On Campus

# Trustees Establish Professorship in Honor of Kenneth and Kareitha Forde

Fall 2021



Courtesy of CUIMC

**The members of Columbia's Board of Trustees** have established an endowed professorship in honor of the late Columbia physician Kenneth A. Forde '59VPS and his wife of sixty years, Kareitha "Kay" Forde, in the African American and African Diaspora Studies Department.

Forde, who taught clinical surgery at the medical campus for more than forty years, conducted groundbreaking research on colon cancer and pioneered the use of endoscopy as a diagnostic and surgical tool. One of Columbia's first African-American surgeons, he became a University Trustee after his retirement in 2006 and was a powerful advocate for minority students and faculty members.

Forde died in June 2019, two years after losing his wife, a nurse who worked with him to promote public awareness of cancer screening and prevention.

“Ken was a giant among Trustees,” says Trustees co-chair Lisa Carnoy ’89CC. “His judgment, counsel, and love for Columbia set a high bar for all of us. And he did not shy away from issues of race, racism, equity, and inclusion, sharing stories from his life and advocating for others. When Ken passed, there was a groundswell among the Trustees to do something in his and Kay’s honor.”

The inaugural incumbent of the Dr. Kenneth and Kareitha Forde Professorship of African American and African Diaspora Studies is Steven Gregory, a Columbia anthropologist who writes about the intersection of race, gender, and class in modern politics.



Guide to school abbreviations

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