



Adeline Tinsley was a dedicated voice for Oviedo's Black community for decades, and she was a smiling face for countless local students during her stint as a school-bus driver.



Adeline's family, friends, and community supporters gathered in late February to cut the ribbon on the newly renamed Adeline B Tinsley Way.

by Jenny Rose Spauldo

A Drive Down

Adeline B Tinsley Way

This Oviedo street was recently rechristened to honor its namesake's decades-long legacy of service

Civil rights advocate, volunteer, church youth leader, school-bus driver, caretaker, administrator – there aren't enough titles to describe how the late Adeline B. Tinsley served in her community. She passed away unexpectedly on July 24, 2019, and to honor her, the street she lived on for more than 70 years was renamed to memorialize her life.

On January 19, Oviedo City Council members unanimously voted to have Avenue B, just east of downtown Oviedo, renamed Adeline B Tinsley Way. The official ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 20 drew people from across the city including local officials, community leaders, family, and friends.

"Her passion was community service," says Adeline's youngest daughter, Barbara Jenkins. "She liked to help people in the community with resources of any kind – food, clothing, shelter."

Born to Roy and Mary Alice Baldwin on February 24, 1933, Adeline grew up understanding the importance of serving others. She was a driving force for change and hope in her community, as she provided countless meals for bereaved families, drove numerous people to church or the local food pantry in her old station wagon, visited the sick at the hospital, and offered friendship to shut-ins.

Adeline was also very involved in Oviedo Citizens in Action (OCIA), which has worked hard to improve relations between the local Black community and the city's government since the 1950s. Adeline did her part by encouraging people to register to vote and helping improve low-income housing conditions. And of course, she loved to ride on OCIA's float in the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade.

Barbara's husband, Ronald Jenkins, worked closely with Adeline while he was president of OCIA from 1994 to 1997. He recalls her vital work as the group's treasurer at that time, helping with OCIA's Adopt a Road project, various food drives, Operation Blessing, and more.

"She was very informative," Ronald says. "She knew which direction to go if I needed to get permits. When we started the

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade and had to get a permit from the county and one from the city, she helped provide direction to go see the city manager or the police chief of Oviedo."

Adeline and her husband, Eddie Will Tinsley, passed on a passion for the community to their six children: Beverly, Brenda, Barbara, Andrew, Elvis, and Craig.

"We grew up in church, and she taught us Godly values," Barbara says. "We always attended Sunday school, church, all the local youth meetings. She instilled in us the values of loving family, loving people, and loving your neighborhood – your community."

Her children often told Adeline she needed to rest more – but that just wasn't her way. When Adeline wasn't busy serving others, she was busy bettering herself. Having dropped out of high school, she decided to go back to school as an adult and graduated with honors in 1969. And she didn't stop there. Adeline then enrolled in vocational classes for environmental services.

With her new education, Adeline began working as supervisor of environmental services at Seminole Memorial Hospital (now the Seminole County Services Complex in Sanford) until 1972. She then quit her job to stay home and take care of Barbara after a painful back surgery. After a few years, Adeline went back to work as a school-bus driver for Seminole County Public Schools until she retired in 1986. After her death, some of the former students who used to ride Adeline's bus reached out to her family to share how much she impacted them.

"I've heard so many people say that my mom is truly missed," Barbara says. "She was a face in the community that everybody knew. Her legacy is going to live on. She left a legacy in so many hearts."

Love and generosity – those values defined Adeline's entire life. And even though she's no longer with us, her memory endures to inspire a new generation. Just take a stroll down Adeline B Tinsley Way and see for yourself.

