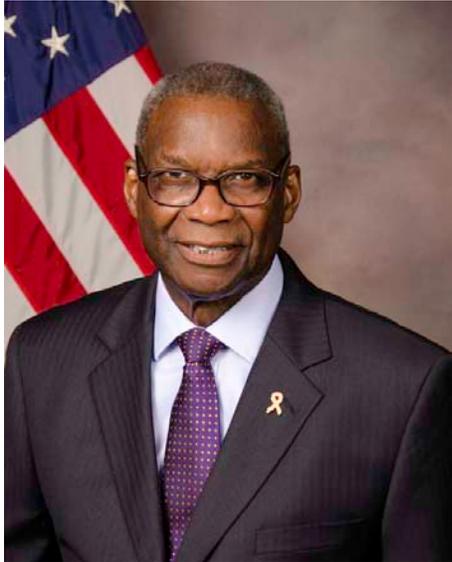


## Biography of Lieutenant General Julius W. Becton Jr., U. S. Army (Ret)



**Julius Wesley Becton, Jr.** was born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania on 29 June 1926. He joined the Army Air Corps in July 1944 and graduated from infantry Officer Candidate School in 1945. He joined the 93<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division in the Pacific at the end of WWII and was separated from the Army in 1946, but returned to service after President Harry S. Truman's executive order to integrate the U.S. Armed Forces in 1948. He went on to serve in the Korean War and the Vietnam War, eventually rising to the rank of Lieutenant General in 1978 and command of VII Corps, the Army's largest combat corps in Europe during the Cold War. Among his decorations were the Distinguished Service Medal, two Silver Stars, two Legion of Merit medals and two Purple Hearts, along with the Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of Germany.

Becton retired from the U.S. Army in 1983, after nearly 40 years of service. However, his public service career was far from over. From 1984 to 1985, he served as the Director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance in the United States Agency for International Development. He then served as the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency from 1985 to 1989 under President Ronald Reagan. In his mid-60s, Becton began a new career, that of education administrator. From 1989 to 1994, Becton was the fifth president of Prairie View A&M University, his alma mater. President Becton was the first graduate of Prairie View A&M University to attain flag rank in the military. In 1996, he became the Superintendent of the Washington, D.C. public school system.

Additionally, Becton served as a member of the American Battle Monument Commission during President George W. Bush's first term and the construction and dedication of the WWII Memorial. He has served as a member of the Federal District Court's oversight committee in the Federal case of Knight v. Alabama; as a trustee of the Marshall Foundation, Valley Forge Military Academy and College, Florida A&M University, and is currently a trustee for the American Public University System and the Association of the US Army (AUSA). He has served as a director on four corporate boards.

While on active duty, Becton graduated from Prairie View A&M College in 1960 with a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and from the University of Maryland in 1966 with a Masters Degree in Economics. He is also a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College, the Armed Forces Staff College and the National War College. Post his military service, Becton also received honorary doctorate degrees from Huston-Tillotson College, Muhlenberg College, Prairie View A&M University, The Citadel and Dickinson College.

His many honors include being named several times by *Ebony* magazine as "One of the 100 Most Influential Blacks in America." He has also received the Distinguished Service Award from AUSA and in 2007 he was selected to receive AUSA's highest award, the George Catlett Marshall Medal for being a 'soldier, combat commander, administrator, public servant,

government leader, and role model.’ In April 2008 the President of the University of Maryland selected him as the Outstanding Alumnus of the Year and in November 2008 he received the Raymond G. Davis Award for Distinguished Service in Korea. In 2009 he was presented the Golden Eagle Award for his contribution to national security by the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME).

His autobiography, *Becton: Autobiography of a Soldier and Public Servant*, was published in 2008 by Naval Institute Press, with a Foreword written by his wife of 63 years, Louise Thornton Becton. His book chronicles the highlights of their career and reveals the influences that contributed to their success. The Bectons are the proud parents of four daughters and one son. They have 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

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