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# Strom Thurmond's Granddaughter Shares Thoughts on Her Family's Legacy

## Quick Facts

- Several months after Thurmond's death in 2003, his bi-racial grown daughter and eldest child, Essie Mae Washington-Williams, revealed that Thurmond was her father. Monica Williams-Hudgens is her daughter.
- Now living in the state of Washington, Williams-Hudgens is a domestic violence advocate, activist, writer, teacher, community organizer and scholar.



Monica  
Williams-Hudgens

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA - **Monica Williams-Hudgens**, a granddaughter of the **late U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond**, will talk about her family history on Feb. 5 at Winthrop University.

The lecture, entitled "**Reckoning the Strom Thurmond Lineage with My Family's Legacy**," will begin at 11 a.m. in **McBryde Hall**. The event is free and open to the public.

Thurmond is listed as the **second-longest serving member of the U.S. Senate**, representing the Palmetto State from 1954 to 2003. After the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to desegregate public schools with the 1954 *Brown v. The Board of Education* ruling, Thurmond was among Southern senators who fought integration of schools. He also opposed civil rights legislation in 1964 and 1965, saying he was opposed to federal authority.

Several months after Thurmond's death in 2003, his bi-racial grown daughter and eldest child, **Essie Mae Washington-Williams**, revealed that Thurmond was her father. Monica Williams-Hudgens is her daughter.

Now living in the state of Washington, **Williams-Hudgens** is a domestic violence advocate, activist, writer, teacher, community organizer and scholar. She earned her Associate of Arts degree in early childhood development, a Bachelor of Science degree in human services (Summa Cum Laude) and is currently working on her Master of Science degree in organizational leadership.

**Williams-Hudgens** has dedicated her life to social justice. She has studied various contexts in which people who are seeking real change can find transformation and has worked tirelessly towards building a community of women and children with strong voices for sustainable and effective change.

Being an agent for social justice and change is just one of the many rich family legacies Williams-Hudgens' father, **Julius Thomas Williams**, and mother, **Washington-Williams**, left for their children. Williams-Hudgens married **Marine Corporal Gerald J. Hudgens** 37 years ago, and they have three daughters, three granddaughters and two grandsons.

The **Feb. 5 event** at Winthrop is sponsored by the **Office of Diversity and Student Engagement**, the **West Forum**, and the **Departments of Political Science, History, Sociology and Anthropology**, and **Interdisciplinary Studies**.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or [longshawj@winthrop.edu](mailto:longshawj@winthrop.edu).

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