



OSCAR LEE "TOBY" DOWNS
Class of 1940

Oscar Lee (Toby) Downs of Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, played varsity football at Tuskegee from 1936-1939. He lettered in football three years. As a student he worked part-time as an aircraft parts inspector at Moton Field. He attained the rank of major in the ROTC and received his degree in industrial education in 1940. Later he earned the M.S. degree from Bradley University, in industrial education. He did further study at Northern Illinois and Western Michigan Universities.

After graduation from Tuskegee, Downs was one of the first black instructors in the National Defense Program at Tuskegee Institute, training men and women in the field of metal work, aircraft and shipbuilding.

He later became an assistant professor at Tuskegee in the School of Applied Science and retired from this position in 1981. He now works as a part-time instructor at Tuskegee. Downs also worked as an assistant coach and football scout for 38 years under the leadership of four coaches Abbott, Van Cleve, Smith and Scissum.

Downs is a trustee of St. John A. M. E. Zion Church; a charter member of the Optimist Club; treasurer of the Tuskegee Tiger Club; a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, the American Industrial Association, American Vocational Education Association and Boy Scouts of America, and is affiliated with Holiday Inns of America.

He organized a baseball team at Tuskegee Institute known as the "Raggedy Nine" which team fielded some outstanding players. He is a Lifetime Golden Tiger and has received numerous athletic and community service awards.