

# Mrs. Thelma T. Gorham Gets \$5000 Fund Grant

## To Be Used For Study At Stanford

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y. — Fellowships totaling approximately \$100,000 have been awarded by The Funds For Adult Education to 18 individuals associated with mass communications for study and training to broaden and liberalize their knowledge and increase their skills.

C. Scott Fletcher, president of the Fund, made public the names of 14 men and 4 women who received grants. One of the four women is Mrs. Thelma Thurston Gorham, a language arts teacher and free lance writer of Oklahoma City.

Employed in the secondary school system by the Oklahoma City Board of Education, Mrs. Gorham has been granted a year's leave of absence to do advanced study in the School of Communications Research at Stanford university, Palo Alto, Calif.

A former assistant professor of Journalism at Lincoln university, Jefferson City, Mo., Mrs. Gorham will do special study at Stanford in the area of Human Relations in Communications. Taken for graduate credit, the work will apply toward her doctorate. The grant is for \$5,000.

Mrs. Gorham and the other 17 Fund Fellows were chosen from hundreds of candidates throughout the United States by a National Selection Committee, whose Chairman was Ralph E. McGill editor of The Atlanta Constitution. Other members of the selection were:

John Fisher, editor-in-chief, Harpers Magazine; Richard B. Hull, director of radio and TV, Ohio State university; Sig Mickelson, vice president, news and public affairs, Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., and Perry Miller, professor of American Literature, Harvard university.

The daughter of Mrs. Bertha Lee, Kansas City, Kansas, and Frank Thurston, Minneapolis, Minn., Mrs. Gorham is a product of the Kansas City, Kansas schools, where she was graduated from Northeast Junior High school and Sumner high school. She also attended Hamtramck High School, Hamtramck, Mich., and Northern High school, Detroit.

She has the B. A. and M. A. degrees with majors in Journalism from the University of Minnesota. She has done graduate work in Higher Education and Journalism Research at Stanford University and has done work in Secondary Education in the University of Oklahoma Extension division and at Central State college, Edmond, Okla.

### AKA MEMBER

The Fellowship winner from Oklahoma is a member of Theta Sigma Phi, national honorary society for women in Journalism. Elected to membership in Nu chapter at the University of Minnesota, she was the first Negro student to be initiated into the organization.

A member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Mrs. Gorham served as editor-in-chief of The Ivy Leaf, the sorority's national publication from 1946 to 1949.

Professionally, Mrs. Gorham has had a wide experience. Prior to accepting a position with the Oklahoma City Public Schools, she was executive editor of the militant Black Dispatch, Oklahoma City Negro weekly. Before coming to Oklahoma City she was managing editor of The Oklahoma



MRS. GORHAM

Eagle, a Tulsa weekly. While working on the Tulsa paper in 1954, she won a media citation from the National Conference of Christians and Jews for an editorial series entitled, "How Ready Are We For Integration?"

A former resident of St. Louis, Mo., Mrs. Gorham served as assistant to the chairman of the St. Louis Committee on Great Books, Charles H. Compton, librarian emeritus of the St. Louis Public Library. She was also young adult program director with the St. Louis County Branch YWCA in Clayton, and worked with groups in Kinloch, Kirkwood, Meacham Park and Webster Groves. As a free lance writer, she edited Building a Better State, monthly organ of the Missouri Association of Social Welfare.

### EX-LINCOLN PROFESSOR

Prior to going to Jefferson City, where she taught in the Lincoln university School of Journalism and for four years, 1947-1952, she was a free lance writer and publicist in the Northern California Bay Area, residing in Berkeley. With her husband, Richard G. Gorham, jr., she operated Gorham Enterprises, a photography, public relations and publicity agency in Oakland. She also represented a number of Negro weeklies on the West Coast and was an accredited correspondent during the United Nations Conference on International Organization held in San Francisco in 1945.

Mrs. Gorham did a brief stint as managing editor of The Crisis, official organ of the NAACP, at the national headquarters in the Wendell Willkie building, New York City, and served as part-time publicity director of the NAACP West Coast Regional Office in San Francisco.

During World War II, Mrs. Gorham had the distinction of being the only woman editor of an official military publication. At Fort Huachuca, Ariz., she served 22 months as editor of The Special

Services Bulletin and The Apache Sentinel official publications of the Armed Forces Special Services Division Service Command Unit 1922. She also served as publicity assistant to the Post Public Relations Officer at Fort Huachuca.

### HAMPTON INSTITUTE

Prior to World War II, Mrs. Gorham was assistant director of public relations and part-time instructor of Journalism at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Va. She went to Hampton from Kansas City, where she was a bureau news editor reporter and feature writer on The Call.

During her fellowship year at Stanford, Mrs. Gorham will be accompanied by her 10-year-old son, Darryl Theodore, who will be enrolled as a pupil in the Stanford University Laboratory school.

The Gorhams reside at 2049 NE 17th Street in Oklahoma City. A member of the Baha'i World Faith, Mrs. Gorham is Secretary of the local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Oklahoma City. She is

a teacher at F. D. Moon Junior high school and chairman of the F. D. Moon unit of the Oklahoma City classroom Teachers' association. She is also president of the Oklahoma City Urban League Guild and serves as journalist of the local chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc.

The 1959-60 Fellows who come from 13 states will engage in study at nearly a dozen universities throughout the United States or in internships at network broadcasting centers. All of the Fellows are expected to follow individual study and practice programs designed by themselves for their own improvement and professional upgrading. The Director of the Fund's mass media fellowships award program is Robert J. Blakely. Ronald Shilen is the Executive Secretary. Inquiries and requests for applications for the 1960-61 awards should be addressed to the latter at the Fund For Adult Education, 200 Bloomingdale Road, White Plains, N. Y.