

Dr. Vanessa Haygood was born and grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina, the middle of five children, where she graduated from West Charlotte Senior High School, the only remaining all Black high school in the school district. Her next stop was 3,000 miles away from home at Stanford University, where she earned a BS in Biology and more importantly, where she realized that in spite of never having known or even seen a Black female physician, she could achieve a goal that she knew only as a dream. Her strong bond with the small number of Black student classmates was a source of collective vision, support, and continuous encouragement toward that goal. Her cohort were there only a few years after the signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and many were from or had strong family roots in the South, so integration was a new concept for us. Fun fact: one of her best friends in college was our own Elder Bob Powell!

She continued her interest in forging paths to parts unknown when she left Stanford headed to Harvard Medical School in Boston, fueled by a love of the science of the human body, the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many people, and compelled to answer a call to use the talents that had been given to her for those purposes.

After completing her medical studies, she returned to North Carolina to do residency training at Duke University Medical Center, then remained there as an Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology for four years after residency. She remained there a total of 8 years during which she met and married Dr. Arthur Vernon Stringer, a fellow Ob-Gyn resident, and they had their two children, Daniel and Jasmine Stringer.

Drs. Haygood and Stringer came to Greensboro to work for Moses Cone Hospital as directors of the Ob-Gyn Teaching Service and the Family Planning Clinic of Guilford County. This allowed them to collaboratively provide Gyn care and to deliver babies for families who had limited means of paying for that care. In 1988 Drs Haygood and Stringer opened a practice, Central Carolina ObGyn where they continued to work until their retirement in Feb 2020. During the 42 years that she practiced, Dr. Haygood delivered thousands of babies, and cared for the health of thousands more women in Greensboro. She was elected the first women president of the Moses Cone Hospital Medical Staff, and became a vocal advocate for Women's Health and healthy babies.

Shortly after moving to Greensboro, Dr. Haygood joined Saint James Presbyterian Church where she was ordained an elder and continues as a member of the Social Justice ministry and the ADORE dance ministry.

