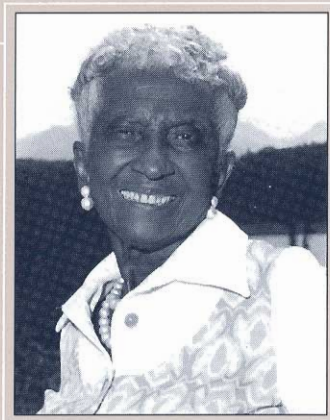


## MAHALA ASHLEY DICKERSON

Partner, Dickerson & Gibbons

*Anchorage, Alaska*



As a girl, Mahala Ashley Dickerson's dream was "to be an attorney and to help people." In pursuit of that dream, she paved the way for women and for African-Americans. Her trail began in Montgomery, Alabama, where the city

sign read, "Cradle of the Confederacy"; a sign that one day she hopes will read, "Cradle of the Civil Rights Movement."

In this segregated south, she attended the only school available to black girls, where she—along with her classmate, Rosa Parks—was taught that she was as worthy as anyone else.

This daughter of country school teachers went on to become the first African-American woman admitted to the Alabama state bar in 1948 and, three years later, the second black female admitted to the bar in the state of Indiana. In 1958, with teen-aged triplet sons in tow, Ms. Dickerson moved to Alaska, and became the first black attorney and one of the few women practicing law in the Alaskan wilderness.

Ms. Dickerson's career is distinguished by her vigorous advocacy for the rights of women and minorities. She fought for labor issues, prosecuting one of the first equal pay cases on behalf of women university professors who received less pay than their male counterparts. Her

commitment to fight injustice inspired her to accept many pro bono cases and to serve as a mentor to young minority lawyers, one of whom recently became Alaska's first African-American judge. In 1982, Ms. Dickerson was honored by the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She was elected the first African-American president of the National Association of Women Lawyers in 1983. The following year, the University of Alaska Anchorage awarded her the degree of Honorary Doctor of Law for her work in encouraging minority equality in Alaska and throughout the United States.

Ms. Dickerson is the President of Dickerson & Gibbons, Inc. She is the founder of Al-Acres, Inc., a charitable, educational and religious corporation, to which she devotes a part of her homestead of 160 acres for recreational, charitable, and religious purposes.

Ms. Dickerson earned her undergraduate degree from Fisk University (1935) and her law degree from Howard University School of Law (1945). She is the mother of triplet sons, one of whom is buried at the homestead where she has established a memorial cemetery and Quaker Meeting House.