

Carolyn R. Payton

- Born: May 13, 1925, in Norfolk, Virginia, to Leroy Solomon and Bertha Robertson.
- Although she grew up during the Depression, her parents always had jobs to support the family.
- Went to Bennett College (a college for black women) in North Carolina.
- She found positive influences in female leaders and teachers.
- Majored in home economics and spent 3 more years getting her masters degree in clinical psychology at University of Wisconsin.
- She was the only black student in her psychology classes.
- After graduation she taught psychology at Livingstone College.
- She was later named the Dean of Women and Psychology at Virginia State College.
- Received her doctorate in 1962.
- Was recommended to assist in the design of selection procedures for the newly established Peace Corps.
- She later became the field assessment officer for trainees preparing to serve in West Africa.
- She lived on many campsites and traveled extensively with the Corps.
- In 1970, she went to Howard University to direct the University Counseling Services.
- She trained many people in ethnic psychology.
- In 1977, President Carter named her Peace Corp's first black woman director and was responsible for over 6,000 volunteers.
- In 1979, she went back to Howard University where she continued to represent many minority groups and their causes.
- She was a powerful advocate for women and minority rights.
- She was a pioneer for ethnic minority psychology.
- Died at age 75 of a heart attack.