



## Merze Tate, Educator

Vernie Merze Tate was born on a farm in Michigan, on June 27, 1927. Her great-grandparents had migrated to Michigan from Ohio after receiving land through the Homestead Act.

She was the valedictorian of her high school. She was an honors graduate of what is now Western Michigan in 1927, yet Tate had difficulty finding employment in the state. At that time, Michigan would not hire African American teachers in its secondary schools.

From 1927 to 1932, she taught high school history and civics in Indianapolis and in 1935 became a history instructor and dean of women at Barber-Scotia College in North Carolina. In 1936, she became the history and social science department chairman at Bennett College for women, also in North Carolina, where she taught four years. She also spent a year at what is now Morgan State University, where she taught political science and was dean of women, before joining the Howard faculty. Whilst teaching, Tate took a part-time master's degree at Columbia. In 1932, she won an Alpha Kappa Alpha scholarship to study at Oxford University where she took a B.Litt. in International Relations in 1935. She matriculated as a Home Student of St Anne's College, and was the first African-American woman member of Oxford University. Subsequently, she gained a Ph.D. from Harvard.

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Later in her life, she was a world traveler and international correspondent for an African American publication. She visited the White House annually including meetings with Eleanor Roosevelt. She never married or had children.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1996/07/08/diplomatic-historian-merze-tate-dies-at-91/8afda8e3-6561-4c94-be9f-ba41e867ac48/?utm\\_term=.1d5ae7d00d9a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1996/07/08/diplomatic-historian-merze-tate-dies-at-91/8afda8e3-6561-4c94-be9f-ba41e867ac48/?utm_term=.1d5ae7d00d9a)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merze\\_Tate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merze_Tate)