



Ensign George C. Cooper

1916 – 2002

Inducted 2004

George C. Cooper was a member of the “Golden Thirteen,” the first thirteen African American officers commissioned by the United States Navy. Throughout his career, he faced considerable prejudice because of his race, yet maintained an unshakable commitment to treating everyone the way he wanted to be treated himself. Paul Stillwell’s book called *The Golden Thirteen* chronicles some of the episodes of racism that these pioneering black officers faced, such as sailors crossing the street rather than offering the appropriate salute to an officer. During his time in the Navy, and later working for the city of Dayton as the first black department director, he served as a valued mentor for other African Americans. Mr. Cooper believed in the responsibility to help others and was able to use his interaction with others as an opportunity to lead them to judge him not by the color of his skin but as a human being.

*The Dayton Region Walk of Fame is located on both sides of West Third Street between Shannon and Broadway streets and on Williams Street in the Wright Dunbar Historic District of Dayton, Ohio.
More information can be found at daytonregionwalkoffame.org*