

## Ernest Collins - Emeritus

Ernie grew up on a farm in Travis County, approximately seven miles southeast of Austin, Texas. The farm, located on Dee Gabriel Collins Road, has been owned and operated by members of the Collins family since the late 1800's and has been recognized by the state of Texas for owning and operating the farm for over 100 consecutive years. He is one of eleven children born to the late Talferd and Ella Collins. Hard work and education were top priorities for the family and all the children were supported and encouraged to take full advantage of educational opportunities. As a result, all eleven children graduated from high school and all attended college.

Ernie attended Prairie View A&M University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and has additional studies toward an MBA at Texas Southern University. Upon graduation, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army. While at Prairie View, Ernie met the lady of his dreams, Floretta Brown. Prior to reporting for officer's basic training in artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Ernie, and Flo were married in her hometown of Bay City, Texas.

He served two years in the Army as a training officer at Fort Ord, California, and was discharged as a 1st Lieutenant in 1969. Also in 1969, he joined Humble Oil and Refining Company, now ExxonMobil in Denver, Colorado. Ernie worked in various marketing staff and management positions and in 2003, he retired after 34 years of service.

Ernie is actively involved in the community as he serves as a Lifetime Director of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Director of the Soil and Water Conservation Board for Walker County, Board Member of 100 Ranchers organization, and Lifetime Member of the Land Owners Association of Texas. Collins serves as a CARET (Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching) Representative for Prairie View, and was the 2015 recipient of the 1890 Universities Career Exemplar Award by APLU (Association of Public Land-Grant Universities). He served as a Member of the Prairie View A&M University Capital Campaign Cabinet, Member of the Board of Directors for the H.S. Estelle 4-H and Youth Camp, member of Advisory Board for Capital Farm Credit. Ernie and Flo are strong supporters of youth and education and have established endowed scholarship funds at Prairie View A&M University and Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.

Ernie and Flo are the proud parents of three children, Leslie Collins-Thompson (Rod), Todd Jamal (Janelle), and Daryl Donovan (deceased). They are also proud grandparents of six: Taylor Floretta, Ross Lorenzo and Brooke Carlette Thompson, Sydney Rose, Ella Gabrielle, and Alston Ernest Collins.

In retirement, Ernie's top priorities are spending time at the family compound, Red Hill Ranch, with family and working with his grandchildren.