

Historian's Corner



**Eric Gumm, MA,
MT-BC**

February is Black History month and to highlight Black History in our field, I am quite pleased to follow up the debut of this column with a spotlight on the documentary “For They Endured: A Look at the Roles and Identities of African American Women in Music Therapy“. It was created by music therapist Kamica King, MA, MT-BC as a part of her graduate research while at Texas Woman’s University. It features Fran Goldberg, MA, LM-FT, AMI, MT-BC, Deforia Lane, PhD, MT-BC, and two of our region’s own, Nellie Doty, MT-BC and June Pulliam, MA, MT-BC as they talk about their lives and careers having studied and/or entered the field during a time where many African Americans faced strong prejudice and discrimination in the U.S.

In this film, King set out to highlight and learn from these women’s journey as a way to inform her own, recognize their accomplishments and preserve black history within music therapy.

This past November, the film gained national attention with an advanced screening at the 2018 AMTA national conference where Kamica’s presentation was highlighted as a conference chair special selection.

Immediately following the screening, King moderated a panel discussion featuring Dr. Deforia Lane and Nellie Doty. The audience seemed to be humbled and inspired by the many achievements garnered, and sobered by the challenges faced by the music therapists. The Q and A session resulted in rich dialogue with the audience about past experiences, the current state of music therapy with regard to diversity and inclusion, ally-ship, and the future of our field.

With regard to the documentary, participants from the southwest region, Nellie Doty, MT-BC and June Collins Pulliam, MA, MT-BC, each have over four decades of experience in the field of music therapy. June was the first black president of the region and owned the first freestanding private practice in the state of Texas. Nellie became the second black

president of the region and was a recipient of the Southwestern Region Service Award. Both have been very active with SWAMTA and AMTA over the years.



Kamica King, MA, MT-BC, Nellie Doty, MT-BC, and Deforia Lane, PhD, MT-BC
Photo Credit: Keva Melvin



**June Collins Pulliam,
MA, MT-BC**

Did you know? African American music therapists make up 1.9% of the current music therapy workforce (King, 2018).

Following my viewing of the film, I felt a sense of pride and admiration. I’m proud to be a part of a field that produced the four women featured in it: Fran Goldberg, Deforia Lane, Nellie Doty and June Pulliam. Each of the interviewees also spoke about the accomplishments that they are most proud of. Fran conveyed that she is proud of introducing the term *music psychotherapy* and for innovating within GIM. For Nellie, who has been a mentor for decades, it is the students- and former students like Kamica King- of whom she is most proud as they are enhancing and expanding the field.

Going into the research, Kamica initially felt that these women endured certain hardships so that she, and others who look like her wouldn’t have to go through the same hardships. However, a new theme emerged from her present day experiences where Kamica realized that they endured so that she could also endure. She hopes this film will serve as an inspiration to all who view it and a platform to encourage more diversity in the field of music therapy.