Alexander.

[Signature]

The Great Seal of Georgia, center, is surrounded by thirteen stars representing the original states. From left to right the flags on the ribbon represent Spain, France, England Confederate and US. These flags all flew over Georgia at one time.

Alexander’s design for alternative Georgia Flag eliminating controversial Confederate Battle flag. Now before the Governor for consideration.
THE BLACK/JEWISH COALITION

3355 Lenox Road, N.E. - Suite 880
Atlanta, Georgia 30326
(404) 233-5501

February 11, 1985

Dear Coalition Member:

The march from Selma to Montgomery was a milestone event in the history of the Civil Rights struggle. On Sunday, March 3rd, people from all over the United States will come back to Selma. They will mark the 20th Anniversary of that famous march which led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Come with us and bring your families. Help us fill a bus with members of our Black/Jewish Coalition. Together, as Blacks and Jews did 20 years ago, let us cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Details regarding the bus, costs, food, time, etc. are still being worked out. We anticipate leaving Atlanta around 9:30 a.m. and returning around 6:30 p.m. A flyer is enclosed which will give you additional information.

We expect to fill a bus quickly, so please let us hear from you immediately. We have a short time to plan a major project.

Don’t miss being part of the action in Selma, Alabama on Sunday, March 3rd. We will be there and want you with us.

Cordially,

John R. Lewis        Cecil A. Alexander
Chairmen

JRL/CAA

Enclosure
CITY BUILDER: Architectural FORUM, the "bible" of building does not have general circulation, so we reprint an excerpt from the January issue. And join in the salute to Cecil Alexander, chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Urban Renewal.

Six architects were selected by FORUM as comprising "a cross section of the competence and influences needed in building for the community."

Mr. Alexander Resigns

CECIL ALEXANDER has resigned as chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Urban Renewal, so, as he says, new blood can take over.

He leaves us a heritage of solid accomplishment and a detailed blue print of what we should do in the future. He has done a fine job, and if it gave him a case of tired blood, we can see why.

Selling the necessity of urban renewal to Atlanta was a long and hard job, made so by the combined indifference and wariness of many of the powers that be, and complicated by legal technicalities that set back the program by several years.

The program, though, finally is underway, and a fine program it is, as far as it goes.

One of Mr. Alexander's points is that we should not stop now, but must keep planning and on a broader base than in the past.

For one thing, he believes the county should share in the general expense, since the program will increase the county's tax digest. So far only the city and federal government are involved.

For another, he would like to see more enthusiasm on the part of local capital. Seed money, as well as more active participation by more Atlantans, is needed.

Mr. Alexander is an architect and brought professional insight as well as enthusiasm to his job. We're sorry to see him go.
March 15, 1965

Mr. Cecil A. Alexander
70 Fairlie Street, N. W.
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Mr. Alexander:

In the rush of events surrounding Selma in our Alabama voting project, I neglected to express my deep gratitude for your sponsorship of the dinner honoring me on January 26. Please accept this belated note of appreciation.

I must confess that few events have warmed my heart as did this occasion. It was a tribute not only to me but to the greatness of the City of Atlanta, the South, the nation and its ability to rise above the conflict of former generations and really experience that beloved community where all differences are reconciled and all hearts in harmony with the principles of our great Democracy and the tenants of our Judeo-Christian heritage.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Martin Luther King Jr.
Mayor Hartsfield (R) Gets Greetings
(L-R) Kohel Suzuki (L), Hideyoshi Kimura of Japan

On its way home

Japanese Thank Atlanta for Bell

A Japanese temple bell, which did languish in the yard of a Piedmont Park tool shed as an unwanted war trophy is making its way home now and might have fooled a note of gratitude to Atlanta Thursday.

At least, an emissary from Yokohama, Japan, where the bell belongs, came in town to convey special thanks to the city and the Atlanta Rotary Club, both of which shared in getting the bell sent home.

Hideyoshi Kimura, an assistant executive, acted as special emissary for Mayor Masamichi Nisago of Yokohama, bringing Mayor Hartsfield a letter of thanks from the Japanese city.

**THE STORY** of the bell begins during World War II. Navy forces stationed at Yokohama took the bell as a trophy of war and sent it to Atlanta. The reason: Atlanta was the name of a Navy warship lost in the war with Japan.

Mayor Hartsfield, who had planned to use the bell in one of the city parks but never got around to it, asked Atlanta architect Cecil Alexander to check on the background of the bell as a trip Mr. Alexander made to Japan a year ago.

**MR. ALEXANDER found out** where it had been taken from Jodoji Temple, in Yokohama. Then Atlanta members of Rotary International offered to help arrange the bell's transfer back to Yokohama. The Navy, which had originally brought it over, agreed to transport it home.

According to Mr. Kimura, a ceremony at which the bell will be restored to the temple is scheduled Thursday, May 30.

Mayor Nisago, in his letter to Mayor Hartsfield, recalled that the temple is located on grounds of what was the estate given to the Japanese in the 17th Century by British, William Adams, in gratitude for his efforts in behalf of British-Japanese commerce.

**MAYOR NISAGO said** it was especially fitting that the bell now "will become a symbol of the friendship combining the U.S. and Japan."

Mr. Kimura is president of the Kanto Auto Works, Ltd., in Yokohama. He has been touring Europe and the United States, to see automobile manufacturing plants. At home, he is vice president of the Rotary Club and chairman of the Club's national service committee.
October 4, 2000

A.I.A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young Jr. Citation
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 2006-5292

Dear Members:

During the period that Atlanta and the South struggled to accept the Civil Rights Movement, there were only a few white Atlantans who openly and with courage stood up for our goals. Cecil Alexander was one of those few. He risked his career and was subjected to threats of violence as a leader in opposing the bigoted hate mongers who would deny us our rights.

At the time I assumed office as Major of Atlanta, Alexander was honored at a dinner given by the American Jewish Committee. He asked that I be the keynote speaker, which gave me a forum to dissipate any tensions caused by diverging views between Blacks and Jews. During my address, I praised Cecil and his wife Hermi, for their long-time involvement in “that greater fellowship of human kind that did not recognize barriers of race or creed or class or educational opportunity” and for their “willingness to come together in spite of differences”.

During my time in an active role with Civil Rights and later as Mayor, I could rely on Cecil’s support. His activities are clearing slums, providing safe affordable housing and preparing the city to accept open public accommodations were a major factor in Atlanta’s peaceful acceptance of the truly revolutionary changes we initiated. The groundwork for racial justice he helped lay was a prime factor in Atlanta’s securing the Centennial Olympics.

I knew Whitney Young well. Cecil Alexander is a worthy choice to receive this honor in his memory.

Peace and blessings,

Andrew Young
August 28, 2000

A. I. A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Ave., N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20006-5292

To the A. I. A. Honors and Awards Department:

I write to express my wholehearted support of the nomination of my good friend, Mr. Cecil Alexander to receive the A. I. A. Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award.

I understand that this award is presented to an architect who has made “a significant contribution toward addressing social issues.” Mr. Cecil Alexander certainly has met this criterion with exceptional courage and commitment. At a time when many white professionals in Atlanta were reluctant to express even moderate support for the work of my husband, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mr. Alexander was a strong, outspoken and active supporter of his leadership and the cause of racial justice. In fact, he was one of the organizers and cosponsors of Atlanta’s first integrated major social event, the banquet honoring my husband after he won the 1964 Nobel Prize for Peace. And when my son, Martin Luther King III was denied admission to an all-white private school, Mr. Alexander resigned from its Board, despite threats of professional ostracism.

Cecil Alexander has been in the forefront of Atlanta’s efforts to promote interracial and interfaith unity, from the Civil Rights Movement on down to today. He has played a key leadership role in virtually every interracial coalition in our city, including The United Negro College Fund, Resurgens Atlanta and the Atlanta Black-Jewish Coalition, to name just a few. He has also served on the Board of Advisors of The King Center, and as a valued member of the Building Committee of the King Center’s Freedom Hall Complex.

Cecil Alexander is an architect who has not only designed beautiful buildings, but has also worked tirelessly to build the Beloved Community of my husband’s dream. In a very real sense he has been one of the pioneering architects of Atlanta’s extraordinary race relations and a vital force for bringing people together across racial lines in the heart of the south. It is with great enthusiasm that I recommend him to you as a most worthy recipient of the Whitney Young, Jr. Award.

Sincerely,

Coretta Scott King

THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CENTER FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE, INC.
449 AUBURN AVE., NE ATLANTA, GA 30312-1590 (404) 526-8900 FAX: (404) 526-8901
E-MAIL: mlkctr@aol.com WEBSITE: http://www.thekingcenter.com

August 27, 2000

From: Eugene C. Patterson
Editor and CEO Emeritus, St. Petersburg Times
St. Petersburg, FL 33731

To: A.I.A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young Jr. Award
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20006-5292

Dear Judges,

I commend Cecil A. Alexander to you as a worthy candidate for the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award recognizing significant contributions toward addressing social issues. His selection would honor you and his profession as much as the man.

His powerful resume is understated. My personal knowledge of his character and contributions dates back more than 40 years to my beginning as Editor of The Atlanta Constitution. My heroic predecessor, Ralph McGill, first introduced me to this brilliant young architect who had embarked on construction of more than memorable buildings in the then-sleepy Southern town of Atlanta. He had also set out to wake up the racially segregated community to its moral obligation to rectify, not justify, past cruelties to its black citizens.

No matter the cost to his social popularity, no matter the peril to his professional practice, Cecil Alexander dared to do more than acquiesce in the trauma of inevitable change in the South; he stood up and led it. He publicly supported the causes led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. when they were not popular among his white brethren. He offered his hand and put his shoulder to movements toward progress in a politically stalled society. He gave heart, through the power of his example, to governmental leaders until their timidity gave way to courage. And his personal audacity shamed his hesitant fellow citizens into moving Atlanta to the forefront of Southern progress toward racial justice.

Mr. McGill and I won Pulitzer Prizes at The Constitution for saying things. Cecil won his city’s lasting gratitude for doing things. Mayors William B. Hartsfield and Ivan Allen Jr. beckoned Atlanta toward becoming a city too busy to hate. Cecil Alexander stood in the front rank of every active cause moving toward that goal—sure, committed, unafraid and ready to risk all it took to move his community and his country toward justice for all. I am honored to be the friend of this tough old combat Marine. You are honored to be the professional associates of a colleague who would not back down from his convictions under pressure, personal or professional. I hope you will show him how we feel by now giving him the Whitney Young Award, which he has in full measure earned.

October 5, 2000

AI.A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006-5292

Gentlemen:

Please accept this letter supporting Cecil A. Alexander for the 2001 AIA Whitney M. Young, Jr. Citation. I have known Cecil all of my adult life - around Atlanta his accomplishments are legendary. As an architect he led one of the region’s most successful practices; the City’s skyline and landscape are graced by his buildings. His work is highly regarded for its sense of context and quality of withstanding the test of time. Perhaps more important than buildings are the lives of countless, everyday citizens which have benefitted from his activism and dedication to the cause of improving race relations.

A personal friend of both Whitney M. Young, Jr. and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Cecil was among those brave history making city fathers who bridged the divide of intolerance, and bigotry; he insisted upon the full integration of Atlanta’s business, professional, and civic enclaves. A review of his background reveals his long term commitment to and success in overcoming for others the impediments of social distance, forged by the politics of exclusion. Cecil was vigilant in encouraging his peers to stand up and be counted on civil rights issues which today we take for granted.

I have worked with Cecil on several boards and commissions and have found him to be a tremendous community resource possessing the ability to be reassuring to his young associates while insisting that they be both enlightened and regarded as peers.

Your recognition of the work and life of Cecil A. Alexander with the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Citation suggests the importance of this award in the hierarchy of the Institute’s recognizing its membership’s achievement. As the 1995 recipient of this award, I urge you to give a full measure consideration to this nomination

Sincerely,

William J. Stanley, III, FAIA, NOMA
Principal

ARCHITECTURE  •  INTERIORS  •  PLANNING  •  CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
1056 SPRING STREET, NW  •  ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309-3818  •  404-876-3055  •  FAX: 404-876-6841
September 8, 2000

AIA Honors and Awards Department  
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award  
The American Institute of Architects  
1735 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-5292

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write in support of Mr. Cecil A. Alexander’s nomination for the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award, in recognition of his significant contribution toward addressing social issues.

Mr. Alexander has been actively involved in community and civic activities for many years. He was Co-Chair of my Congressional campaign, and has worked with me as Co-Chair of the Black Jewish Coalition. Cecil has worked diligently toward increasing diversity and racial tolerance in Atlanta and the State of Georgia. He has not only made significant contributions to the architectural design of the many buildings in our great city, but he has contributed to the building of social and civic alliances that have greatly improved the quality of life for many of Atlanta’s citizens. I applaud Cecil’s commitment to the citizens of our state, city and nation.

Again, I am pleased to support Mr. Cecil A. Alexander’s nomination for the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award. I would appreciate your giving his application every consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John Lewis  
Member of Congress

JL:ss
August 30, 2000

A.I.A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20006-5292

Dear A.I.A. Honors and Awards Department,

It is with absolute and full enthusiasm that I write in support of Cecil A. Alexander's nomination for the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award. I am now in my 30th year of service as a rabbi at Cecil's synagogue. When I began my rabbinate here Cecil was already legendary in his accomplishments and achievements toward the social well being of our greater community. His work with our late spiritual leader, Rabbi Jacob M. Rothschild, in the field of civil rights was exemplary and had a powerful impact on our entire city. Our own synagogue, over the years, has recognized civic leaders in the general community for outstanding contributions to our city. Cecil himself was honored with the receipt of this award, our Temple Centennial Award. No one I know has shown a greater dedication to those values which enhance the circumstances of our fellow citizens, no matter their skin color, no matter their national origin, or religion.

The values for which the late Whitney M. Young, Jr. stood are in total concert with the values of which Cecil has built and lived his life. If Cecil is fortunate to receive this award, I promise you that not only would Cecil be greatly honored, but the award itself would be honored by having Cecil as a recipient.

If there is any further way that I may be of help to you, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Alvin M. Sugarman
August 22, 2000

A.I.A. Honor Awards Department
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006-5295

Ladies/Gentlemen:

It is my understanding that my good friend Cecil A. Alexander of Atlanta has been nominated for the prestigious Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award.

During my association with Mr. Alexander of forty plus years, I've admired his many accomplishments in the civic and business communities of our city. He was of great assistance prior to my election and during the eight years that I served as Mayor of Atlanta. His advice and good works were excellent. He was a constant support and always on the side of the less fortunate - always willing to fight for the rights of all citizens.

Cecil Alexander's accomplishments include many years as a well respected architect and businessman. In my opinion, however, his greatest legacy would be his concern and efforts on behalf of all people.

It is a pleasure for me to recommend that you give favorable consideration to Cecil A. Alexander as the recipient of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award.

Respectfully,

Ivan Allen, Jr.
Dear Members of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Committee:

I am delighted to submit this letter in support of the nomination of Mr. Cecil Alexander for the Whitney M. Young, Jr Award in recognition of his significant contributions toward addressing current social issues. In my more than 30 years as a resident of Atlanta, I know of no one more deserving of this award than Mr. Alexander.

I am particularly pleased to support Mr. Alexander’s nomination for an award named for Whitney Young. Mr. Young was the former Dean of the School of Social Work at Atlanta University and this year, as part of the 80th Anniversary Celebration of the School, we are announcing plans to name the School, the Whitney M. Young Jr. School of Social Work.

When you look at Mr. Alexander’s resume, it is clear that he has been very active in a variety of civic organizations and in other capacities in the city of Atlanta to address issues of race, education and finding solutions to housing and other social ills affecting this city. His involvement has been active and consistent over many years, often when the positions he took to help mediate racial disputes may have been unpopular. He is highly respected and recognized as a calming force who was genuinely committed to improving the quality of life and racial harmony for Atlanta.

I have known Mr. Alexander best as a Trustee of Clark Atlanta University. I became president of Clark College in 1988, just before the historic consolidation with Atlanta University in 1989. As a member of the Board of Trustees of Atlanta University and a former member of the Board of Clark College, Mr. Alexander was a strong supporter of the consolidation and brought a valuable perspective into the deliberations that resulted in the formation of Clark Atlanta University. He continued as a member of the Board and served as Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee during the initial years following the consolidation. He was elected Trustee Emeritus and he continues to attend and participate actively in meetings of the Board.

As a Clark Atlanta University Trustee, Mr. Alexander’s influence extended far beyond his service as Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. He proposed and helped shape the vision for the one major initiative following the consolidation. As a result, Clark Atlanta created the first School of International Affairs at a college or university in the South.

In summary, Mr. Alexander has been a visionary and tireless advocate for the homeless and disadvantaged citizens of Atlanta. He is a person of enormous influence in this city that extends far beyond his contributions as an architect. I am honored to have been asked to submit a letter on his behalf for the prestigious Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award given by the American Institute of Architects.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Cole, Jr.
President
September 5, 2000

A.I.A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Citation
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006-5292

This is written in support of the nomination of Cecil A. Alexander, FAIA, for A.I.A.'s Whitney M. Young, Jr. Citation.

The nomination's supporting material, outlining his years of working for racial justice, speaks for itself. What I am citing is personal recollection of his persistent attitude on the subject within the profession.

In the early '60's, white-owned Georgia architectural firms employed minorities only for menial positions: ours was no exception. At one point in that period an outstanding black graduate of a top architectural school was highly recommended to our firm. Two of the partners opposed his employment on the grounds that several key employees had indicated they would leave an integrated office: an embarrassed Alexander had to inform the applicant of the turndown. When this was done, Alexander told his partners he would have to resign, since he was publicly urging white firms to employ minorities in technical positions and as a member of a firm which, itself, refused to do so, he would be branded as hypercritical. After due consideration the partners withdrew their objections and agreed to hire the black person. When Alexander offered him employment, the minority applicant explained a white firm in another city had employed him. (A footnote: this black architect went on to a distinguished career in architecture and government.) Following this episode, the firm was ready to accept qualified minorities in technical and administrative capacities.

Despite substantial resistance by many of its members, Alexander's persistence brought about the admission of the first black member of the Atlanta Chapter of A.I.A. (one architect transferred his membership to another Chapter in protest!). Still working on our firm's reluctance to work with minorities, he brought about a joint venture with that first black A.I.A. member; although the joint venture was selected as architect, the project was never built. With the firm's changing attitude and Alexander's continuing encouragement, several future joint-ventures were entered into with other minority firms, with those firms in full participation in the architectural work – not just as “token” black firms, which approach was, then, still observed in other practices.

Cecil A. Alexander's genuine dedication to the cause of eliminating discrimination in our practice – and the profession in general – represents the very essence of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Citation: I urge the Institute’s favorable consideration of Cecil A. Alexander's nomination for that Citation.

Sincerely,

Bernard B. Rothschild, FAIA, FCSI

September 11, 2000

A.I.A. Honors and Awards Department
Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006-5292

Dear Colleagues,

It is my honor and privilege to lend my support to the nomination of Mr. Cecil Alexander, FAIA, for the Whitney M. Young, Jr. award in recognition of Cecil’s outstanding contributions throughout his career as an architect toward major social issues of our day. I have known Cecil since 1992 when I was appointed dean of the College of Architecture at Georgia Tech and have worked closely with him in a number of activities since that time. However, his mark on the social landscape of Atlanta has been made for many years prior to our getting to know each other. These contributions include civil rights and racial relations in Atlanta, low income housing, urban redevelopment, regional planning and metropolitan transportation, economic development, historic preservation, the arts and symphony of Atlanta, Afro-American education, among many, many others. I can say without equivocation that anything and everything of exceptional social significance that has occurred in Atlanta over the last 50 years involved Cecil.

I have had the good fortune to meet many exceptional architects, planners and designers in my career, but I have never met anyone who has been more engaged and more effective in the politics of social change in American urban life than Cecil. I believe he is most deserving of the prestigious Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award of the American Institute of Architects.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Thomas D. Galloway, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor
Client Services

I can help from the very beginning of the building planning through its opening—or on any part of the process. Here are some of the ways I can assist:

- Research and Program for Project
- Site Selection and Analysis
- Budget Consultation
- Scheduling Consultation
- Preparation of Schematic Plans
- Alternative Contractual Relations with the Contractor
- Selection of Design Team
- Selection of Construction Team
- Analysis of Plans and Specifications
- Review of Contracts
- Methods of Compensation
- Working with Local Government Officials

"If you need extensive assistance, I can help in the planning as well as the execution of these important decisions. On the other hand, if your requirements are more limited, I can provide an outsider's perspective. And in addition to architectural advice, I can, through associates, furnish advice in many related areas, such as engineering, landscape, economics, detailed estimating and sophisticated scheduling."

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- The Coca Cola Company Headquarters
- The Coca Cola Company Technical Center
- The Southern Bell Headquarters Tower
- Phipps Plaza, Atlanta
- The Waverly Hotel, Atlanta
- The First National Bank Tower, Atlanta
- The Georgia Power Headquarters on Peachtree
- Development Plans for Underground Atlanta
- Development Plans of the Cincinnati Riverfront
- Several Large Residences

Advisory and Civic Activities—Present and Past PERTAINING TO BUILDING AND PLANNING

Chairman of Building Committee for Clark College, Atlanta
Chairman, Building Committee, Science and Technology Museum
Chairman, Building Committee, Southern Center for International Studies
Member, Building Committee, Martin Luther King Center
Chairman, Architectural School Committee of the Yale Council, Yale University
Chairman, Citizen's Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal, Atlanta
Chairman, Mayor's Housing Committee, Atlanta
Vice Chairman, Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission
Board of Atlanta Chamber of Commerce—Chairman, Long Range Planning Committee and Aviation Committee
Board of Central Atlanta Progress

Education

A.B., Yale University, 1940
Master of Architecture, Harvard Graduate School of Design, 1947
Graduate studies at Georgia Institute of Technology and Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Lieutenant Colonel, USMCR, Pilot WWII

If I Can Be Of Service To You:

Cecil A. Alexander, F.A.I.A.
524 W. Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Telephone: (404) 876-3800 or (404) 873-1100

Cecil A. Alexander, a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and a founding partner of one of Atlanta’s largest and most respected architectural firms, with a message to people planning a new project.

"In thirty-eight years of practicing architecture, I’ve learned that some people — experienced or otherwise — who are embarking on a new building project, need help. And because of my experience as an architect and planner, I am in a position to provide that help. I believe I have something to offer — something I call ‘Insight from Outside’.

"In my career as an architect helping people design and construct buildings, I’ve come across a number of problems, and I’ve managed to solve a great many of them — the very same problems you’ll probably run into in your building project. Of course, there were those I couldn’t solve. But from those, I learned to avoid such problems in similar situations."