

Reby Cary 1920-2018

Reby Cary was born Sept. 9, 1920, in Fort Worth. He graduated from I.M. Terrell High School in 1937, and earned a bachelor's degree in history and political science from Prairie View A&M University. He completed postgraduate work at Prairie View, North Texas State University and TCU.

He was drafted into military service in 1942, and became one of the first African Americans to graduate from the U.S. Coast Guard's radioman school. During World War II, he served on the USS Cambria in the Pacific.

Upon his return to Fort Worth, he established the McDonald College of Industrial Arts to offer job training for African Americans. He began teaching history at Dunbar High School, later becoming the first black instructor at Tarrant County Junior College in 1967 and then becoming the first black professor at UT Arlington in 1969.



Cary would also be the first black member of the Fort Worth ISD School Board, later serving in three terms in the Texas House of Representatives.

He also wrote more than 20 books on the history of African Americans in Fort Worth and in the military before his death on Dec. 7, 2018, in Fort Worth, at age 98.

The Reby Cary Youth Library will enhance Cary's legacy as a pioneering educator who served his country and community in a multitude of powerful ways. It all started with a mother to whom Cary credited for his success:

“When my friends were out playing marbles, my mother would say ‘Get back in the house and study.’ If she saw me with my head outside of a book, my behind would soon be on fire. It never changed.”

