



INEZ ELIZABETH COHEN DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD IN K-12 EDUCATION

A mover and shaker in the field of education, Inez Elizabeth Cohen has fulfilled her dream of teaching, leading and inspiring students and educators around the country. Her journey began in the classroom with stops along the way to school districts in California, Colorado, Alaska, Alabama and Virginia. Each stop presented new opportunities and new insights as her roles changed from the classroom to department chair, team leader, assistant principal, principal, central office administrator and now, as a national turnaround school consultant. While her roles changed during her forty-year career, her vision to make a difference in the lives of students has remained steadfast.

With her extensive experience in all facets of school-based administration, she was able to successfully transition as a central office administrator to assume the helm of her school district's program for first-generation students, the College Partnership Program. Her leadership and ability to create partnerships with colleges and businesses opened the doors to higher education for 10,000 first generation scholars in the program. As a result of her work in college admissions counseling and helping thousands of students in her school district to navigate the college admissions maze, the program was recognized as an exemplary model by the College Board, the Virginia College Access Network and the U.S. Department of Education.

Although she retired in 2010, her passion to create equity in education for underserved students was the next step in her journey. As a national turnaround school consultant, she has provided technical assistance to failing schools in urban school districts in the areas of closing the achievement gap, school improvement, charter school development, charter school management and school to prison pipeline alternatives. Her clients have included the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the US Department of Education, the Maryland Department of Education, the San Antonio Independent School District, the Alliance for Equity and Diversity in Education and YouthBuild USA.

A Tampa native and graduate of Hillsborough High School, Mrs. Cohen received her undergraduate degree from The Florida State University and her graduate degree from Chapman University. Additionally, she has studied School Ethics and Leadership at Oxford University in Oxford, England. She has maintained strong ties with her alma mater as a member of the FSU College of Education Development Council, as a member of the FSU Westcott Legacy Society and the Strozier Society, as a Life Member of the FSU Alumni Association and as a former Regional Area Director for the FSU National Black Alumni Association. She is determined to help as many students as she can to cross the finish line of college completion. As a result, and along with her husband she has established and fully endowed four scholarships, two at FSU and two at Howard University. The scholarship dearest to her, the Ellis and Dorothy York Endowed Scholarship, is a tribute to her parents who were the first generation in their families to graduate from college.

She is very active in the Tampa Bay community and is member of Allen Temple AME Church, The Tampa Women's Club and The Links, Inc as well as her lifetime memberships and lifetime service with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc and Jack and Jill of America, Inc. She is married to George Cohen, MD and is the mother of four children and four grandchildren.