

THE LEGACY OF SPEED AND DEDICATION

Before Usain Bolt, the fastest human in recorded history, others on the little Caribbean island of Jamaica shocked the sports world with their winged feats on the track. There were Veronica Campbell Brown, Asafa Powell, Elaine Thompson, Clausey B Myton....

Yes, *our* Clausey B Myton Sr. Before the 50 years that he devoted to the growth and development of children in Marvell and Phillips County, Clausey Myton was a legend in the sports world far from the Mississippi Delta that would become his home and his laboratory. Myton was among the first to bring the world's attention to the island that would become legendary for the speed of its young men and women.



In 1956, the skinny kid from Spanish Town, Jamaica, set the national record for the 880-yard dash, which he ran in two minutes flat. American universities took notice and his track coach contacted Arkansas AM and N College at Pine Bluff (now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff), which offered him a scholarship. For four years, he performed feats in a number of track and field events for the college. Years afterward, Jamaican kids began to win medals at Olympic and other international trials.

We at the Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center have for years celebrated Clausey Myton's feats both on and off the athletic fields. For 38 years, he coached football, volleyball and track in the Marvell schools, winning at least eight district championships and molding hundreds of youngsters into productive men and women. He was a founder of BGACDC and helped it grow and develop. He was the first Jamaican to be elected to public office in Arkansas - the Philips County Quorum Court.

Now, through the Darnell Williams II Endowment, he carries on the vision of his son, who was killed in a car accident in 2008. The Darnell Williams II Endowment has given college scholarships to more than 30 youngsters from the Marvell-Elaine community, a wish often expressed by Darnell.

As part of a year-round celebration of black history, BGACDC is going to feature the legacy of men and women from the community each month.



"As a community activist for more than 50 years, I understand that black history is viewed differently by young people under 50," Beatrice Shelby, executive director of BGACDC, said. "I sincerely hope they understand that BGACDC needs to celebrate the history of those who have worked to make life better for children in Marvell."