

JOSEPH AMISANO, FAIA
ARCHITECT

October 21, 1994

1995 Fellows Jury
American Institute of Architect
1735 New York Avenue
Washington D. C. 20006

Dear Colleagues:

I hereby claim the honor of sponsoring Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., AIA as a nominee for advancement to Fellowship in the American Institute of Architects.

To measure the effectiveness of Joe Robinson's influence within the community and on students, other institutions and with parents, one needs to visit Morris Brown, a black college, and meet up with Don Blair, a white architect and administrator; seeing him surrounded by a waterfall of students bying for a pause, to express ideas, questions, humor, uninhibited opinions and a love for learning. They are there in large part because of Joe Robinson breaking the soil and dropping in the seeds of learning years before in a less conducive environment.

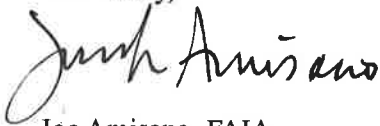
In contrast to his own experience at a time when our profession was out of step with reality, the only recourse Joe had was to teach high shcool. Even so, he championed the rewards of architecture and encouraged his students to pursue the elusive goddess. Fifteen years later, because of his post on the Morris Brown Board of Trustees, Morris Brown College is one of his indirect cap stones.

He and I were equally associated in the design of the Robert Woodruff Library, a central facility for the five colleges that make up the Atlanta University Center. The schools broadened to include graduate studies, mass communications and archival history. We managed, within our restraints, to include a 1,000 seat flat floor meeting and exhibition hall which was needed by the community as well as for the colleges. Joe defended its inclusion upon the needs of the people who wished not to be left out of the urban process.

He never let me down and could always be counted on to show foreign visitors both sides of the Atlanta coin, as he did with Jan Gehl of Denmark.

Now that he is recognized by our colleagues and Atlantans, he has structured his office to enable it to carry on with the same principles in the future, whether he is at the helm or on the sidelines.

Yours truly,



Joe Amisano, FAIA

Section 1: Introduction

Part A. Nomination and Profile

Nomination

Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., AIA

Nominee's Name

J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc.

Firm's Name

1020 Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30310

Complete mailing address

(404) 753-4129

Phone number

(404) 753-4435

Facsimile number

Atlanta

Nominee's assigned AIA chapter

November 15, 1967

Date nominee became AIA member

Category of Nomination: (select one Object)

- To promote the aesthetic, scientific and practical efficiency of the profession
- To advance the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education, training and practice
- To coordinate the building industry and the profession of architecture
- To ensure the advancement of the living standards of people through their improved environment
- To make the profession of ever-increasing service to society.

Sponsor

Joseph Amisano, FAIA

Sponsor's name

Tooms, Amisano & Wells, 1028 Nawench Drive, Atlanta, GA 30327

Complete mailing address

(404) 233-5111

Phone

(404) 233-6823

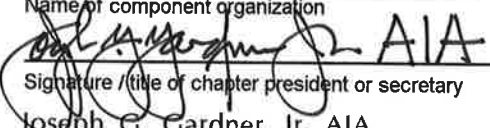
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Component Nomination

Nominated by

Atlanta Chapter, American Institute of Architects

Name of component organization

 **AIA**

Joseph G. Gardner, Jr. AIA

Typed name / title of chapter president or secretary

November 1, 1994

Date

Section 1: Introduction (continued)

Nominee's Education

(Chronological order / high school first / most recent last)

<i>Name / Location</i>	<i>No. of years</i>	<i>Grad. year</i>	<i>Degree</i>
Howard High School, Georgetown, SC	4	1944	
Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA	5	1949	B.S.
Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA*	4		
Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA**	1		
<i>* Attending Graduate Classes for Teaching Certificate</i>			
<i>** Continuing Education in Architecture</i>			
State of Georgia Teaching Certificate for Life (No. 5355)			

Scholarships Awarded to Nominee

None

Other Data of Note

- Past Member & Secretary, Board of Governors, Georgia World Congress Center
- Co-Founding Member, Vice President and 1st Southern Regional Director, National Organization of Minority Architects
- President, Minority Airport Architects & Planners (MAAP)
- Active Alumnus and Recruiter for Hampton University and Morris Brown College Architectural Programs

Practice

State(s) or territory(ies) where nominee is registered or licensed to practice architecture:

Active Registrations:
Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North & South Carolina, Tennessee & Virginia and NCARB (#13,049)
Inactive Registrations: Mississippi and West Virginia

Nominee is engaged in the profession of architecture as:

Firm Owner, Principal and President of J.W. Robinson & Associates, Inc.

Section I: Introduction (continued)

Part B. Digest of Achievements
(250 total word limit)

Nominee: **Joseph W. Robinson, Sr., AIA**

Joseph Robinson has had a profound and lasting effect on the profession of architecture through his efforts to eradicate racial barriers for future generations.

- ◆ Robinson used architecture to reshape changing communities during a time of segregation. He designed over 200 private homes with exceptional recreational spaces allowing those prohibited from public facilities to socialize, entertain and host political gatherings at home.
- ◆ Robinson taught in the Atlanta public school system for over 15 years. More than a teacher, he inspired his students, who became architects, engineers, doctors, lawyers and other professionals. Robinson is a mentor to architectural students and interns. As a Trustee of Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Robinson provided strong support for their new architectural program.
- ◆ Wanting to smooth the road he had traveled, Robinson was a co-founding member of the National Organization of Minority Architects. He continues to actively recruit students to architecture.
- ◆ Robinson forged two of the first major minority / majority joint venture projects in Atlanta, showing such alliances could work to the benefit of the entire community.
- ◆ Robinson was one of the first of two minority members of the Georgia World Congress Center's Board of Governors. Contributing nine years of service, he played a pivotal role, increasing Georgia's tourism industry through expansions of the GWCC and development of the Georgia Dome.
- ◆ Robinson brought the internationally acclaimed Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District from dream to reality using his leadership and professional skills. According to Mrs. King, he has been an ardent and energetic advocate of community improvement.



Section 2: Category of Nomination

2.1 List the books or articles written by or about the nominee in relation to the category of nomination, if applicable.

Author Rod Rogers
Title Morton Theatre Restoration: "1910 Black Vaudeville Theatre / Multi-Use Building Becomes Multi-Cultural Performing Arts Center"
Publication/ **Construction Market Data Profiles** / March 29, 1993
Publication Date

Southern Bell - Staff Writer
Black Male Achievers
1991-1992 Calendar of Atlanta Black History / January, 1992

Council of Educational Facility Planners, International
Learning Environments
Educational Facility Planner (CFPI) / 1992

Engineering News Record / ENR
Truss system cuts steel by 35% on twin dome-shaped roof structures
ENR Magazine / September, 1976

Black Enterprise Magazine
Minority-owned businesses are helping make new Coca-Cola complex a major success
Black Enterprise Magazine / June, 1986

Paul Hagan
Airport Entrepreneurs Come of Age
Atlanta Magazine / April, 1984

Masonry Institute of Atlanta - Staff Writer
Award Winners - Excellence in Masonry
Masonry Magic / Winter 1982

Shiela M. Poole, Staff Writer
Black architects try to unlock doors
Atlanta Journal Constitution / October 4, 1991

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)
Significant awards, honors and recognition continued

J. W. ROBINSON, SR. - PERSONAL AWARDS

- ◆ **For Leadership, Counseling, Understanding and Sincere Devotion to your Homeroom**
from the Senior Class of 1969- Washington High School
- ◆ **Southern Christian Leadership Conference Certificate of Appreciation**
1972
- ◆ **In Deep Appriciation for Friendship and Generous Support of Service to Young People**
Butler Street YMCA
1973
- ◆ **Honor Award for Outstanding Cooperation**
Lambda Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma
1974
- ◆ **Honor Award for Outstanding Cooperation**
Lambda Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma
1975
- ◆ **Interracial Council for Business Opportunity "The Catalyst Award"**
Businessman of the Year
1975
- ◆ **The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta**
In recognition of your contribution of outstanding and meritorious service when the tornado struck Perry homes
1976
- ◆ **The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta**
Dwelling Lease - Honorary Public Housing Tenant
In Acknowledgement of outstanding contributions and untiring services in area of Public Housing
1976
- ◆ **The Housing Authority of The City of Atlanta Special Recognition**
For Your Valuable Assistance in Development of the Northwest Area Community Complex
1977

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)
Significant awards, honors and recognition continued

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA - Personal Awards Continued

- ◆ **Butler Street Young Men's Christian Association
Honors J.W. Robinson, Sr. with Enrollment in the
YMCA Century Club**
1977
- ◆ **Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.
Businessman of the Year**
February 4, 1989
- ◆ **National Hampton Alumni Association, Inc.
Southeast Region - Founder Southeast Region NHAA, Inc.**
March 3, 1991
- ◆ **Minority Business Awareness Week
for Outstanding Professional Business Leadership
In the Field of Architectural Services**
October 13-17, 1980
- ◆ **From the Governor of the State of Georgia, George Busbee
Appointment to the Board of Governors
Georgia World Congress Center**
1981 - 1990
- ◆ **Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church
Salutes J. W. Robinson, Representing the Trustee Board**
March 14, 1982
- ◆ **Achievement Award
Lambda Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma**
1982
- ◆ **In Appreciation to J. W. Robinson
Carver Boys Club**
February 6, 1978
- ◆ **National Hampton Alumni Association
Alumni Merit Award for Outstanding Achievement
In Your Chosen Profession & Loyalty and Support of
Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA**
1984

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)
Significant awards, honors and recognition continued

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA - Personal Awards Continued

- ◆ **In Honor of Your Contributions**
Butler Street Young Men's Christian Association
The Century Club
1985

- ◆ **George L. Smith II**
Georgia World Congress Center
In recognition of longstanding efforts and leadership
Commendations: J. W. Robinson, Sr., Secretary, GWCC
1980-1989

- ◆ **Women for Morris Brown College**
R.A. Billings Award
1988

- ◆ **National Organization of Minority Architects**
20th Year Anniversary - Cornerstone Award
1992

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)

2.2 List significant awards, honors, and recognition accorded to the nominee.

DESIGN AWARDS

- ◆ **Design Excellence: AIA Atlanta Chapter
'Architecture in Atlanta'**
Committee for Fire Station #38,
City of Atlanta, GA, 1973
- ◆ **National Organization of Minority Architects
Design Excellence Award
Atlanta Life Insurance Corporate Headquarters**
(JV with TVS&A) - 1984
- ◆ **Special Recognition Award (JV):
National Society of Professional Engineers**
William B. Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport One of 10
Outstanding Engineering Achievements in the United States
15th Annual Competition, 1981
- ◆ **Honor Award: Engineering Excellence in Structural Design
New York Association of Consulting Engineers (National)**
(JV with TVS&A) Atlanta Life Insurance Corporate Headquarters
Atlanta, GA 1981
- ◆ **Special Recognition Award:
National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)**
Design Excellence in College Physical Education Buildings
John H. Lewis Health, Physical Education and Recreation Building
Morris Brown College, Atlanta, GA, 1976
- ◆ **Merit Award: Excellence in Masonry Design -
Masonry Institute of Atlanta (Local)**
J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc. / TVS&A, JV
Atlanta Life Insurance Corporate Headquarters
Atlanta, GA, 1982
- ◆ **Award of Merit: Edwin F. Guth Memorial Award of Merit, Illuminat-
ing Engineering Society of America (National)**
Interior and Exterior Lighting - Robert W. Woodruff Library
J.W. Robinson / Toombs, Amisano & Wells, JV
Atlanta University Campus, Atlanta, GA 1985

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)

2.2 List significant awards, honors, and recognition accorded to the nominee.

DESIGN AWARDS - continued

- ◆ **Engineering Excellence**
Consulting Engineers Council of Georgia (State)
with Armour, Cape & Pond Engineers
Southside Comprehensive High School
J.W. Robinson / Dougherty, JV
Atlanta Georgia, 1987

- ◆ **The Council of Educational Facility Planners, International**
1992 Design Portfolio (National)
Southside Comprehensive High School
J.W. Robinson / Dougherty, JV
Atlanta, Georgia, 1992

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)

2.3 List the significant work of the nominee in the areas relating to the category of nomination

PROFESSIONAL AND CIVIC AFFILIATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS:

◆ **American Institute of Architects**

Member, National, Georgia and Atlanta Chapters
(Nov. 15, 1967 - Present)

Past Secretary, Atlanta Chapter (196)

Member, National Committee on Recreation

Member, Committee on Historic Preservation

◆ **National Organization of Minority Architects**

1972 to present

Co-Founding Member, Vice President

1st Director Southern Region

Member, Task Force for Better Government Relations

Attended work-sessions to make Standard Forms
254 and 255 accountable to minority vendors

Member, Task Force for Accreditation

Active part in securing accreditation for architectural
programs at:

Southern Louisiana University

Florida A&M University

Praire View College, Texas

Tuskegee University (*Subject of several
Accreditation reviews*)

◆ **National Hampton Alumni Association**

1949 - Present

Charter Member, Southeastern Region

Member, Budget Committee, Southeastern Region

Financial Secretary 1969 - 1977

Member, Fundraising Committee, Southeastern Region

Regional Fund Raiser, 1968 - 1972

Chapter Fund Raiser, 1968 - 1974

Past Chairman, Budget Committee, Atlanta Chapter

Treasurer of Atlanta Chapter, 1951 - 1976

Member, Executive Committee

*(Has actively recruited good students for Hampton since 1949;
serves as a consultant at student recruitment sessions throughout
the Southeastern Region)*

◆ **Leadership Atlanta, 1975**

Completed Training - Class of 1975

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)

2.3 Significant work of the nominee

- ◆ **Atlanta Business League**
Members, Board of Directors, 1972 to 1984
Outstanding Professional Leadership in A/E Services, 1980
- ◆ **Butler Street YMCA**
Member, Board of Directors, 1969 to 1980
Member, Century Club, 1970 to 1984
Awarded twice for his participation and support
- ◆ **Lamda Sigma Chapter - Phi Beta Sigma**
1956 to Present
Awarded twice for his activities on behalf of the alumnus
- ◆ **Minority Airport Architects & Planners,**
President, 1978 - 1988
Minority consortium responsible for design of Concourses C and D
at Hartsfield International Airport; also shell for airport transit station
and Hertz Rental Car Complex at airport.
- ◆ **Atlanta Board of Education**
Instructor of Graphics - (1954 - 1969)
Lifetime State Certificate (No. 5355)
*(First instructor to initiate descriptive geometry
in the Atlanta Public Schools)*
- ◆ **Morris Brown College - Board of Trustees**
Member, 1982 to present
Chair, Buildings and Grounds Committee
Provided persuasive support for the recently
established architectural program
- ◆ **Georgia World Congress Center - Board of Govenors**
Member, 1980 to 1989
Secretary, 1980 - 1989
Participated and supported in development of
expansion plans and sat on selection committee for
last expansion and the Georgia Dome
- ◆ **Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**
Member Board of Trustees
Awarded for participation above and beyond the call
Performed design of three renovations and the recent
elevator addition for the physically challenged



*"...without reservation....
this early training laid
the foundation and in-
spired me to pursue a
career in architecture."*

-George W. Atkinson, AIA
Principal of George
W. Atkinson, AIA • Architect

*".....not only a good
teacher, he truly cared
about his students
learning..."*

-Babatunde K. Abdullah
Industrial Illustrator
Lockheed Corporation

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)

2.4 Describe how the nominee's work may be considered notable and how it has advanced the profession of architecture

Joseph Robinson was about to graduate from high school.

"Well son, what are you planning to do with your life" asked Aunt Janie.

JW had been raised by his mother and aunt, both school teachers.

"Not quite sure Auntie", said the young Joe.

"Well you're a good artist, Joe, what about commercial art?"

"I'm not that good, Aunt Janie. Not when I see what some of my classmates have done"

"Well you like carpentry and building things, so what about carpentry as a profession?"

"I don't think that's what I want to do either".

Aunt Janie saw she was going to have push a bit harder to get Joe to think about this seriously.

"How about architecture, Joe" Aunt Janie threw out.

"Architecture? What is architecture?"

"You know what to do, Joe."

Joe came back, dictionary in hand, his finger tracing down the list of words,

"Here it is, architecture - the art, profession or science of designing and constructing buildings".

"That's it, Aunt Janie, that's what I want to do!"

Joe Robinson's 15 years as an impassioned instructor with the Atlanta Board of Education influenced over 2,250 ambitious students. The first to teach descriptive geometry in the public school system, he nurtured their quest for knowledge and inspired them to pursue their dreams. His efforts produced architects, engineers, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. George Atkinson, AIA, recently opened his own practice, Dr Jasper Sessions has served as a dentist for some 20 years, Babatunde Abdullah is an illustrative artist at Lockheed and the late John Kennedy was a lawyer with the firm of Kennedy and Sampson. Robinson continued his mentorship in his practice as well. 85% of the African-American architects in Georgia and many across the country today have worked for Robinson at one time or another in their careers.

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)
2.4 Description of nominee's notable work - continued

Joe Robinson's concern for educating others to the contributions of African-American's in the building of this country, led him to become a major player in bringing the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District into reality. The MLK historic district today has international recognition, and with over 3.5 million visitors per year is the second most visited such site in the country. In addition, Mr. Robinson provided the preservation design for the King Birth Home, the home next door, which became an office of the King Center for Non-Violent Social Change, the MLK Community Center and the MLK Natatorium. He also provided restoration and/or renovation design for other buildings that were important to the district such as: the Oddfellows Building, an office building with a performance theatre on the ground floor, and the Big Bethel AME Church, originally begun in 1881 and completed in 1924.



As a mentor to scores of African-American architects, Robinson understood the need to enhance the profession for future generations and was a charter member of the National Organization of Minority Architects. With a membership of hundreds of architects, nationwide, the organization speaks for the concerns of broader participation by minority architects in the mainstream of the design profession. Robinson a vice president, and Director of the Southern Region was active in two of NOMA's Task Forces: Government and Education. The organization has worked to sensitize the AIA, the federal government and other national, regional, and local municipalities to the use of minority architects and to standardize the selection process with revisions to the Standard Forms 254 and 255 (Rev. 1983). NOMA was also responsible for the accreditation of architectural programs at several Black southern colleges and universities. (*Southern Louisiana, Florida A&M, and Praire View College in Texas*)

"As a result of his role as mentor and friend, numerous careers were launched...firms were spawned...many went on to become successful regional practices. The lessons that were learned at J. W. Robinson & Associates can never be forgotten."

-William J. Stanley, III, AIA, NOMA
Principal, Stanley Love-Stanley
Past President, Atlanta Chapter
National Organization
of Minority Architects

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)
2.4 Description of nominee's notable work - continued



Griffith residence interior

Robinson responded to the needs of the community in the built form when urban renewal and the development of expressways meant many old communities were being largely destroyed. More affluent blacks were moving into the near northwest and southwest areas of Atlanta. Because of public segregation their homes became their primary source of entertainment. Elaborate recreational facilities (*read basements*) became especially important. Robinson designed over 200 of these innovative contemporary new homes. (*Homes of Herman Russell, Jesse Hill, and an addition and renovation to the home of Dr. & Mrs. Martin L. King, Jr.*) Visitors to the city were so impressed with these special neighborhoods that this period also marked the beginning of Atlanta's appeal as a "black mecca".



Union Baptist Church Sanctuary

Robinson also answered the call for more centrally located community meeting places. Realizing the church, as always, would become the focal point for community organization, Joe began to design churches beginning with Union Baptist Church, one of the largest African-American churches built during that period, with seating for 1500 and a large educational facility. He has designed 24 churches in 24 years.



Morton Theatre, circa 1910

Joe Robinson's concern for preserving and spotlighting the culture of African-Americans was recently observed with the opening of the refurbished Morton Theatre in Athens, Georgia. A joint venture with a preservation specialist, the now refurbished building was a Black owned multi-purpose building, containing a 600-seat theatre featuring Black Vaudeville. His firm has provided restoration for Fountain Hall on the Morris Brown College Campus and the "Barn" at Hampton University among many others.

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)
2.4 Description of nominee's notable work - continued

In 1980 Robinson became one of the two first African-Americans to be appointed by then Governor George Busby, to the Board of Governors of the Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC). Mr. Robinson became Secretary to the Board in 1981 serving until 1989. Joe was able to contribute to the growth of Georgia's tourism industry by actively supporting measures that would expand the GWCC facility. In addition, he sat on the A/E selection committees for the design of the the 3rd expansion and the Georgia Dome, providing Atlanta's capability to host the Superbowl and provide stadium facilities for the 1996 Olympics.

"He is extremely well respected not only by his peers in the profession of architecture, but also by business leaders, elected officials and other civic leaders throughout the community."

- Dan Graveline,
Executive Director
Georgia World Congress Center

Joe Robinson was President of MAAP (Minority Airport Architects and Planners), the first minority consortium of building industry professionals to be formed in Atlanta. MAAP was a partner in the first major black and white joint venture for the design and construction of the award-winning, Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport. MAAP was responsible for the design of Concourses C and D and the shell for the airport rapid transit system, MARTA. (*Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority*)



Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport

Robinson has been a member of the Morris Brown College Board of Trustees since 1981. Serving as Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, he has overseen the maintenance and expansion program of the College. Prior to joining the Board, his firm was responsible for the restoration and/or renovation of several buildings in addition to the design for the award-winning John H. Lewis Health & Physical Education Building. Robinson actively campaigned to support the new architectural program at Morris Brown.



Fountain Hall Restoration, 1981
Morris Brown College Campus

Continuing his pioneering ways, Robinson's firm recently completed the design for the new Federal Courthouse at Albany, Georgia. It is the first time the General Service Administration has ever collaborated with a private firm to jointly design a Federal Courthouse. GSA provided the mechanical, plumbing and electrical design.



New Federal Courthouse, Albany, GA

Section 2: Category of Nomination (continued)

2.4 Description of nominee's notable work - continued

Against great odds, J.W. Robinson has exemplified determination and a pioneering spirit; A spirit that has led him not only to establish one of the first African-American owned architectural practices in Georgia, but also to become an empowering influence on future generations. Through his commitment and his actions he has shown those who aspire to greater challenges, how to strengthen, organize, and blend those characteristics that make communities better parts of a whole - - a nation founded on freedom!



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Section 3: Exhibits

EXHIBITS LIST

1. **Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Thornton - Private Residence**
Atlanta, GA - 1962
2. **Mr. & Mrs. Hubert Griffith - Private Residence**
Atlanta, GA - 1963
3. **Union Baptist Church**
Atlanta, GA - 1968
4. **Martin Luther King, Jr., Birth Home**
Atlanta, GA - 1974
5. **Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Center**
Atlanta, GA - 1976
6. **Martin Luther King, Jr. Natatorium**
Atlanta, GA - 1978
7. **West End Church of Christ**
Atlanta, GA - 1994

Relevant Award and Publications:

8. **National Hampton Alumni Association**
Alumni Merit Award
1984
9. **Southern Bell Calendar**
Black Male Achievers
1991-92 Calendar
10. **Atlanta Magazine**
Airport Entrepreneurs Come of Age:
Joint Venturing: Did It Really Work?
April 1984

Section 3: Exhibits (continued)

Descriptive Data

Project

Private Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Thornton, Atlanta, GA - Exhibit #1

Synopsis

J. W. Robinson, Sr.

Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA

Designer

1962

Date

The Thornton Residence was the first new home built in the neighborhood by blacks after a barrier separating the black and white neighborhoods was removed.

The structure is brick veneer with partial steel frame construction featuring a series of plywood vaults across the front facade. There are clerestory windows on all front bedrooms. The livingroom windows are floor to ceiling with a panoramic view of the picturesque area, while a skylight illuminates the hall off the bedrooms.

The house also features 4 bedrooms and 5 baths with additional skylights over the dressing-room located in the master bedroom and the laundry.

The first floor cantilevers out from the large basement area which is an entertainment area with a centered circular bar seating up to 10 guests.

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.

That responsibility included:

- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other



Signature:

Client / Mr. Calvin Thornton

Title / Typed name:



Section 3: Exhibits (continued)
Descriptive Data

Project
Private Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Hubert Griffith, Atlanta, GA - Exhibit #2

Synopsis

J. W. Robinson Sr.
Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA
Designer

1963
Date

The Griffith Residence is brick veneer, post and beam construction featuring a folded plate roof that accents the front facade. There are 3 bedrooms and 3½ baths. Distinctive high clerestory windows light the living and dining rooms, and the great room at the rear of the house, can be converted into a dining facility with many smaller tables for a cabaret effect.

The daylight basement / recreational room can be entered separately from the rear, if desired, and is a large "L" shaped space with an office and plenty of room for entertaining large groups of people.

Declaration of
Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.
That responsibility included:

- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other

Signature:



Client / Mrs. Hubert Griffith

Title / Typed name:



Section 3: Exhibits (continued)

Descriptive Data

Project

Union Baptist Church, Atlanta, GA - Exhibit #3

Synopsis

J. W. Robinson, Sr. / Herbert Rawlins, AIA, Supervising Architect

Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA

Designer

1962

Date

Union Baptist is a Georgian style church with a seating capacity of 1500, making it one of the largest African-American churches designed in Atlanta during this period. The three-story structure encompasses 31,156 square feet of space. The daylight lower level contains thirteen classrooms which can be converted into six double classrooms. An auditorium, stage with dressing rooms and multimedia controls for visual presentations, can also be found on the lower level.

The sanctuary and chancel comprise most of the main floor with a choir area seating 100 persons. Special equipment uncommon to many churches in 1962 was utilized. One such feature is a chancel lighting panel allowing the pastor to control the use of all lighting and to signal the organist to begin playing. The nursery and pastor's study are also located on this level.

The upper sanctuary consists of balcony seating, the organ room, three classrooms and an additional pastor's study.

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.

That responsibility included:

- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other

Signature:

Client / Rev. Wilborn

Title / Typed name:



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Section 3: Exhibits (continued)
Descriptive Data

Project
Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Home, Atlanta, GA - Exhibit #4

Synopsis

Unknown - Circa 1895

Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA - Restoration

Designer

1974

Date

The restoration of the M. L. King Birthplace was the first birth home of an African-American to gain recognition by the National and State Register of Historic Places. The two-story Queen Anne style frame house was originally built in 1895. Exterior restoration detailed the house to the period of Dr. King's birth.

The interior was also restored to the original furnishings that the family utilized at the time Dr. King was born. Mrs. M.L. King, Sr., provided the necessary input to ensure that wallpaper, carpet, paints and other decorative aspects were if not authentic, then, as similar to the original decor as possible.

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.
That responsibility included:

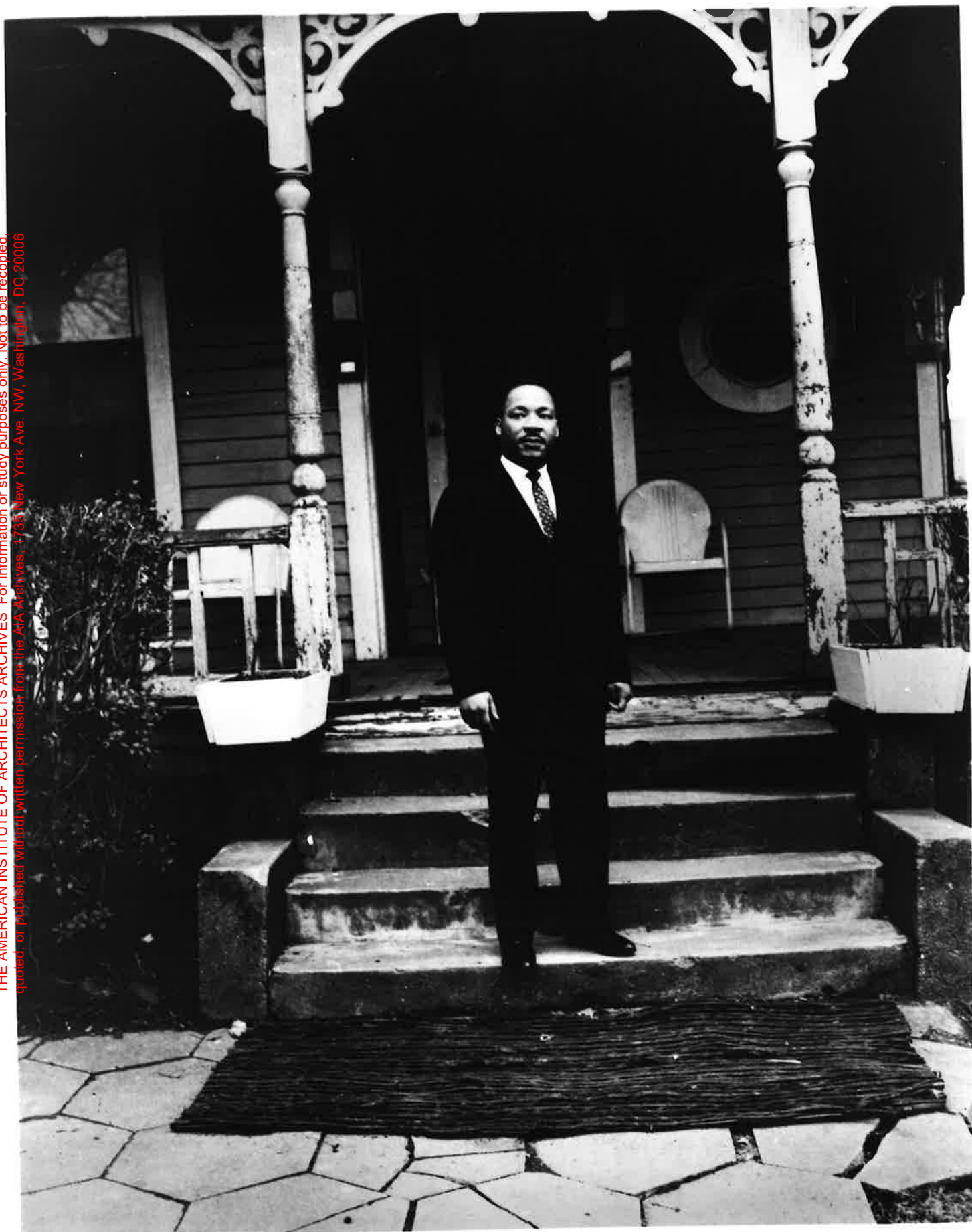
- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other


Signature:

Architect / Norman F. Robinson, AIA (no relation)

Title / Typed name:

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Section 3: Exhibits (continued)

Descriptive Data

Project

Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Center - Exhibit #5

Synopsis

J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc.

Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA

Designer

1976

Date

This multiuse community building is within the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site Complex. The building's facilities are operated and used by the City of Atlanta Recreation Department and the John Hope Elementary School of the Atlanta Board of Education.

The facility houses an information center for the community, a community library, a day care center for 100 children, an Equal Opportunity Atlanta branch office, Legal Aid office and a branch of the Family and Children Services of Fulton County. There is a gymnasium, a kitchen and rooms for meetings, arts and crafts, exercise and dancing. The recreation facilities are centered around a large interior courtyard which provides a view to all facilities as well as centralized access. A sculptured fountain formerly graced the plaza in front of the center.

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.

That responsibility included:

- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other

Signature:

Architect / Norman F. Robinson, AIA (no relation)

Title / Typed name:



Section 3: Exhibits (continued)

Descriptive Data

Project

Martin Luther King, Jr. Natatorium - Exhibit #6

Synopsis

J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc.

Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA

Designer

1978

Date

This community swimming facility has an "L" shaped marcite and concrete pool. The 25 meter pool has five lanes and a 45 ft. by 35 ft. diving pool. The diving pool is 12 ft. 6 in. deep and has a one meter and three meter diving board. Overhead lighting was designed to preclude the use of underwater lights. The pool meets National Collegiate Athletic Association swimming competition standards and was formerly used for all indoor swimming meets sponsored by the City of Atlanta.

Three trapezoid shaped bays project out from the exterior of the building. One bay is the entrance to the facility, while the other two provide space for spectator seating. With the large expanses of window space around the building, a panoramic view of downtown Atlanta can be seen.

The showers, dressing rooms, basket room, concession stand and waiting area are located on the lower level with a hydraulic elevator for handicapped access.

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.

That responsibility included:

- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other



Signature:

Architect / Norman F. Robinson, AIA (no relation)

Title / Typed name:



Section 3: Exhibits (continued)
Descriptive Data

Project
West End Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA - Exhibit #7

Synopsis

J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc.

Architect of record /firm

J. W. Robinson, Sr., AIA

Designer

1994

Date

This contemporary sanctuary is 11,085 square feet and has a north-south axis with an irregular octagonal shape. There is seating for 712; each seat has an excellent view of the worship services. The focal point of the south end of the sanctuary allows the congregation to face the pulpit, baptism pool and the main cross located in the exterior equilateral arch.

The glue laminated wood structural system provided the best solution for the elimination of all structural columns within the seating area. All structural columns are located at the outer edge of the seating.

The selection of earth tone exterior and interior finishes compliment the warm tones of the wood and provides a soft warm feeling for worshippers to experience. Each stained glass window expresses the rainbow spectrum, while each sets the tone of the sanctuary interior with its small cross. Upon entering from the Narthex the congregation passes through a warm and elegant lobby area with nursery, lavatories and mechanical spaces off to the right, and non-obtrusive to the sanctuary which opens to a large warm and spacious place to worship.

Declaration of
Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the project listed above.
That responsibility included:

- Solely responsible for design
- Largely responsible for design
- Design under direction of nominee
- Nominee's firm executed design
- Other

Signature:

Architect / Stanley L. Jennings, R.A.

Title / Typed name:



**ALUMNI MERIT AWARD
C I T A T I O N
1984
JOSEPH W. ROBINSON, SR.**

You are a native of Hartsville, South Carolina, and graduated as an architectural engineering major in 1949 from Hampton Institute.

As president and principal of J. W. Robinson & Associates, Inc., an architectural, urban planning and interior design firm in Atlanta, Georgia, you have distinguished yourself as an outstanding architect, whose achievements have been recognized by the American Institute of Architects, the National Society of Professional Engineers, the Illuminating Engineering Society of America, and the New York Association of Consulting Engineers.

Your clients have spanned the spectrum of religious, governmental, social, educational, residential, and commercial concerns. They have included the Atlanta University Center, Turner Theological Seminary, Morris Brown and Clark Colleges, and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority. Your firm also has completed projects for Southern Bell, Atlanta Life Insurance Company corporate headquarters, Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport, and the Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthplace.


Through various civic and professional organizations, you have shared your expertise to help improve the quality of life in your community. You are a member of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, NAACP, Georgia Business and Industry Association, Leadership Atlanta, Urban League, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, and the American Institute of Architects. You have given service as a trustee at Big Bethel A.M.E. Church and at Morris Brown College and on the governing Boards of the Georgia World Congress Center Authority, the National Organization of Minority Architects, and the Atlanta Business League.

Since 1949, you have been a member of the NHAA Atlanta Chapter, serving as its treasurer from 1951-1976. You have been chapter fund-raising coordinator, and you have recruited students from Hampton Institute. You are among the charter members of The NHAA Southeast Region, which named you region fund-raiser from 1968-1972. You have been the region's financial secretary since 1969. In 1974, the region honored you as the "Outstanding Hamptonian."

Architect, businessman, community leader, and noted Hamptonian, The National Hampton Alumni Association proudly presents its prestigious Alumni Merit Award to you on this day, Saturday, May 12, 1984, at the 67th Annual Reunion Banquet.



Thomas A. Bryant, President
National Hampton Alumni Association



Alphonse W. Knight, Executive Director
National Hampton Alumni Association



Southern Bell

Carl E. Swearingen
President-Georgia

Dear Friends:

For the past seven years, Southern Bell has worked to provide for the Atlanta community, and for the nation, a wealth of invaluable information with our annual CALENDAR OF ATLANTA BLACK HISTORY. We welcome you to join us, in this 1991-92 edition, as we commemorate the successes of Atlanta's Black Male Achievers.

In saluting these men, we commend the accomplishments and recognize the vastness of this important segment of our society. By making this the most inclusive Calendar to date, we desired to provide an abundance of positive attention on today's Black male.

Our honorees have undeniably excelled in their respective fields. They serve as key resources in the areas of education, health care, government, media, sports, entrepreneurship, judiciary, cultural arts, and community service.

This eighth edition of the Calendar is a testimonial to the superb strength of character and undying will to succeed of the Black men featured within, and to the generations of Black Male Achievers of tomorrow.

All the best,



Joseph Robinson, Sr.

Joseph Robinson, Sr. is president of J. W. Robinson & Associates and is a pioneer in the field of architecture. His architectural work for 39 years is renowned in the southeast and encompasses all types of edifices. Robinson's work can be seen all over Atlanta. He was the architect for the John Lewis Heath, Physical Education and Recreation building at Morris Brown College, the Atlanta Life Insurance Headquarters building, the Ashby Street MARTA station, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center, Southside Comprehensive High School, and Union Baptist Church. He was also one of the architects of Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport. Among his numerous awards are the Merit Award in Masonry from the Masonry Institute of Atlanta (1982), the Special Recognition Award from the National Society of Professional Engineers (1981), and the Engineering Excellence Award from the Consulting Engineers Council of Georgia, with Armour, Cape & Pond Engineers (1987). Robinson is past secretary of the Board of Governors of the Georgia World Congress Center (1982-1990) and is a founding member of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA).

Joint Venturing: Did It Really Work?

Many minority firms, both new and established, saw joint-venture requirements in the big Hartsfield Airport expansion project as the push that would bring them into their own. Some were right. Some learned a bitter lesson.

As enthusiasm and planning for Atlanta's new airport were starting to jell some eight years ago, Maynard Jackson issued a fiat that threatened to stop the whole project dead in its tracks. The mayor said, in effect, that grass would grow on the proposed site of the new Hartsfield International before he would allow it to be built without substantial black involvement.

After a year of feuding, the assorted parties — contractors, architects and airlines officials — decided Jackson was serious. George Berry returned from Cousins Properties to the city government, entrusted with making the compromise between the mayor's bi-racial agenda and the private sector work. Suddenly, ex-

panding the city's ongoing experiment with "joint-venture" firms, dozens of joint-venture black and white contracting, building and supply firms sprang into business, just to work on the airport.

Black entrepreneurs marched into the warm sunshine of lucrative federal and city contracts torn between wary suspicion and eager anticipation. Bright college boys dashed ahead, while old veterans, survivors of a thousand small encounters, probed cautiously. The veterans, black businessmen who had laboriously developed their skills and businesses among the black community, remembered the cold and bleak days when every dollar was a hard-won milestone. The new recruits came of age during the civil rights marches. They helped

Architect J.W. Robinson (left) whose firm designed Concourses C and D at Hartsfield, and Tom Cordy of AMC Mechanical now on the Board of Cox Communications and First Georgia Bank.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILLY MCCOPE

ATLANTA Magazine
April 1984

turn the old white mayors and city councilmembers out of office in city after city. They understood the power of organization and contacts, of being on the inside when the deal was cut.

In the late 1970s public works money poured through Atlanta like a golden flood. In addition to the airport, MARTA was being built, the interstate highways improved, the Model Cities program active. And for the first time in history, the stream was slightly diverted to flow through black companies. Better than \$70 million for the construction of the airport alone was earmarked for minority firms.

Insisting on black-white joint venture, despite the howl of protests it triggered, didn't end up costing money. "We estimated that minority participation would add about 1 percent to the total," says Deryck Muehlhauser, a white official with the airport's joint-venture architectural firm who now heads his own company. "The winning bids ended up coming in below what we had projected they would cost, so there's no real evidence that minority involvement cost anything extra. Hartsfield was the most economical modern airport ever built anywhere in the world."

The joint-venture rationale was more political than economic. The argument: minority firms needed a helping hand, a special advantage, but once they got that leg up they would be able to compete actively on an equal footing.

Then, in the wake of America's worst post-war recession and the Reagan administration's tight-fisted approach toward non-defense spending, the public spigot was turned off. The minority firms suddenly found themselves out in the "real world" just like everybody else.

How have they done?

Of the dozens of firms that sprang up around the airport project, only a handful are still operating in their original form. Several of the minority companies that participated in airport contracts — H.J. Russell Construction, AMC Mechanical, the Paschal restaurant company — have continued to prosper, using the airport as a springboard for subsequent assignments.

A Learning Experience

For Atlanta's minority entrepreneurs, the airport project proved to be an invaluable step on the learning curve. Of the firms that encountered heavy going at the airport, only a few actually failed. Most fell back, re-grouped and now exist in a different form, all the wiser for having had the experience.

In part, the carnage among the black airport-related firms reflects the problems of small business in general, and in part the particular circumstances of black business. Al Anderson, who started his own public relations group in 1973 and represented many of the minority airport firms, describes the situation like this: "In general, there are just too few op-

portunities being made available to black firms. There has been some progress. But when you look at where blacks are in the Atlanta corporate structure, we are still in the dark ages."

Even if many of the minority firms did fail, it is generally agreed that the resources of the city's black entrepreneurs and professionals matured enormously as a result of the airport experience. DDR, formed for the airport job, is scheduling large construction projects around the country. Turner Associates architects will be the project manager on a joint venture to build a \$44 million government center for Fulton County. Tom Cordy, of AMC Mechanical, now sits on the board of Cox Communication and First Georgia Bank.

The airport experience stimulated what Dave Miller, director of purchasing for the city of Atlanta, calls "second and third wave" companies, small independent engineering and contracting companies able confidently to bid to sub-contract major projects.

Perhaps the biggest impact of the airport project has been the enhanced self-esteem it has provided black entrepreneurs. Even if much of the money paid black entrepreneurs went almost immediately to white suppliers or partners, many minority businessmen had their first taste of controlling their own destiny. And after generations of controlling their rage, the taste was sweet indeed.

/Continued on page 99



Public relations executive Al Anderson (left) and Oscar "Spike" Harris of Turner Associates, the firm that designed the International Arrivals Building at the airport

'Sophisticated And Demanding'

Oscar "Spike" Harris, whose Turner Associates firm designed the International Arrivals Building at Hartsfield, vividly recalls what it was like to be a black man in a white firm. "You woke up and you turned on your switch. There was a sense of always being alert. You never knew when there would be some strange type of comment that you would have to react to." Now that's no longer a factor in his life. "I am trying to build an organization that can compete. I am very conscious that the market is extremely sophisticated and demanding. If someone has a problem with the way they see minorities, that's his problem and not mine."

John Guillory is an engineer whose printing company rode the roller coaster in the '70s — up with MARTA and the airport, down with the economic contraction. Today his company is growing, having recently absorbed two other firms and picked up the contract for Southern Bell's new stationery, but he has memories of harder times. Like when he walked into his dorm room for the first time as a college freshman to be greeted by a roommate saying, "Get out of my room!" The next morning his car's tires were slashed. While his subsequent experiences in the work world were not as overtly racist, he clearly appreciates the opportunity he got to launch a business and become his own boss.

"As individuals we could not have fought the battles that Jackson did," says Guillory. "All the mayor was saying was to do what is fair and right. Companies sell to the black community, it is only fair they buy from them, too."

Opportunity Of A Lifetime

Architect J.W. Robinson's firm, with three other minority firms, got complete design responsibility for concourses C and D at the airport. "It was a hell of an opportunity," he says, "an opportunity that comes to very few people in a lifetime. Projects and clients that size just do not come very often." If his current projects don't have quite the same scope or drama, his firm has continued to acquire exciting work, like the new high school in east Atlanta destined to be the "magnet" for computer studies.

The situation that Maynard Jackson sought to redress has been a chronic one facing black America — the difficulty of developing an entrepreneurial class. Carl Ware of Coca-Cola, who is involved with that company's minority business program, appreciates the problem. "In the beginning, minority firms lacked capital, they lacked experience on sizeable projects, they lacked contacts. Today they are

rapidly gaining what they lacked. But it still takes years to build the kind of experience white firms have."

Developing minority entrepreneurs is one of the crucial tasks facing Atlanta. With well over half the city's population now black, the opportunity and need for black business is steadily growing. "Metropolitan Atlanta's black population is a tremendously under-utilized resource for the region's growth," argues Dr. Edward Irons of Atlanta University's School of Business Administration.

The Brightest Minds

Historically, business has not been a serious option for most black Americans. "Until very recently the brightest minds went into the professions — law, medicine or the ministry — because it was there they could succeed," argues black author Robert Yancy of Atlanta. Even when major corporations began to open up to minorities, blacks tended to feel isolated from the predominately white culture of the large firms. They would climb the corporate ladder and then suddenly hit what seemed to be an invisible barrier, and their career tracks halted.

Correspondingly, more and more blacks now seek to become independent entrepreneurs. "The number of students in our MBA program who say they want to start their own business has gone up by four or five times," says Dr. Gene Jones, also of Atlanta University. Still, he points out, the number is small.

And Atlanta, for a variety of reasons, looks to a lot of them like a good place to do it. But the development pattern of the city does not bode well. Over the last decade, 70 percent of the metro area's new jobs and 75 percent of its new office construction have gone into the northern corridor along the Perimeter between Interstates 75 and 85, according to the Atlanta Regional Commission and Georgia State's Economic Forecasting Project. There is now as much office space outside the central business district as within it. The racial implications of this location pattern are undeniable: the new jobs and the new offices are located in areas with relatively little black population. "The fact that so many businesses are physically removed from the city," notes public relations executive Al Anderson, "just compounds the problems that black businessmen have in selling to them."

The verdict is still out on the ultimate impact of the affirmative action airport program. If it was not the costly boondoggle that critics feared, neither was it the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. In giving incentive and opportunity at nominal extra cost, it afforded Atlanta's nascent black entrepreneurs a chance to expand their expertise. And it rendered a service to the city by helping develop another segment of its social base.

The unanswered question is what happens now? ■