**History of the Award**

The award is named for Mrs. Lucy Harth Smith (1888-1955), principal of Lexington’s Booker T. Washington Elementary School for 20 years, and Atwood S. Wilson (1895-1967), principal of Louisville’s Central High School for 29 years.

Mrs. Smith was a pioneer in promoting the study of Black History in the nation’s schools, having been both state and national president of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. She was also president of the Kentucky and National Association of Colored Women. The founder of a health camp for black children, she served on the Governor’s Committee of Youth and Children and on the executive board of the Kentucky Interracial Council.

Mr. Wilson was a long-time trustee of the Louisville Free Public Library and presented the resolution that abolished segregation of the races in Louisville’s main library; later all city libraries were desegregated. He was among the first three blacks to receive the Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award for service to boyhood and one of the first blacks in the nation to be elected to Phi Delta Kappa educational fraternity.

Both Mrs. Smith and Mr. Wilson were prominent in education association activities. Mrs. Smith was the second woman president of the Kentucky Negro Education Association (KNEA), as well as being a trustee of the American Teachers Association. For 20 years, Mr. Wilson was secretary-treasurer of KNEA and in 1957 was named by its successor organization, the Kentucky Teachers Association, as chairperson of the merger committee to carry out the uniting of KTA with the Kentucky Education Association.

The Lincoln Foundation Key Award for contributions to the education of blacks in Kentucky went to Mr. Wilson in 1941 and to Mrs. Smith in 1945. Nominees for the Lucy Harth Smith-Atwood S. Wilson Award for Civil and Human Rights in Education must be individuals or organizations who work or have worked in Kentucky.