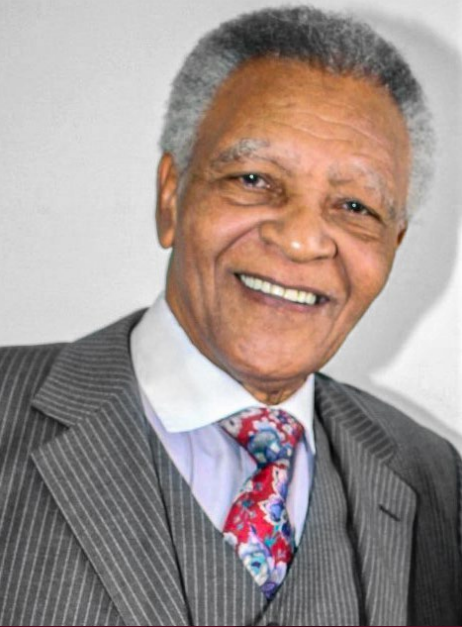


# Diversity Excellence

## LECTURE & AWARDS



# CHARLES NEBLETT

ACTIVIST, ORGANIZER, SPEAKER AND PERFORMER

CHARLES NEBLETT, Doctor of Humane Letters, 2019, came to SIU in 1959 and quickly convinced President Delyte Morris to desegregate all student housing on campus. During his time at the university, Dr. Neblett was influential in building a bridge between the students, campus, and community of Carbondale. In 1961, Neblett joined the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to organize black voter registrations. He is a Charter member of "The Freedom Singers," which sang at protests, marches, picket lines and sit-ins in over 40 states during the civil rights movement.

Neblett was among those to join Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the 1963 March on Washington and led participants in song after Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech.

He also participated in the 1965 March from Selma to Montgomery, and the 2001 Million Man March.

During his career, Neblett would go on to perform with luminaries such as Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Miles Davis, Harry Belafonte, Joan Baez, Odetta, Mahalia Jackson and Nina Simone.

He was elected the first African American magistrate in Logan County, Kentucky, in 1989.

In 2010, President and First Lady Obama invited the Freedom Singers to perform at the White House at the "Celebration of Music for the Civil Rights Movement." Following the performance, Neblett and First Lady Obama conducted a workshop for 200 young people. Also in that year, his advocacy for equality earned him the Freedom Flame Award in Selma, Alabama, and a place in the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

Currently, Neblett acts as Founder and President of Community Projects, Inc. He and his wife of over 45 years, Marvinia Benton Neblett, have six children, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Wednesday  
**December 4**

**7 PM**

SIUC CAMPUS  
Student Center Auditorium

International Lounge:

6 pm Reception for guests  
attending lecture  
(wine and hors d'oeuvres)

8 pm Reception immediately  
following lecture  
(cake, coffee, wine)

Free event, open to the  
community. Individuals with  
disabilities are welcomed. Call  
618-453-5738 to request  
accommodations.

