

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** Debbie Smith High School  
**Date:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 12:01:05 PM

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Good Morning,

I would like to voice my support for the naming of Hug High School to be renamed Debbie Smith High School. Debbie Smith has been a trusted and respected leader for Nevada and the educational system. Education should always be our number one goal when looking to the future. Debbie Smith has always made it a priority and is deserving of this honor. We all know that without critical funding for our educational system we are doing a disservice to our youth and future leaders. Debbie Smith has been a driving force for additional funding in the Assembly and Senate. We can now honor her hard work and dedication with her name on this school.

As a candidate for Washoe County School Board Trustee I see that additional funding is keeping the District from it's full potential. . With leaders like Debbie Smith we come closer to becoming a model for other districts in the country. Funding is the key for success and Debbie Smith has worked very hard towards that goal. We can support and honor her commitment by naming this school for her. The young people of today are our future for tomorrow and they need the proper education and tools to take on the task.

I would have preferred to make this statement in person at the School Board meeting but will be unable to attend. I will be attending the City of Reno Tenant Issues and Concerns Advisory Board meeting. As a member of that board along with the Reno Ward 4 Advisory board and the Washoe County Senior Services board I know the importance of working hard for a cause. Debbie Smith has shown this commitment and should be honored.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Mark Miranda

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** Debbie Smith CTE Academy  
**Date:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 1:27:30 PM

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Dear School Naming Committee,  
Please allow me to recommend you name the new career and technical high school after the incomparable Debbie Smith. She had such a beautiful influence on our community and I add my vote to the many that believe this tribute to her memory is well-deserved.  
Thank you very much, Valarie Rider

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Valarie Rider, Proprietor  
Heirloom Gardens

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** School Name - Debbie Smith CTE Academy  
**Date:** Sunday, February 2, 2020 1:37:40 PM

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Hello,

I respectfully request that the contribution Debbie Smith made to education in Nevada be commemorated with the naming of the CTE Academy in her name, Debbie Smith CTE Academy.

Thank you for considering!

Best,  
Catherine Schmidt

[REDACTED]

**From:** [Judy Lancing](#)  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** School Naming  
**Date:** Monday, February 3, 2020 10:37:00 AM

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Please strongly consider “Debbie Smith” when naming the new technical school to be built at the current Hug site.

Debbie Smith was a huge factor in getting this whole project off the ground.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** School Naming Committee letter  
**Date:** Monday, February 3, 2020 1:09:51 PM

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Representing Debbie Smith's birth family, the Bilbrey family I am writing to request the naming committee stand by their original decision to name the repurposed Hug High School campus the Debbie Smith CTE Academy.

We were surprised and disappointed that the School Board rejected the recommendation of the naming committee as the process was comprehensive, transparent, thorough , and fair. We see no reason or new information that would validate removing Debbie's name from the recommendation. The community had plenty of time to log their input, submit letters and speak at the committee meeting.


I would also like to say that Debbie's hallmark trait as a legislator and community leader was to not "flinch" when it came to making the tough decisions. Debbie was known for her courage to make the right decision and accept the push back from those who disagreed with her. We feel the naming committee stood tall in making their earlier decision and we ask that you reaffirm your process and decision on Wednesday.

We appreciate your hard work and dedication to your community. Respectfully submitted,

**Bruce Bilbrey**

[REDACTED]

Always Be Humble and Kind,

**From:**   
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: For WCSD School Naming Committee Review: in consideration of School Naming, and in support of Dolores Feemster  
**Date:** Monday, February 3, 2020 3:22:53 PM  
**Attachments:** [rgj\\_article\\_dolores\\_feemster.pdf](#)

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Re: Dolores Feemster, Background  
RGJ Article:

Dear School Naming Committee,

With sincere gratitude for all of your efforts and hard work in this school naming process, my family is tremendously appreciative.

I would like to ask you to review the attachment (text body below), which is an RGJ article about my Grandmother, released shortly after she passed away.

I hope this article gives you more insight on Mrs. Feemster's work.

Thank you again, for all of the hard work each of you are doing to establish the "right fit for this CTE.

[Anjeanette Damon](#), [adamon@rgj.com](mailto:adamon@rgj.com)

Published 5:15 p.m. PT May 27, 2018 | Updated 12:16 p.m. PT June 4, 2018

Dear trustee members,

Attached is a beautiful article that was written about my grandmother, Dolores M. Feemster. This article really captures a lot about my grandmother work in the community. The work I believe will inspire future generation.

I thought it would be helpful in guiding your decision.

[Anjeanette Damon](#), [adamon@rgj.com](mailto:adamon@rgj.com) Published 5 15 p.m. PT May 27, 2018 Updated 12 16 p.m. PT June 4, 2018

Dolores Feemster returns to her seat after receiving a Community Award at the Martin Luther King Memorial Service on Sunday, Jan. 17, 2010.(Photo: David B. Parker/RGJ, David B. Parker/RGJ)Buy Photo

**Update Monday June 4: A memorial service for Dolores Feemster** will be at noon Saturday at the **Reno-Sparks Convention Center** on South Virginia Street.

**A reception will be held immediately after the service in the cafeteria at the Hug High School, on Sutro Street.** Feemster was a longtime counselor at the school.

**Original story: There seemed to be no end to the number of people Dolores Feemster could be a mother to.**

She gave birth to 12 children in her 89 years of life, but her clan stretched well beyond that.

As a counselor at Hug High School, she helped countless children find a safe place to learn and earn a diploma.

As a community activist she helped galvanize civic leaders to build affordable housing for abused women, senior citizens and families in need.

As a civil rights activist, she marched, painted over racist signs in the night, helped integrate Reno's schools and volunteered years of service to the NAACP.

So, it's no wonder that in the hours since her death Friday morning— the day after her 89th birthday— that many are remembering her not only as the Feemster matriarch, but as the Reno "community's mom."

"When you think of community involvement, you think of Dolores," said her long-time friend Bertha Mullins. "When you think of young people, you think of Dolores. Especially when you think of Hug High School, you think of Dolores. Over the years she gave so much."

Born in Reno in 1929 to a white father and a black mother, Feemster lived briefly in communities throughout Nevada-- Winnemucca, Gardnerville, Elko-- before she settled in a modest house on the corner of 10th and Sutro streets in northeast Reno.

That small brown house became a neighborhood hub, a landing pad for teenagers, a place for a warm meal and good advice and a headquarters for community organizing.

"It felt like a community center," said Reno City Councilman Oscar Delgado, who grew up in the northeast Reno neighborhood. "It was the house that never turned anyone away. It was a home that took everyone's issues in the context that they were real, they were important and that they were important to her and her family.

"One of the beautiful things about Dolores is she took every issue personally and wanted to find a way to help you," Delgado said. "From connecting you with others in the community that could support you, or just putting her arm around you and saying, 'Things are going to be OK. I'll stand with you to see you through it.'"

## **Fighting racism in a segregated 'Mississippi of the West'**

Feemster's community organizing skills came early, as she helped fight racism in Reno in the 50s and 60s.

In a 1982 interview with the Reno Gazette Journal, Feemster said it took her a long time to fully understand not only her own heritage, but the harsh racial discrimination suffered by African Americans in Reno.

"For a long time, I knew nothing about black history," she said. "I was often the only black student in private and parochial schools. And while we studied about a few people, who I later found out were black, no one told me at the time they were. So, it took a long time for me to

find out who I was and what my people had done and could do."

Dolores Feemster, foreground, and Janet Anderson. (Photo: Marilyn Newton, RGJ File)

As her roots began to grow in Reno, Feemster dedicated much of her life to the civil rights cause. She spent countless hours as an active member and past-president of the Reno-Sparks chapter of the NAACP.

"She was a very quiet, soft-spoken person, but she was also very persistent in what she felt was right and in doing the right thing," Mullins said.

In 1984, Feemster told the Reno Gazette Journal she was appalled by signs declaring "No dogs, no (racial slur)" that began to pop up as the Reno's African American community grew.

"I couldn't believe it," she said. "Some friends and I spent a lot of time going around painting over some of those signs at night, and when they went back up, we would go back and paint over them again."

### **'She would always take them in'**

Feemster worked for the Washoe County School District for 30 years. In the 1970s, she ran the district's "Enter Group," an organization that recruited minority teachers and funded a volunteer busing program to help desegregate the city's schools.

She retired from the district as a counselor at Hug High School, where she took an active role in many of the students' lives.

"Some of the youth have said that when they didn't have a place to stay, they stayed over at Mrs. Feemster's," Mullins said. "When you hear the young people—they're all adults now—some of them say, 'If it wasn't for Mrs. Feemster, I don't know where I would be today.'"

Although her small was full of her own children, many young people found it a safe place to stay the night if they needed it.

"Sometimes she'd get up in the morning and kids were there she didn't know who they were," Feemster's best friend Lucille Adin said with a chuckle. "But she would always take them in. With all the kids she's had, she still cared about so many more. It was absolutely amazing. Everybody knew Mrs. Feemster."

Dolores Feemster on Thursday, August 26, 2010. (Photo: David B. Parker/RGJ, David B. Parker/RGJ)

Adin said she can't imagine the house on 10th Street standing empty without Feemster making it a home.

"I went to help her daughter do some cleaning, it was the first time, and I've been to Dolores' house hundreds of times, that she's not being there," Adin said. "It was just so different. That corner, everybody knows that corner. It's going to be different."

Feemster's community engagement didn't stop at education and civil rights. Feemster also was a staunch advocate for affordable housing, serving as a board member with the Community

Services Agency. The transitional housing complex, D&K Horizons, on Sutro Street was named as a tribute to her and former Reno City Councilwoman Kathryn Wishart.

### **'She was wanting to make a difference'**

It's been a difficult few years for the Feemster family. In 2014, Feemster's son, Ronald, died in a garage fire. In 2016, her granddaughter, Eboni, died after an illness. And last year, her son Darryl Feemster died from a stroke.

"Darryl, that was really hard," Mullins said. "When he did take sick and was in the hospital, she spent most of the time right there with him, day and night."

Dolores is survived by nine of her children: Lynette Cobb, Elaine Feemster, Carolyn Page, Janice Pickens, Cheryl Young, David Feemster, Lonnie Feemster, Robert Feemster and Gary Feemster.

She was preceded in death by sons James, Ronald and Darryl.

Arrangement for her memorial service are still being made. Andy Barbano, a family friend and fellow community organizer, said he needs to find a venue large enough to handle the expected crowd.

"I think we need a place that can sit 2,000," he said.

Even as her own health deteriorated and the breast cancer she once kicked returned, Feemster wouldn't give up her community involvement.

"Even when she was ill, when I was working on NAACP matters, I would pick her up, take her to the meetings. She would make telephone calls. She was still involved," Adin said.

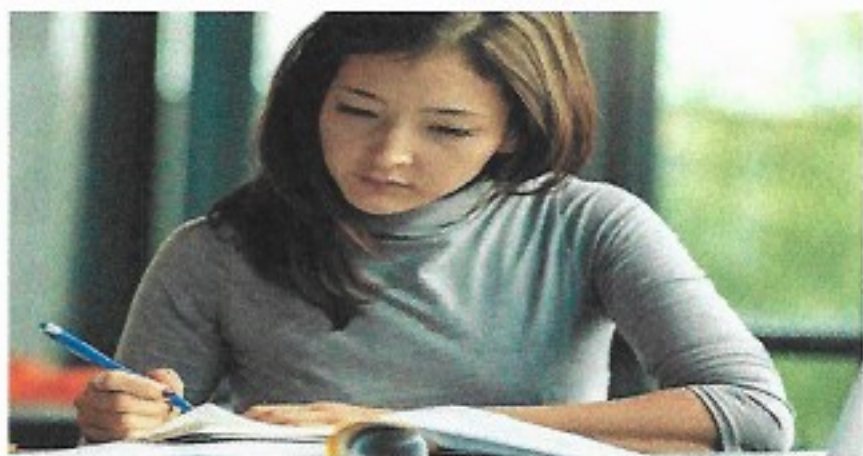
Asked what drove Feemster to give so much to her community, Mullins said it was just part of her DNA.

"I believe it was her character," Mullins said. "I never did hear her say what the reason was. To me, it was just a part of her makeup.

"She was wanting to make a difference and she did."

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Adrienne Feemster



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# Remembering Dolores Feemster: Memorial service set for Saturday

[Anjeanette Damon](#), [adamon@rgj.com](mailto:adamon@rgj.com) Published 5:15 p.m. PT May 27, 2018 | Updated 12:16 p.m. PT June 4, 2018



(Photo: David B. Parker/RGJ, David B. Parker/RGJ)

**Update Monday June 4:** A memorial service for Dolores Feemster will be at noon Saturday at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center on South Virginia Street.

The service will be in the convention center's Mt. Rose Ballroom on the west side of the building. Parking is free on the northwest side of the building. Additional parking is available at the convention center's auxiliary lot on Peckham and Kietzke Lane.

A reception will be held immediately after the service in the cafeteria at the Hug High School, on Sutro Street. Feemster was a longtime counselor at the school.

She will be interred at a private family ceremony at Reno's Mountain View Cemetery.

Visitation will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, June 8, at Walton's Sierra Chapel, 875 W. 2nd Street in Reno.

**Original story:** There seemed to be no end to the number of people Dolores Feemster could be a mother to.

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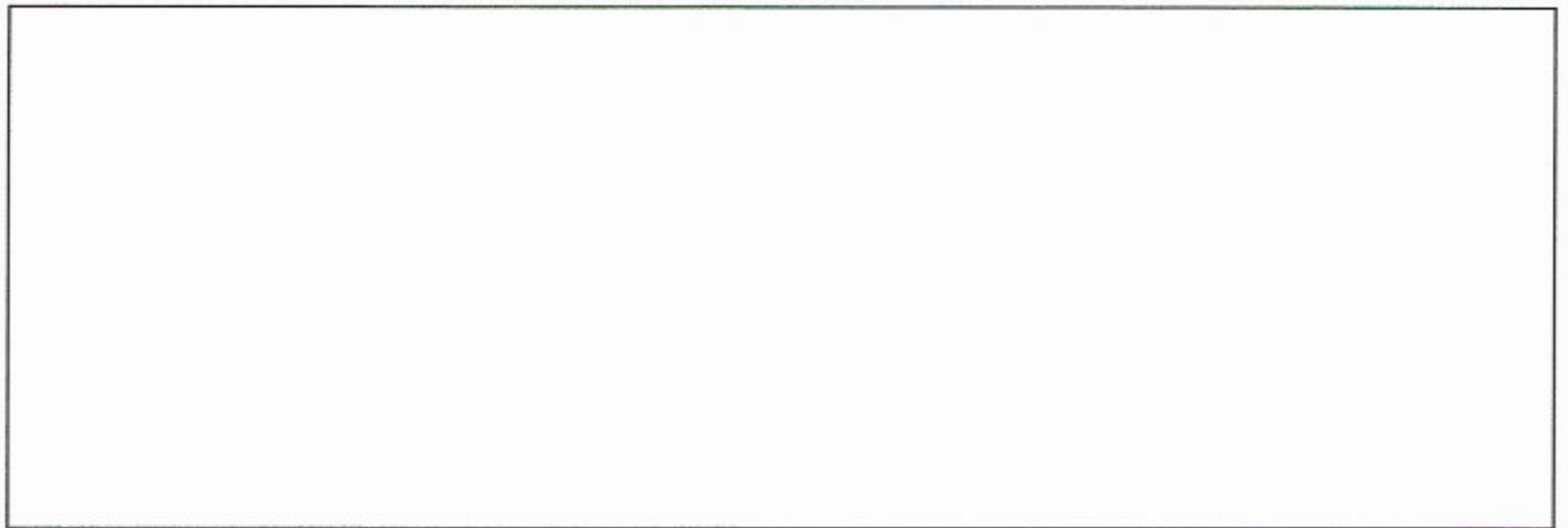
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"When you think of community involvement, you think of Dolores," said her long-time friend Bertha Mullins. "When you think of young people, you think of Dolores. Especially when you think of Hug High School, you think of Dolores. Over the years she gave so much."

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## 'She was wanting to make a difference'

It's been a difficult few years for the Feemster family. In 2014, Feemster's son, Ronald, died in a garage fire. In 2016, her granddaughter, Eboni, died after an illness. And last year, her son Darryl Feemster died from a stroke.

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Asked what drove Feemster to give so much to her community, Mullins said it was just part of her DNA.

"I believe it was her character," Mullins said. "I never did hear her say what the reason was. To me, it was just a part of her makeup.

"She was wanting to make a difference and she did."

Read or Share this story: <http://www.rgj.com/story/news/2018/05/27/reno-loses-civil-rights-activist-matriarch-dolores-feemster/648906002/>



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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** Debbie Smith High School  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 4, 2020 12:31:51 PM

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To whom it may concern,

There is no more apt an honor to bestow upon the legacy of Senator Debbie Smith than for a school to bear her name. Her dedication to improving the lives of Nevadans and the people of Washoe County through education was unparalleled.

In addition to her enduring legacy in education, she touched the lives of everyone who was fortunate enough to have known her. She was truly special and will forever be missed.

Sincerely,

Rob Steiner

--

Rob Steiner (Mobile)

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** Debbie Smith High School  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 4, 2020 1:10:11 PM

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Im sending this again, i most fervently pray that the committee will name this school for Debbie. I've met so many people in my life—Debbie will always be a standout. I will cherish her friendship for my whole life.

I'm weeping as i write this. I met Debbie when she came to eat at my cafe. She was always accompanied by alert and intelligent people and was always so quick to notice need and to offer her warm and sincere help. My daughter Bianca and I grew fond of her so quickly. We met her family then when she came for mothers day brunch every year.

My enduring impression of her is that while she focused effectively—like a good mom—on so many things, kids and their need for exceptional education was her priority.

Her daughter planned a lovely surprise birthday party for her mom, one friday night at my cafe. It was glorious—Debbie was so well loved by so many people. The following Tuesday she got a diagnosis that was devastating to all of us who loved her. And then she was gone. I cant think an honor she would have deserved and appreciated more than a school named for her. My regret is that the generations of kids who will pass through there will not know how she made every single person she met, feel special. I know though that there will be some magic there, because her spirit still glows bright.

Barb Giacomini  
Daughters Cafe  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Fredrickson, Samantha G](#)  
**Subject:** Debbie Smith CTE  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 4, 2020 1:13:47 PM

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To whom it may concern:

It's with great pride, and sadness, that I send this letter in support to name the new CTE school after my Mom, Debbie Smith.

Sad, because if she were alive, I would never be sending this email. My Mom would never ask or see a school named after her; she just did the hard work, not wanting recognition.

Pride, because she accomplished so much for the community, that this is even an option. Without WC-1, Wildcreek High School, and the prior five new schools would not have been built. She worked tirelessly during the last year of her life while she was fighting brain cancer (traveling back and forth from northern Nevada to Houston for treatment) to see this initiative put on the ballot and then helped get it passed.

We are having conversations about what to name new schools because of her.

Debbie Smith was good. She was true, thoughtful, loving, kind, passionate and worked so hard for all kids to have the opportunity of a great education. All three of her children, including me, are proudly a product of the WCSD system.

Naming a school after her reaffirms the community's pride that we had a leader like my Mom representing our kids.

Additionally, would you mind sharing this link with the naming committee members? It is a great summary of my Mother's accomplishments.

<https://vimeo.com/367915785>

I strongly urge you to support Debbie Smith as the name of the new CTE school.

Thank you for your time,  
Erin Smith