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### Lois Carson (April 16, 2015)

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# Bridges That Carried Us Over Project

## Interview Summary

**Interviewee:**

Lois Carson

**Interviewer:**

Simone Hall

**Interview Date:**

April 16, 2015

**Interview Location:**

San Bernardino, CA

**Length:**

00:37:52

**Interview Summary completed by:**

Nadia Lathan, 2022.

Caroline Blanchard, 2024.

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**Description:**

Lois Carson discusses her involvement in founding the San Bernardino section of NCNW alongside Amina Carter in 1968. The organization primarily focused on serving Black women, however, it was deeply involved with sponsoring youth programs such as Checkmates and Creative Careers for Youth. She played a role championing other sections throughout Southern California, including Perris, Moreno Valley, High Desert, Orange County. Furthermore, she mentions how she conceptualized the idea for the Twinning Program and the importance of cross-cultural exchange with Africa. “Think globally, act locally” is a phrase that has guided her work throughout her life.

**Subject Topic:**

- Inland Empire (Calif.)
- San Bernardino (Calif.)
- Segregation
- Segregation
- Social Participation
- Wilma Amina Carter
- Mary McLeod Bethune

**Spatial Coverage:**

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
Bethune Youth Center	118 E Foothill Blvd. Rialto, CA 92376

**Temporal Coverage:**

1968-present

**Key Organizations:**

- National Council of Negro Women, Inc. (NCNW)
- Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America, Inc. (YWCA USA)
- Bethune Youth Center
- Checkmates

**Interview Index:**

Media Format	Time (hh:mm:ss)	Topic Discussed
Digital Video	00:01:04 – 00:04:50	The origins of NCNW and their service to Black women and their families.
Digital Video	00:04:00 – 00:05:10	Jim Crow laws in the North and the South.
Digital Video	00:05:10 – 00:06:29	Founded one of the sections of the NCNW in the Inland Empire.
Digital Video	00:06:29 – 00:10:27	The role the NCNW played and the reasoning behind being a local section within a national organization.
Digital Video	00:08:52 – 00:14:30	The impact the NCNW had on youth programs and the overall community.
Digital Video	00:14:30 – 00:16:01	Founded other IE sections of the NCNW in Perris, Moreno Valley, etc. did not receive pushback from local communities.
Digital Video	00:19:34 – 00:22:52	Work with the youth program, Checkmates.

Digital Video	00:25:48 – 00:28:30	Origins of Twinning Program with Senegalese and Togolese Women.
Digital Video	00:30:43 – 00:31:19	NCNW convenes every year for the Bethune Recognition Program.
Digital Video	00:33:25 – 00:34:00	Encourages youth to get involved at a local level with issues within their schools and communities and engage in conversations about current events.
Digital Video	00:34:00 – 00:37:52	Hope for future generations and the message left behind with the legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune.

**Related Materials:**

Additional oral history interviews are available from the Wilmer Amina Carter Foundation's 1“Bridges that Carries Us Over Project” on CSUSB ScholarWorks, <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/bridges/>.

**Full interview transcript can be found below.**

## Interview Transcript

### Start of Interview:

[00:00:00]

**Simone Hall** [00:00:12] OK, you all set? I'm set. OK, today's date is April 16th, 2015. My name is Simone Hall and I am interviewing Miss Lois Carson for the Archives in Black History in the Inland Empire Project. Her name is spelled first name L O I S last name C A R S O N correct correct? We are interviewing her here at her home in San Bernardino and San Bernardino, California. Thank you, Lois, for interviewing and taking time out to conduct this interview with us.

**Lois Carson** [00:00:49] You're most certainly welcome. I'm happy to do so.

**Simone Hall** [00:00:51] OK, perfect. So let me look at my notes here real quick. What can you tell me? There you go. What can you tell me about the National Council of Negro Women?

**Lois Carson** [00:01:04] Well, first and foremost, I love the organization. One of the reasons I love it is because it's for all women, regardless of educational status, income status or anything. Dr. Dorothy Height, our now deceased National President, used to say it's y'all come organization. And because I believe in inclusiveness, that's one of the things I admire about it. Secondly, it focuses on women, children and the families of uh these women. First of all, women and the communities in which these women live. And it's aimed at improving our life for women and their families and the communities they live in.

**Simone Hall** [00:01:48] OK, from what I understand, uh, the NCMW was active as a safe haven for women. Can you go into a little bit of detail about that?

**Lois Carson** [00:01:58] Well, not so much that as uh a collective voice for women. It was founded by Mary McLeod Bethune in 1955 at the Harlem branch of the YWCA. And she invited women who were heads of all the other national organizations at that time. And she indicated that we needed to have a stronger voice and presence at the seat of power, meaning Washington, D.C. And she entreated them to come together and form a council. They would still retain their individual identity, but for purposes of collective power, they would come together. And she used the uh...uh Example of if I touch you with one finger or you may not know you've been touched or two, but if I roll all my fingers up into a fist, we can feel a mighty blow. And with that, these other 18 organizations said, yes, we'll form the council. And it's been that way ever since. Today there are 36 organizations and they are called affiliates. So that's kind of uh the history and purpose of the organization.

**Simone Hall** [00:03:09] OK, so I understand you just explained uh why these the... Organize...this organization was founded, but how was it founded? How did everything uh come together to form the NCMW?

**Lois Carson** [00:03:21] Well, it was that initial meeting and when they voted at that time, it was founded, every organization endorsed it. And uh it has been that way ever since. So that's how they came together through an agreement to form this council. But the uh they still are a separative to figures but is together as a fist.

**Simone Hall** [00:03:44] OK, uhm give me two seconds to give me wits about me. Now, what were the times like? uh Can you go ahead and do go into a little bit of detail about the cultural uh time period and the social time period at the founding? uh yeah, At the founding?

**Lois Carson** [00:04:07] Well, of course uh, Jim Crow that was 1935 was pretty prevalent at that time, uhm very segregated in both the North and the South. In the north, it was de facto not by law, but by practice. In the south, it was in fact, it was a definite fact. Visible, separate drinking fountains, separate schools, separate everything. So those were the times. And uh there was very little in the way of political power on the part of black people. And it was pretty much for forward thinking for Mrs. Bethune to come up with that idea that we would be heard if we worked together, stood together.

**Simone Hall** [00:04:52] OK, now you. uhm You have founded several different chapters here in the Inland Empire. Do you want to tell me about the founders?

**Lois Carson** [00:05:09] Well I one of the founders of the we call them sections in the National Council of Negro Women as opposed to chapters. And the idea being when you break an orange open and you take out the sections of the orange. And With a with the idea that we were sections, you know, that it came from something bigger than that section and the orange is the organization. The section is the local chapters. And we were chartered in 1968 as uh a uh section here for the Inland Empire. And we carved out our recruitment territories, anything from Fontana to Redlands at that time. But you can live almost anywhere if you want to be a member here. We had had an organization here, a local club coalition, a base that we tried to do local uh civic work with. But when we found out that there was a national organization and we could be part of something bigger than ourselves, we disbanded the other organization and formed the Inland Empire section of the National Council of Negro Women.

**Simone Hall** [00:06:16] So why uh was there a need for the Inland Empire section, the National Council of Negro Women?

**Lois Carson** [00:06:21] Well, the same need as we had been serving all of these other little tiny local organizations to help youth, to uh help people in need to fight discrimination. Those were the same things that NC and W focused on. However, if we were part of a national organization, we would be getting guidance. We could, uh you know, go to meetings nationally, hear what other people are doing in other areas is just so much better. Being uh a local section of a national organization gets you to think globally, but to act locally.

**Simone Hall** [00:07:03] I love that phrase. hahaha I was trying to live my life like that. Now, what were these were some of the achievements of both uh the national chapter of the National Council of Negro Women and specifically the Inland Empire section.

**Lois Carson** [00:07:17] Well, nationally, we're involved in global politics as well. Now, in global service, we have twinning organizations in Africa, the Caribbean and uh even uh Asia, uh and they work on national kinds of problems like today would be uh income inequality, for example. It would be health care, affordable health care, those kinds of things. Locally, we decided that that we would focus in certain areas. Mrs. Bethune left a 10 point legacy to us and it begins with I leave you love. And here's where I leave you a responsibility for our young people. We took that last plank and made that our program for work. And we've had a youth program here ever since 1969. can you.. And right now we run the Bethune Youth Center over here on Foothill.

**Simone Hall** [00:08:14] Oh, wow. I did not know that.

**Lois Carson** [00:08:19] We've had a youth program continuously. Hasn't been the same youth program? But that's what we've had. And we work with the domestic violence. We run programs to train young people in order to get a job, finish high school so that they can have productive lives.

**Simone Hall** [00:08:35] OK, so is that can you tell me a little bit more about the youth programs?

**Lois Carson** [00:08:40] The Bethune Youth Center? We work at the present time. We work with young people 18 to 24. Oh okay, because that's kind of uh the invisible segment of the population. There isn't a whole lot for that group. They pretty much stand outside, you know, the body politic, the only part of the system that they know well is the police. They don't go to doctors. They drop out of school. They uhm don't belong to anything they don't vote. uh So they're just invisible to the population. Yet they are making babies and they can't take care of them. The young women mainly know the welfare department, the young men know the police. So we try to work with them to understand that you're part of this community. The community is here to support you, but you have to do your part to make the system work for you so that we work with them and we provide them with uh get help them get back into school, get their GED. We teach them how to develop a resume, how to dress, how to interview a job, uhm how to volunteer. uhm We take them to various things so that they understand what else is in their community . uhm Theater various things like that, just to engage them in the uhm community and hopefully they can be successful instead of ending up in prison or dead.

**Simone Hall** [00:10:18] Yeah umm so what's the biggest impact that you've seen on one of the youth that you've been serving these last years?

**Lois Carson** [00:10:27] Well, a number of finished college, a number of going into the military, a few of them are employed around here with a good jobs. Ummm it's been it's been very successful and uhh they're not. Elected officials or anything like that, yet they

are not doctors and lawyers yet because they have so far to come up, you know, that if they get a good job and they can support a family, that's success, really. If they finish high school, that's a success. And uhh so we work with those who are most in need. I work with another program that works with achievers. That's a whole different segment of the population. But these are much more in me.

**Simone Hall** [00:11:19] Can you discuss a little bit about the program you work with, with achievers as well?

**Lois Carson** [00:11:25] Well, that's not under the National Council of Negro Women no thats another.

**Simone Hall** [00:11:31] What other achievements or excuse me, what were some of the achievements made by the local uhh section in the inland empire of the National Council of Negro Women?

**Lois Carson** [00:11:44] Well, we umm. Have honored people who have done who have achieved women, mainly we all of them, and then eventually we umm started honoring men in the community for the things that they have done as well. We adopted a rule that option house for umm families of domestic violence, and we'd keep that room furnished and we make a lot of donations to them. We get involved in umm issues in the community. We go to city council and board of trustees, school board meetings to make sure that we're there to umm make our voices heard on behalf of women and families who can't be there, who don't have a voice yet. So I will focus most of our attention on the young people that we work with because we did vow that we would always focus on young people in our work.

**Simone Hall** [00:12:49] I appreciate that personally. Can you discuss a little bit about the uniqueness of the sections, the Inland Empire that you found, except some understanding that you just started just one, but several.

**Lois Carson** [00:13:03] Yeah, we uhh I personally sat on the national board for about mmm 12 years. I was national director of youth program based on our experiences with youth programs, that I became secretary nationally and then vice president. So I was on from the late 70s to the early 90s. I think I went off in 91, 92, something uhh like that. Umm but being part of that national organization, uhh we would go to the White House every time we had a convention. Remember, Bethune said you deal with power at the seat of power. And there were only two national conventions that were held in Washington, D.C., one of them in Los Angeles, where we received our charter. Thank God it was we were it just so happened that way. And the other was in Brooklyn, umm Harlem, New York, rather, where it was found at the Harlem branch of the YWCA for our fiftieth anniversary. But it it it it ties you in with the issues nationally. And you know that you're making an impact across the country, not just here, but here and there, you know.

**Simone Hall** [00:14:26] What was it like, how many sections did you start in the Inland Empire.



**Lois Carson** [00:14:30] Umm the Perris section, which is called Willie Mae Taylor section, Moreno Valley Section, High Desert, which includes Victorville and Barstow, Orange County, umm Pomona section. Those mainly were six of them in Riverside and Riverside sections.

**Simone Hall** [00:14:56] Were there any obstacles that you faced while starting these sections or any adversity or. Yeah, adversity from surrounding community.

**Lois Carson** [00:15:04] Mainly not because most of the women really wanted it. I think that the adversity that I worked hard to overcome was any kind of power struggle on the part of the women who would be leaders. Everybody wants to be leader. You know so mainly that was the only thing and we worked hard to kind of avert that, keeping everybody's eyes on the objective as opposed to the people. And then uhh trying to forestall that by having a workshop. Here's what you need in a leader to start a fledgling organization to make it grow. These are the kind of qualities. And so you get people to look at themselves and others and look for the best person to do that, as opposed to my friend, uh myself or whoever. That's not it. And that's not hard that's not easy to do.

**Simone Hall** [00:16:01] No

**Lois Carson** [00:16:01] It's very hard to do.

**Simone Hall** [00:16:02] I originally thought that there would be tension amongst uhh nonblack community members with the founding of the National uhh Negro Women Council.

**Lois Carson** [00:16:15] No and we're open to nonblacks to come into the organization. Mrs. Roosevelt was a member of the very first uhh when they organized in the New York. She went to one of the meetings at the Harlem branch of the YWCA. No president's wife would be able to go without security, you know, Secret Service people trickling in. But she was able to traverse after the meeting at that time. Not only that, it became international and Madam Pandit of India became a member of the National Council. So it's always been interracial. But they have to understand that our first priority is black women and their families. Now if you adhere to that agenda. Come on in. We want you. We need you. So we've always had nonblack members.

**Lois Carson** [00:17:03] But I'm I think it's so interesting to hear that the struggle was, in fact uhh a leadership struggle within the council itself between women.

**Simone Hall** [00:17:13] That's a woman thing and but you can offset that if you can get their eyes on the big picture opposed to the little picture and it wasn't big enough to make a big deal out of it, but we worked to well, my job is trying to get them organized was to try to avoid that. What some strategies that would get their attention elsewhere?

**Simone Hall** [00:17:38] Now, clearly, you have been uhh quite uhh a significant leader with the National Council and our local sections. And in a previous question, you your response? Indicated that there is some really good uhh guidelines and criteria a leader needs to start a fledgling organization. Can you discuss that a little bit?

**Simone Hall** [00:18:01] Well, you have to be knowledgeable, you have to know the organization that you're trying to sell, you have to be behave in a way that tells everybody, I buy this myself or you can't sell it to somebody else. If you don't buy it yourself, you have to act out the example that you're trying uhh to sell. Umm you have to be able to communicate well so that people understand, uhh not talk above their heads, but making sure that you are communicating. There's one thing to talk and speak, but there's another thing to umm communicate. Umm you have to have a kind of a track record so that people will believe what you're saying. You've been there, you've done some of those things. And I love all the organizing. Uhh I believe in group dynamics. You can get more done with a group than you can with an individual. And I think that that comes through that you're sincerely trying to do that. And you talk in terms of the leader is a servant. Here to do things not just to tell people what to do, but to do it yourself, and I think the servant leader comes through a lot better than the leader or leader.

**Simone Hall** [00:19:29] Now. I'm not sure what the next question

**Simone Hall** [00:19:34] I would like to just go back to that focus on youth, our very first youth program was called Checkmates and there was a program to teach young kids girls, mainly when we started in junior high school to be checkmates. And they were similar to candy strippers in major hospitals. And we did our volunteer work in convalescent hospitals. So they wore...They wore a checkered jumper and a white blouse so that they would stand out and people would know these are Checkmates. And we had a registered nurse whose husband was a doctor. She trained them and how to be checkmates in a hospital setting, how to be volunteers in a hospital setting. That was very successful. But then we had some girls who didn't really want to work in hospitals. So we ask Amina Carter to train them in office work. She was I think teaching office practice at night school and she was working for someone, and you know. So she trained our group of office Checkmates, and we had a black librarian who taught them to be library Checkmates. And we had a curriculum. We devised a curriculum for all of them. At this point, boys were saying they wanted to be part of that. So we integrated them and had boys and girls. The boys just wore a checkered shirt and that went on for a while. And nationally, about the height our national president was so impressed, we took Checkmates to Washington for the unveiling of the Mary McCleod Bethune statue in Washington, D.C. And when these people saw all these, all these kids would checkered outfits on. Who are they? What are they? Everybody across the country wanted to start Checkmates, and Dr. Height wanted to accommodate that. So I went to Washington many times and one of the staff and I wrote a grant to the Department of Labor to implement Checkmates nationwide. The Department of Labor kept telling us change this, modify that, do this. And by the time we got through that, it wasn't Checkmates at all, it was something else. Dr. Height said, keep Checkmates, but we'll

do what they want for this grant. And at that point, we created, it was a new program called Creative Careers for Youth. And Amina became the executive director of that program. So we had Checkmates and Creative Careers for Youth at that time. We never did get Checkmates implemented nationally, but we kept it to a point and it began to die off, so we focused on our other program. After Creative Careers for Youth, we were back on our own because, I think it was Reagan who became president and he cut out a lot of money from the Department of Labor. So that program went bye bye. We wrote another grant and we got what we have now, the Bethune Youth Center, and that's been there since 1984. So, yeah, we've been doing that.

**Simone Hall** [00:22:52] Almost 30 years. Congratulations.

**Simone Hall** [00:22:58] And we get funding from cities. San Bernardino, Rialto, some Department of Labor funding.

**Simone Hall** [00:23:08] Okay. Now, were there any other programs like Checkmates and the office program that the National Council of Negro Women started here in the Inland Empire?

**Simone Hall** [00:23:17] Well, not here in the Inland Empire because we would do all of that. National doesn't start anything anyway.

**Simone Hall** [00:23:24] Yeah

[00:23:24] They look to the local sections to do that. And there are other youth programs around the country, but they're not Checkmates, nor are they what we have over here. We've had a lot of people come and visit us to see our model, and some have gone on to get some Department of Labor funding. But their program still isn't exactly like ours. It's whatever meets the needs of their communities.

**Simone Hall** [00:23:49] How is your model influential? How was the model of your programs in the section here, influential to other chapters?

**Simone Hall** [00:23:58] Well, the fact that they didn't have anything in looking for something to do. But, you know, you don't want to just go to the meeting and sit around and have cookies and tea.

**Simone Hall** [00:24:08] Yeah.

**Simone Hall** [00:24:09] You want to do something. But many of them didn't know how to write grants. They didn't have skills yet to operate grants because it's one thing to get them. It's another thing to operate and keep them. And you got to be accountable to the government for the funding. You can't say you're going to spend it on this and you spend it on that. And so we had to train a lot of organizations in how you manage funding and how you reported out those kinds of things, how you keep records and things like that.

**Simone Hall** [00:24:44] So I'm hearing that the National Council of Negro Women, especially the Inland Empire sections, multiple sections, not only trained other organizations and other sections and how to properly conduct themselves, they help the youth, they had a founder who is a national member in a couple different positions. Are there any other huge achievements like that you care to discuss today? Or any achievements that you think you personally find significant?

**Lois Carson** [00:25:16] Me? That I did? Or that the national?

**Simone Hall** [00:25:18] I'm here to talk about the local sections, and I want to talk about you.

**Lois Carson** [00:25:24] One year. Let me tell you about when we started our international affairs. You know, I told you, Madam Pandit of India was an early member. And Dr. Height, our national president, used to go to international meetings in different countries around the world. And in 1975, when the United Nations declared a Decade for Women, have you heard of that?

**Simone Hall** [00:25:47] Yes.

**Lois Carson** [00:25:48] And they called for a meeting in Mexico City. Some of us went from the National Council of Negro Women. So we would be there because we do have a we have what they call a status as a national, non-governmental organization at the United Nations because Mrs. Bethune was at the founding of the United Nations, so we've always had this status, a non-governmental organization, what they call an NGO there. Anyway, a number of us went to Mexico for the first U.N. Decade for Women. And we met these African women from different African countries, and particularly in particular, these groups were from Senegal and Togo. And they told us that when they come to the United States, they never got to meet black women. They only they were the guests of white women. And they never got to meet any black. They heard that there were black people in the United States, but they never met any. And you know Dr. Height said, well, we'll take care of that. So we wrote a grant to the State Department for and proposed a program called The Twinning Program, where we would twin the National Council with women's organizations in Africa. And we particularly cited these women we had met in Mexico City, the Union of Togolese Women and the Federation of Senegalese Women. These were organizations in those countries. So we wrote up something where we would bring them here and then we would go there to visit them in their countries. And when the National got that grant to come here, they sent out a communique to all of the sections saying, if you would like for these women to visit your area, write us a proposal of what you would do with them if they were here. And I wrote the proposal for our group here and I got the University of California at Cal State San Bernardino, to indicate that they would be there to help us with this because the women were French speaking. We had one member in our section who grew up in Louisiana and was taking French at Cal State and spoke French very well. So we cited her as someone who would help us communicate with these women. And we told them where

we would take them, what we would do, what they would see if they were here, and we were selected to host them here. I got the university to translate all of our booklets and programs into French.

**Simone Hall** [00:28:31] Oh, good.

**Lois Carson** [00:28:31] So that they would understand what they were reading. We had receptions for them, the mayor welcomed them and all of that. So needless to say, I got picked to be in a reciprocal group going there.

**Simone Hall** [00:28:43] Oh, wow.

**Lois Carson** [00:28:43] My first trip to Africa.

**Simone Hall** [00:28:45] And what was that like for you?

**Lois Carson** [00:28:48] Fantastic. And I have been back eight times since.

**Simone Hall** [00:28:54] Wow. Couldn't stop. I don't believe you.

**Lois Carson** [00:28:54] So those are the other kinds of things that being part of a national organization gets you locally into. We would have never had those kinds of experiences. And look at what we brought to the community. The community had never had anything like that before. We got involved in the NCNW.

**Simone Hall** [00:29:18] And that's something else. Oh, what. Yes, well, OK, sorry, I thought I was trying to save the day. Is there anything else that you would like to say regarding the Inland sections for the National Council of Negro Women or just anything you would like to say today?

**Lois Carson** [00:29:38] Well, we are still working very hard. We do various things to raise funds so that we can serve the community better. We are a working organization. We don't do balls. We do have membership teams. And that's about the most social thing that we do. But mostly we work and we go to meetings still and address people in power. We speak to power all the time about issues locally. During the sixties, you know, when there was lots of turmoil, we were engaged in discussions to learn to live with our neighbors and seeking racial harmony. And we still are engaged in similar kinds of things because it's not over yet. We haven't won that war yet.

**Simone Hall** [00:30:36] Now, how active are the chapters and are the sections excuse me, in the Inland Empire today?

**Lois Carson** [00:30:43] All of them work pretty hard. We come together every year in what we call the Bethune recognition program, where we all come together and we rotated. Victorville might host in one year Inland Empire might host it another year. Orange County might host it so that. We're all sponsoring it together and it shows how

we can work together and we're moving towards regionally doing more together so that we can help each other from San Diego to Ventura and everything in between.

**Simone Hall** [00:31:21] Now, I'm sure you've been keeping up with recent events and well, this is no nothing new for the black community. We haven't seen a lot of it on the news in other forms of media regarding racial discrimination and cop beatings of black people, black women, that beatings of black women and killings, unjustified police shootings of black women often go undiscussed, black men mainly, but also black women too.

**Lois Carson** [00:31:53] It's a minefield for black men in America. Yeah, I mean, you don't know when you're going to get blown up if you step on the wrong thing and every mother, you know, dreads when her son leaves home because she's not sure whether you want to come back alive or not. I have four sons, so I can tell you I know what that's like. But with black women, it's the income inequality working for such little pay. Doctor Height used to say black women don't need more work. They need more money for the work that they do. Yes. And because we were hard working people and have always been at the bottom of the ladder lifting everybody else up, but not going up equally ourselves. So we always are going to be working on that situation. But we don't just think about ourselves and our needs. We're there to support black men, our black youth as well, and lift everybody.

**Simone Hall** [00:32:53] Now, speaking of the youth, how would you like to see the youth in this community very specifically address issues such as income inequality and police brutality?

**Lois Carson** [00:33:06] Well, it depends on their age. If they're still in school and in high school, we want them to focus on grades, you know, work.

**Simone Hall** [00:33:13] But this issue affects high school students as well

**Lois Carson** [00:33:15] Well they they have to engage in that through their families. So we focus on that family. When my kids were small, I had them in the marches where we would be marching with picket signs. My kids were right there with those. So that's how they learn the issues by doing it. And around the dinner table, we would talk about, you know, what's going on in the world and things like that, what's going on at their schools. They can work on those things in the settings where they are. If there are problems at school, get engaged in that and show some leadership and but. That's it has to be appropriate to their age and the way they look at the world on their own, but they must do something. Must do something.

**Simone Hall** [00:34:01] What are your hopes for the youth in the Inland Empire? How would you like to see them progress? What do you hope our future is?

**Lois Carson** [00:34:13] Well, I hope their parents will lead and guide them and where the parents are deficient in doing that, I hope that the National Council of Negro Women

can step in there and what they call in loco parentis will stand there with them and that and just want to see them visible in community, engaged in community. And we have to really work hard at that because there's not enough for young people. There's very little funding. Many times they want to be involved in something, but they have no transportation to get there. So we have to always focus on the family so that the family can help the children. It's hard to ask, but we just keep plowing at it without looking at how hard it is and keep chipping away at that mountain.

**Simone Hall** [00:35:13] Now. This might seem like a simple question to ask answer, but for some people, especially people who might be watching this interview everyday, simple question, it's kind of hard to begin the steps to becoming a part of any sort of organization. So how does one become a member of the National Council of Negro Women?

**Lois Carson** [00:35:40] Well, hopefully we are out there visible enough so they can just come up and say, I like that organization and we go to all kinds of community meetings and where people are, like the Mayor's Status of Women conference, we were there with a table to recruit people. We go into the low income communities and community centers to find women, especially Low-Income Women, because middle class women are going to find things. It's people who are struggling every day to feed their kids and wonder where the next buck is going to come from there. Certainly not thinking about organization, but we should be thinking about them and we should go where they are, not wait for them to come to where we are. Food setters, food banks, where people go to get food, places like that. We should be there talking to people and telling them we need you. What do they bring to an organization? They bring the experience of struggling every day somewhat successfully. They're surviving. And so they have to understand they have skills and talents to bring to it too. We're not just doing something for you, but it's reciprocal.

**Simone Hall** [00:36:57] What is the legacy that you hope to leave with the National Council of Negro Women?

**Lois Carson** [00:37:04] Having lived out the legacy of Mrs Bethune. I leave you love, I leave you faith, I leave you hope in our future, I leave you respect for the use of power. I don't remember them all, but the last one I leave you responsibility to our young people if I can live that out that legacy enough.

**Simone Hall** [00:37:27] Well, thank you. Is there any parting words that you would like to say?

**Lois Carson** [00:37:31] No, thank you. And I think it's wonderful what the media is doing for this community with these archives,

**Simone Hall** [00:37:38] Well I'm sure she thinks it's wonderful what you've done for the community. Thank you very much. OK, let me go ahead and end this interview. So thank you, Lois Carson, so much for this interview.

**End of Interview:**

[00:37:52]