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# THE DAILY NEWS

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## White-Baker's volunteer work earns Lifetime Achievement Award

BY MORGAN STARLING  
THE DAILY NEWS

A Jacksonville woman has received the President's Lifetime Achievement Award for her volunteer work over the last 20 years.

Dr. Sheila White-Baker has spent the last two decades helping homeless veterans try to find housing, feeding the homeless and working with a company called MDA as a Compensation and Pension Examiner and Disability Evaluator for retired veterans and those preparing for retirement, she told The Daily News in an email.

She said she also established a nonprofit organization with a colleague called the Baker-Reeves Foundation. She then went on to establish The Baker Foundation Inc. White-Baker said she received most of her funding through donations and is still working to make her foundation an official 501(c)(3).

"I continue on my plight to help others in need of these services," White-Baker said. "I am also a tax preparer and have donated time, energy and effort into helping others with their taxes and navigating through preparing taxes pro bono."

White-Baker said she has dedicated over 5,000 hours to community service, and just last May, she received an Honorary Doctorate in

Humanitarianism by Global International Alliance. This year, she said she was even more grateful to receive the President's Lifetime Achievement Award.

In President Biden's letter to White-Baker, he said "The American story depends not on any one of us, not on some of us, but on all of us. I congratulate you on taking it upon yourself to contribute to the public good, and I'm proud to present you with the President's Lifetime Achievement award in recognition of your 4,300 hours of service to this great nation."

"This has all been a very humbling experience, and I will continue to press forward and be a trailblazer for my family and loved ones," White-Baker said. "It's not every day that people recognize the good that you do and how it affects others, but to know that the President sees what I'm doing in the community, says a lot about who I am as a person."

White-Baker graduated from Swansboro High School in 1993, and said her heart was set on medicine and becoming a doctor from the age of four. She said she accepted a scholarship from Shaw University, an HBCU (Historically Black College and University) in Raleigh.

She added she turned down scholarships from North Carolina State Univer-



Dr. Sheila White-Baker

sity, Duke University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Campbell University and others.

"I wanted the experience of attending an HBCU and learning about other cultures," White-Baker said. "While attending Shaw University, I also attended Durham Tech where I received an English and Computer Programming degree. I then transferred to North Carolina Central Uni-

versity and received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and minor in Social Work, graduating Magna Cum Laude."

White-Baker said she then attended The University of Phoenix, where she received three master's degrees: a Master of Science in Nursing, Master of Health Administration and Master in Nursing Information, along with a certification in

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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## Former Onslow County commissioner, dies

BY MORGAN STARLING  
THE DAILY NEWS

A former Onslow County commissioner has passed away at the age of 91.

W. Randolph Thomas, who served on the Onslow County Board of Commissioners beginning in 1972, passed away on Wednesday, according to a Thursday afternoon news release from the county.



W. Randolph Thomas

The release said Thomas was a developer and entrepreneur, who in his later years gave back to the county by being an advocate for the community and championing festivals in the Swansboro area.

"Randolph Thomas leaves behind a legacy of service to his community and served as a positive leader on the Onslow County Board of Commissioners during his term," said Onslow County Board of Commissioners Chairman Tim Foster in a statement in the release. "His dedication to public service is an inspiration to others, including his son Randy Thomas who was a long serving member of the Jacksonville City Council. I offer our deepest condolences to his family and friends during this period of mourning."

Jacksonville City Mayor Sammy Phillips also released a statement Thursday afternoon sending condolences to the Thomas family on behalf of himself, the city council and the city.

"The Thomas family has a tradition of helping to make our community a better place," Phillips said. "Mr. Thomas' son, Randy, served on city council for more than 14 years. Together they have made a lasting difference. We send our prayers and sympathy to Randy and the entire Thomas family during this time."

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## Onslow County school board elects new chair and vice chair

BY MORGAN STARLING  
THE DAILY NEWS

The Onslow County school board has a new face at its center following a special election Wednesday morning.

A special called meeting was held Wednesday to elect a new chair and vice chair of the Onslow County Board of Education following recent conflict that led to the resignation of the board's former chair.

Following a paper ballot election, Ken Reddic was elected chair and Bradley Williams was elected vice chair.

Onslow County

Schools Superintendent Barry Collins announced via Chief Communications Officer Brent Anderson in an email Monday afternoon that Bill Lanier resigned as chairman effective Saturday, March 11, but will continue as a member of the board and serve his term which expires in November 2026.

The resignation came after disagreements in both a Feb. 7 and Mar. 7 meeting led to unruly behavior on the board.

Lanier was at the center of the conflict and Board Member Angie Todd began the Mar. 7 meeting by making a

motion that the agenda be amended to include an election of a new chair and vice chair, which Board Member Louis Rogers seconded.

After much confusion on next steps, the motion ultimately failed during that meeting after a 4-3 vote against. However, after Lanier began a back-and-forth with a public speaker later in the meeting, Board Member Melissa Oakley, who had voted against the motion, changed her stance on the issue.

She sent a request the following morning asking for the immediate resignation of Lanier as

board chair. One week later, a new chair and vice chair have been elected.

Reddic has been a member of the board since August of 2018 and served as vice-chairman since December 2022, according to a Wednesday afternoon news release from Onslow County Schools. He is a life-long educator, having served in Onslow County Schools as a teacher, coach and administrator for more than 40 years before running for the board.

Williams has served on the Board of Education since being sworn in



OCS YOUTUBE

Ken Reddic (left) and Bradley Williams (right)

in December 2022. Prior to his time on the board, Williams served in the United States Marine Corps. He also currently serves his community as

an associate pastor at his church.

Reporter Morgan Starling can be reached at [mstarling@jdnews.com](mailto:mstarling@jdnews.com).

NC HOUSE SENDS PISTOL PERMIT BILL TO COOPER'S DESK

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COOPER URGES COMPANY TO KEEP NC PAPER MILL OPEN

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