

2009 Hall of Fame Inductee

“Mama Lisa” M. Gage

Class of 1980

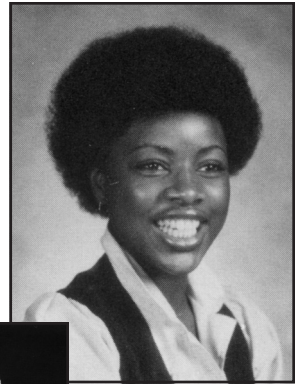
The president, founder and artistic director of Fundisha Enterprises (FundishaEnterprizes.org), “Mama Lisa” Gage offers lessons on the rhythm of life as a passionate expert in dance, drumming, storytelling, craft and oral history who shares her talents in order to empower her middle school classroom math students and community through the preservation of African cultural education.

A 1980 graduate from University City High School, Gage received her bachelor’s degree from Harris Stowe State College and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) from Webster University. Her credits include working with Afi Ama Folk Performing Company, Unity Art Ensemble, Non-Stop Reggae, Grupo Atlantico of Columbia, Drums N Harmony, Cambooley, Mc Cree Theatre of Michigan, Umoja African Arts Company of Pittsburgh,

Us Players of St. Louis University, and the St. Louis Black Repertory Company; collaborating with poet laureate, Shirley LeFlore, jazz great J.D. Parran and BAG, as well as, Dunham choreographer Theodore Jamison, and folk masters Kasa Panzu (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Donald Dorcilus (Haiti), and Oswald Moses (Trinidad); and participating in local youth projects sponsored by the St. Louis Public and County Schools, St. Louis County Libraries, St. Louis Art Museum, Kilalo Rites of Passage and Community Women Against Hardship, among others. Her portrait hangs inside and outside of the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park.

Gage’s skills and amazing talents have also been preserved on film in documentaries done for cable, “Mama Lisa Teaches Kwanzaa” and “Changing Times: Teen Talent.”

Mama Lisa serves as an instructor of African Cross-Cultural Studies at Lindenwood University and as department chair of mathematics at Normandy Middle School. She also served as a tenured teacher for the School District of University City. Her many awards and honors include the Griot Gala & Tribunal Honors Award in 2005 and the Salute to Excellence in Education Award in 2008 from the *St. Louis American*.



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