

## Bebe Ross Coker Leadership in Racial Justice Award

Ms. Bebe Ross Coker is an educator, playwright, and activist. Born in Jacksonville, Florida, she attended Stanton High School and moved to Delaware in 1960. Ms. Coker is a longtime advocate of educational equity and learning excellence for all children. Along with twelve other Civil Rights advocates, she opposed the plan to desegregate public schools by busing children out of their neighborhoods. Instead, the group proposed an alternate plan to Federal Court where teachers would be bussed to schools rather than students.

Public service and volunteerism are the hallmark of Ms. Coker's life and her many contributions were recognized by the first Jefferson Awards Panel for community service. She served on many boards and commissions throughout the State, including the New Castle County VO-TECH Board of Education, the Wilmington Metropolitan Urban League, the Delaware Civil Rights Commission, the Christina Board of Directors (Old Swedes), the Grand Opera House Restoration Committee, the Wilmington Black Theater Ensemble, the Black Heritage Educational Theater Group, Circle of Caring Ministry Group, and the Delaware Kenya Association. Ms. Coker is the recipient of numerous local and regional awards for public service.

Ms. Coker enjoys her volunteer projects with Delaware State University, the Christina Cultural Arts Center, and with the YWCA Delaware's Home-Life Management Center. Above all else, she cherishes the gifts of her three daughters.