

Jeh Johnson

A native of Nashville, Tennessee, Jeh Johnson grew up on the campus of Fisk University where his father was a sociologist and President of the College. After graduation from Pearl High School in Nashville, he accepted a national Scholarship to Columbia College in New York, and following a long-standing ambition, he went on from the College to pursue graduate work in the School of Architecture. Upon graduation, he received a William Kinne Fellows Travelling Fellowship and the Students Medal of the American Institute of Architects. While at Columbia, he met Norma Edelin, the sister of his roommate, and they were married after Jeh completed a tour of duty in the U.S. Army, and Norma completed her studies at Sarah Lawrence College. They have two children, Jeh Charles, General Counsel of the United States Department of Defense and Marguerite, an Officer of the United Way in Alabama.

In 1963, Jeh came to Dutchess County to join in an Architectural practice with William Gindele, a Columbia Schoolmate. The firm became the largest Architectural Practice in the Mid Hudson Region. The firm designed landmark structures in the Hudson Valley including the Poughkeepsie Day School; The Dutchess County Mental Health Center; Interfaith Towers; Saint Simeon Senior Citizens Apartments; and the LaGrange Town Hall. He became a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1977.

Following the retirement of his partner, Jeh, in association with Henri LeGendre and Garrison McNeil, centered his practice on the New York City area. In 1990, he returned to devote his efforts to the Mid Hudson, and he designed a range of projects, large and small, including the Central Baptist Church in Salt Point; Mount Zion Baptist Church in Greenhaven; Saint Anna Senior Citizens Apartments; Riverview Baptist Church, Kingston; and Ebenezer Baptist Church, Poughkeepsie, as well as the Intercultural Center and Shiva Theater at Vassar College. His works include private residences, and twenty-two Multifamily Housing Developments.

From 1964 to 2001, he was a Senior Lecturer in Architecture and Instructor in Urban Studies at Vassar College. Many of his former students, most of whom have been women, have gone on to brilliant careers in Architecture.

In the Mid Hudson community, Jeh has served on the Board of the Hudson Valley OIC, The Chamber of Commerce, the Planning Board of the Town of Poughkeepsie, and the Dutchess County Planning Board. He has served as a Counselor at the Poughkeepsie Children's Home and as a Board Member of Scenic Hudson, Inc. He is a Member of the Town of Poughkeepsie Historical Preservation Commission.

Outside of the local area, his efforts on behalf of the Profession of Architecture have been channeled through his service as a member of the Chairman of the New York State Board for Architecture; and Chairman of the National Housing Committee of the AIA. As Chairman of the 1974 AIA National Convention, he successfully developed the theme of "A Humane Architecture."

Jeh is a Founder and Charter Member of the National Organization of Minority Architects. NOMA, as it is called, has grown from an organization of seven members to one that now has twenty-three chapters from Boston to Los Angeles and includes students of Architecture as well as practitioners.

Recently, Jeh has been expanding his photographic studies of the Architecture of the "Black Church in the African-American Experience" in all of its forms, from the seventeen hundreds to the present day