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Collection 552
Rebecca R. Mitchell (1927-2021) Papers

By William Buie
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Biography

On April 11, 1927 Rebecca R. Mitchell was born in Wilkesboro, North Carolina to William Henry and Ella Rousseau. She attended Lincoln Heights School in Wilkesboro, one of the 5,300 schools built with the support of Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington's Rosenwald Fund which matched the funds raised by the community for building construction. After World War II, Rebecca and Richard Mitchell, her husband, moved to Trenton.

While in New Jersey, she attended Livingston College and earned a Bachelor's degree in Community Development and Urban Planning. She subsequently went on to Rider University and earned a Master's degree in Public Administration. Professionally, Mitchell spent most of her career in service to the city of Trenton. She was a manager for the Trenton Housing Authority as well as a relocation specialist for some of the city's urban renewal projects. She was also an urban planner for Trenton's Model Cities Program. Eventually, she became the first African American woman to serve as bureau chief for the Department of Housing and Development and Neighborhood Planning. In her personal life, Mitchell attended Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton and was an active member of the church community. She served on the board of directors for the Trenton Ecumenical Area Ministry and the Trenton NAACP.

Rebecca R. Mitchell passed away on March 5, 2021. She was 93.

Scope and Content

This collection features materials that document Rebecca Mitchell's undergraduate education at Livingston College and graduate studies at Rider University. Researchers will also find writings and research materials related to her professional career. Record types in this collection include books, documents, news clippings and excerpts, photographs, reports, and notes on flash cards or

loose-leaf paper. Those interested in Mitchell's academic development, her early professional career, and arguments concerning urban renewal in Trenton will find this collection useful.

Arrangement

The majority of records in this collection were delivered to the archive in manila envelopes. The cover of each envelope has handwriting that provides context for the group of documents therein. Documents have been removed from the manila envelopes but the groupings have been maintained.

Series Description

Series 1. Academic Papers, 1965-1984

This series contains syllabi, research papers as well as supporting news clippings, excerpts, and other documents from Mitchell's time at Livingston College and Rider University.

Series 2. Professional Papers, 1963-2004

The majority of records in this series were not created by Mitchell but rather acquired by Mitchell in order to support her professional activities. The series is comprised of a book, booklets, graphs, news clippings, and reports. Those interested in some of the information resources that Mitchell had at her disposal will find material to review in this series.

Series 3. Books, 1971-1984

This series is comprised of five books and a three-ring binder containing a report titled "A Comprehensive Planning Process for Trenton."

Series 4. Photographs, n.d.

This series contains photographs and negatives of various buildings and scenes around Trenton. The series contains more negatives than photographs.

Container List

Box	/	Folder	/	Folder Title
1	/	1	/	Photographs, n.d.
1	/	2	/	Livingston College Papers, 1972
1	/	3	/	Livingston College Papers, 1972-1974
1	/	4	/	Livingston College Papers, 1972
1	/	5	/	Rider College Papers, 1965-1984
1	/	6	/	Rider College Papers, 1973-1984
1	/	7	/	Rider College Papers, 1981-1982
2	/	1	/	Professional Papers, n.d.

- 2 / 2 / Professional Papers, n.d.
- 2 / 3 / Professional Papers, 1963-2004
- 3 / / Books, 1971-1984

Provenance

Material donated by daughter [Acc. # 2022.022]