

### 2003 ITAA Fellow – Gwendolyn O’Neal



Gwendolyn S. O’Neal engaged in innovative course development, teaching strategies, and leadership for more than decades. Most notable is Gwen’s work in the semiotics of apparel and related consumer products that “moves beyond viewing clothing use only as nonverbal communication to the science of signs and meanings.” This work resulted in national and international recognition for her and her students.

Gwen’s scholarship, notable for its focus on important societal issues, has been commended in fields beyond human ecology. Her colleagues noted that Gwen has investigated the meaning of apparel quality from the consumer’s perspective, clothing related violence, and African American aesthetic of dress. Gwen’s research related to clothing and violence was published in a variety of refereed journals, and she was invited to present her research at various professional meetings and symposia. She served as a consultant with numerous public and private school systems regarding dress codes and school uniforms.

As a professional, Gwen exemplifies the highest standards in her work combined with high principles, and she has served ITAA with distinction. Most notably she was the first person elected Vice President for Planning of ITAA in 1995, a position to which she was re-elected in 1997. In 2004, Gwen served as President of ITAA. Through her commitments in related organizations, such as the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and the National Coalition for Black Development in Family and Consumer Sciences of which she also served as President, Dr. O’Neal brought even greater visibility to ITAA. After teaching at Bennett College, Alabama A&M University, and The Ohio State University, and serving as Department Head at Kansas State University, Gwen retired from her position as Department Head, University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2014.