

# ARKANSAS BLACK HISTORY



Image courtesy of Encyclopedia of Arkansas

Education and activism were driving forces in the life of Edomae Boone Watson. Born near Augusta, Arkansas (Woodruff County), she received the equivalent of a high school diploma from Shorter College, North Little Rock (Pulaski County) and then a bachelor's in education from Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal School (AM&N), now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB). In Jonesboro (Craighead County), Watson taught at the segregated Industrial High School, later known as Booker T. Washington High School, where she was awarded Teacher of the Year in 1931. Watson played a significant role in founding the Head Start program and integrating the school system in Jonesboro. Watson was appointed by Arkansas Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller to the state's Early Childhood Commission and served on the executive board of the Day Care and Child Development Council of America in Washington, D.C. In 1984, a community center located where the Industrial High School had stood was named in her honor, acknowledging her many civic contributions.



ARKANSAS  
HERITAGE

