

The young Paul Ogden learned from examples set by his father that it is every person's moral responsibility to do what is in their power to bring about justice to all human beings. A minister who took seriously his calling to serve others, Dunbar Ogden Jr. showed his son that standing up for unpopular causes can be dangerous, and takes courage.

In 1957, three years after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that school segregation was illegal, nine African American students tried to enter Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., where they were met by an all-white mob, as well as members of the National Guard, who were determined to block them. Leading this small band of frightened youngsters was Pastor Dunbar, who was there because none of the other religious leaders in the city were willing to face the hostile crowd. Thanks to the intervention of a team of NAACP lawyers, the students were allowed to enter the school through a side entrance. One year later, Dunbar Ogden again served as an escort to Central High School -- this time to The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. -- who was there to witness one of the brave African American students who broke down barriers the year before receive a high school diploma.

But before Paul Ogden could carry on in his father's footsteps as an advocate for others, he faced discrimination himself. After attending a residential school for deaf students in St. Louis, Mo., for his elementary education, Ogden returned home to his place of birth, Charleston, W.Va., to attend Stonewall Jackson High School. His excitement at being back home with his family was tempered by the callousness of some teachers who refused to permit him to attend their classes because they weren't were not willing to stand at the front of the classroom and let him lipread their lectures. The boy was devastated by this insensitivity, but through his determination to learn, he graduated, the only deaf person in his class, and was named co-valedictorian as well. Belatedly, he received a letter of profuse apology from one of the teachers who had denied him a seat in his class.

Ogden went on to earn a degree from Antioch College in Ohio, best known since its founding in 1850 as an oasis of learning for all people seeking higher education, regardless of race or gender. Its motto: "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity." He continued his studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he earned master's and doctoral degrees.

Thus began a career dedicated to advocacy for deaf children. Ogden became a professor at California State University, Fresno, retiring after almost 40 years as professor emeritus of deaf studies. During this time he gained a reputation as a peerless educator and mentor. He was voted Outstanding Professor of the Year at the university in 1995, and placed second for the same award for the entire 23-campus California State University system. Many of Ogden's students reported that they accomplished things they never dreamed possible because of his inspiration. His illustrious career was recognized by the California Educators of the Deaf, who conferred upon him a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Ogden's knowledge in the field of deaf education has made him a highly sought presenter at conferences and workshops. His books have received worldwide recognition, including praise from former First Lady Barbara Bush, who invited him to the White House after reading *Chelsea: The Story of a Signal Dog*. The accomplishment he is most proud of is *The Silent Garden: Raising Your Deaf Child*, co-written with deaf colleague David H. Smith and published by Gallaudet University Press. Now in its third edition, the book has been an incomparable resource for 30 years, providing parents, teachers, and others the tools they need to help a deaf child reach his or her fullest potential.

In recommending him for an honorary degree from Gallaudet, the University's nominating committee wrote, "Dr. Ogden is an exemplary example of what it means to be a successful Deaf leader who inspires people to pursue their passions so they, too, can be a source of encouragement to others. In other words, his circle of influence continues to widen over the years as the ever-expanding ripples encompass other people affected by his teachings and writings. He truly exemplifies the values, contributions, and achievements worthy of this distinction."

For his exceptional leadership, vision, contributions, and empathy to others, Paul Ogden is a beacon of hope that clearly shows the good that perseveres. Gallaudet is therefore deeply honored to confer the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, to Dr. Paul W. Ogden.