



Roland A. Dykes III

Close friends and family of Roland A. Dykes III have frequently observed that his life provides strong evidence that the American Dream can still be accomplished, especially in East Tennessee. This dream says that success and great opportunity accrues to anyone who works to obtain a good education; develops good work habits; keeps the faith; and establishes worthwhile goals. This is a factual description of Roland A. Dykes III (also known as Trey Dykes to family and close friends) who was born in the post-World War II era to Roland A. Dykes, Sr. and Elizabeth Carol Dykes in Newport, Tennessee. Trey was one of eight children born and raised in Newport and took pride in the fact that the Dykes family thrived for several generations in the City of Newport and Cocke County.

Roland Dykes III graduated from Cocke County High School in 1969 and left home to attend the University of Tennessee, Knoxville where he earned a B.S. degree in Business in 1974 and later earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Jacksonville University in 1989. This led to a very successful career in the private sector rendering his leadership skills to corporate giants such as: Xerox, DuPont Conoco (District Manager); AT&T Transtech (Project Manager); and Quaker Oats/Gatorade/PepsiCo (National Accounts Sales Manager).

After a very successful 35-year career in the private sector Roland Dykes III returned to Newport in 2014 to apply his skills and talent to voluntary community and public service. Since retiring he has been involved in the community as a 2013 graduate of, and current member of Leadership Cocke County. In addition, he is a 2019 graduate of the East Tennessee Regional Leadership program. A sample of the organizations he remains active in are:

- President of the Tanner Preservation Alliance, an organization dedicated to preserving the Tanner School Building. The school was the segregated facility for Black children in Cocke County prior to integration in 1965. This facility was damaged by a tornado in 2008 and stood empty before grass roots efforts organized to rehabilitate and repurpose the building in 2022. Today it is home to a satellite campus for Walters State Community College, as well as the Chamber of Commerce, a Senior Activities Center, the Cocke County Partnership, a small museum and an audio/visual room, and a state-of-the-art Welcome Center.
- President of the Tennessee Picnic Association, an organization dedicated to preserving the legacy of the 8th of August/Emancipation Day holiday in Tennessee. The holiday has been celebrated in Newport and the surrounding areas for more than 110 years.
- Recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League; a Member of the National Association of Black Mayors; served as Chair of the East Tennessee Development District; served as Chair of the Policy Council for the East Tennessee Human Resource Agency; and selected as Cocke County Citizen of the Year in 2022.

Roland Dykes III's public and community service (after retirement from the private sector) created the foundation for his venture into local elections. In 2016, Roland Dykes III was first elected Mayor of Newport and reelected to a second, four-year term in 2020. It is a significant achievement that he was twice elected Mayor of Newport, an east Tennessee city with a total population of 7,030 persons with a demographic profile of 4.3 percent African-American. This achievement is also significant because his father, Roland A. Dykes, Sr. served as Vice Mayor of the City of Newport and was sworn in as the first African-American Mayor of Newport in 1998 following the death of the incumbent Mayor. Several months later, Roland A. Dykes, Sr. was elected to the office of Mayor and served with distinction until 2005. Today, Roland Dykes III serves as Mayor in charge of 118 city employees representing 15 departments with a focus on preserving the historic downtown Newport; improving community and recreation facilities; and extending the downtown scenic river walk to enhance business development and tourism. What Roland Dykes III accomplished in the private sector and now the public sector is a clear declaration that the American Dream is still very much alive. Roland Dykes III is married to Rhonda and they will celebrate their 47th wedding anniversary on November 26. Roland and Rhonda have one son, Roland IV, who is blessed with a rich, family heritage and the opportunity to obtain his American Dream. The Beta Theta Boulè Foundation is honored to present the **2023 Fatherhood Excellence Award** to Roland A. Dykes III.

Roland A. Dykes III's enhanced profile can be found on our website: btbfoundationinc.org