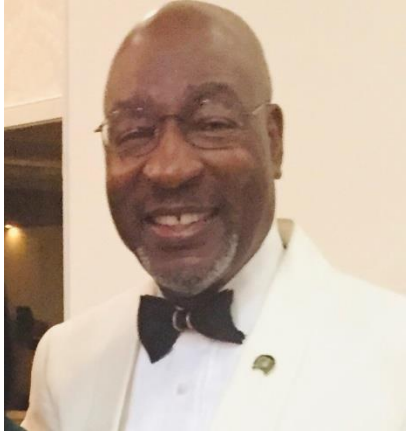


History of the Prince Hall University
By
WGC Rev. Dr. James L. Mitchell #45
Dean of the Prince Hall University
1995



In the 1990's, membership in Prince Hall Masonry was at a high level in Pennsylvania. However, a serious problem with uniformity and conformity of the ritualistic work, understanding of the constitution, by-laws, and the management of the constituent lodges across the state, was a growing problem.

The concerns were often discussed among the leadership and members of the craft during various district council meetings. However, no definitive plan of action was developed or introduced to address the problem.

In 1995, M.W.G.M. Reverend, Thomas A. Jackmon Sr. # 97, had a vision of establishing a school of training specifically designed to address the issues affecting Prince Hall Masonry across the State of Pennsylvania.

M.W.G.M. Thomas A. Jackmon summoned his Grand Lecturer, James L. Mitchell # 45, and charged him with writing a "Making of Masons at Sight Ceremony" and the development and implementation of a school of training to address the problems of uniformity of the ritualistic work, understanding of the constitution, by-laws, leadership, and management of the constituent lodges in Pennsylvania.

However, after further discussion with Grand Lecturer Mitchell regarding the work and experience needed, to accomplish this monumental task. Grand Master Jackmon, decided to enlist the aid of W.D.D.G.M. Earl C. Abrams #23, to assist Worshipful Grand Lecturer Mitchell.

After hours of meetings, research and consultations, a draft proposal of a school of training known as the "Prince Hall University," was introduced to M.W.G.M. Thomas A. Jackmon Sr. and after his approval.

The concept of the Prince Hall University was presented and well received in the Eastern, Western and Central parts of the State.

Afterwards the proposal was presented and approved at the Grand Lodge Annual Session.

On Saturday, March 14, 1998, the Grand Opening of the Prince Hall University was held at the Berean Institute, 1901 West Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, PA. 19130.

The records show that fifty (50) plus Master Masons graduated in that class, including P.M.W.G.M. Malcolm E. Harris #58, P. M.W.G.M. Melvin A. Alston Sr. #9, and P.M.W.G.M Donald C. Jones #120.

The Prince Hall University although extremely successful was discontinued due to a lack of funding, until 2018.

In 2018 the Honorable M.W.G.M. Melvin A. Alston Sr. # 9, was elected and installed, the 104th Grand Master of Prince Hall Masons in Pennsylvania.

Grand Master Alston being a graduate of PHU, recognizing the importance and necessity of a well learned Mason. Directed, Reverend Dr. James L. Mitchell #45 one of the two writers of the University to re-establish and re-implement the Prince Hall University of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania.

On November 2, 2019, at 4301 North Broad Street in Philadelphia, the re-opening ceremony of the PHU took place with over (50) plus master masons enrolled.

On February 29, 2020, the PHU held a certificate and graduation ceremony for (43) forty-three of the (50) fifty Master Masons.

In October 2020, under the direction of MWGM Donald C. Jones # 120. A Virtual component of the Prince Hall University was developed and instituted. It was done in response to the universities inability to conduct on site classes during the COVID 19, pandemic.

In February 2021 to March 2021, (36) thirty-six Master Masons from several districts across the State registered to attend the PHU, via Zoom.

On Saturday August 29, 2021, (27) twenty-seven of the (36) thirty-six Master Masons successfully completed the required courses of study to graduate the Prince Hall University.

WGC Rev. Dr. James L. Mitchell #45 continues to serve proudly, as the Dean of the Prince Hall University, of which approximately (200) two hundred Master Masons have graduated as of January 18, 2023.