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National Museum of African American History and Culture

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Honored Guest

[[image - BILLY DEE WILLIAMS]]

While his acting roles have greatly varied, there has always been one constant—the special electricity generated by the presence of Billy Dee Williams on the screen.

His versatility as a performer has enabled him to draw a wide audience, the result of film roles in which Williams' interest has been "in heroes that reach a cross-section of people." An essential part of this interest has been a concern for presenting positive black characters. This has been evidenced in Williams' previous portrayals of Gayle Sayers in "Brian's Song"; a legendary black baseball player in "The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings"; composer Scott Joplin in a television special and Martin Luther King in the Play, "I Have a Dream."

However, it was in the film, "Lady Sings the Blues," that Williams' unique magnetism set his reputation as a "romantic" hero, when, as Lou MacKay, he emerged suddenly from the shadows at the door of a Harlem nightclub, a sight which elicited an audible sigh from many females in the audience.

His more recent film parts include that of a decoy cop in "Hawks" in which he starred Sylvester Stallone and that of Lando Calrissian in the "Star Wars" sequel, "The Empire Strikes Back."

A New York City native, Williams' acting debut was at the age of seven on Broadway in the musical, "The Firebrand of Florence." Several years later he attended the city's High School of Music and Art, where ironically, his first love was painting which he pursued further on a scholarship to the National Academy of Fine Arts and Design. He resumed acting as an extra on live television programs such as "Lamp unto My Feet" as a way of paying for his paints and canvasses, but as Williams worked with other talents such as Paul Muni and Angela Lansbury and studied with others such as Sidney Poitier and Jerome Robbins, his appreciation of the craft resurfaced.

Today, he is a member of the board of directors for the American Film Institute. His future plans include producing and directing as well as continuing with his acting. Williams' plan is "to do it all!"

1983 Recipient of The Seagram Vanguard Society Award
[[image - EUGENE L. McCABE]]

Two concerns have governed Eugene L. McCabe's presidency of North General Hospital in Harlem—a desire to see the hospital remain an integral part of the community's life, and the health care needs of the residents of central and East Harlem.

North General Hospital is a non-profit, teaching institution affiliated with the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, which faced severe financial difficulties threatening its very existence before McCabe took charge. Through close work with public officials, civic and religious leaders, community groups and other concerned citizens, he helped to secure public and private funding for the hospital, a challenge he was well



prepared for because of his expertise in the areas of administrative management and fiscal affairs.

The success of his efforts has resulted in keeping North General Hospital and the 1600 jobs it provides for Harlem residents in the community, as its largest private employer with an annual operating budget of \$45 million.

In another instance, all of New York City, benefited from McCabe's expert skill during its fiscal crisis of the mid-1970's, when, as staff director of the Governor's Commission, he centralized lobbying efforts and created and developed a convincing informational campaign which gained public support for the city's successful request for \$2.5 billion in Federal loan guarantees.

Prior to his becoming the Chief Executive Officer at North General, McCabe was Regional Director for DeLeuw Cather/Parsons and Associates directing the activities of the company's New York staff in a \$2 billion rail transportation project. His previous spots have also included Deputy Director for the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, and Administrative Manager for Community Progress, Inc., in New Haven, Conn.

Involved in numerous community, educational and health industry activities, McCabe is presently a member of the Board of Governors of the Greater New York Hospital Association, a board member of the Helene Fuld School of Nursing, Chairman, Health Committee, Uptown Chamber of Commerce in Harlem and a member of the New York Urban League's Health Task Force.

The National Urban League Guild is pleased to extend its congratulations to Eugene McCabe for his valuable contributions to the improvement of health care services for Harlem residents, and for his overall commitment to the community's economic and social progress, as the recipient of the 1983 Seagram Vanguard Society Award.



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