

# Gala honors Bloomington's black leaders of all ages: [www.heraldtimesonline.com](http://www.heraldtimesonline.com)

George and Vi Taliaferro named Living Legends

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Capping off a month of activities and festivities, dozens of people wined, dined and honored award recipients during the sixth annual City of Bloomington Black History Month Gala Saturday night at the Hilton Garden Inn.

Indiana University graduate student in microbiology Adrian Land received the city's Commission on the Status of Black Males 2011 Outstanding Black Males Leader of Tomorrow award. Land said he simply wants to be a person who does his part to build bridges and open doors for other people, as so many have done for him.

As a member of the commission, Land has served as a co-facilitator of workshops for the IU Men and Women of Color Conference.

He is a member of the Midwest Crossroads Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, an emissary for graduate student diversity through the IU Graduate School, an ambassador for the Office of Diversity Education, and was a participant in the 2009 Compact for Faculty Diversity.

Land also serves as a house parent for Stepping Stones and is a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

Husband and wife team Viola and George Taliaferro, who have lived in Bloomington for 41 years, were named Living Legends.

"If my husband and I have done anything beneficial ... especially to young people, then we are very pleased," Viola Taliaferro said. Her husband could not attend Saturday night's gala in Bloomington, as he was in Indianapolis receiving another award.

Viola Taliaferro served as a judge in Monroe County Circuit Court from 1995 to 2004. An advocate for children, she has served as a juvenile justice consultant to former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno and as a member of the National Research Council of Juvenile Justice.

She received her law degree from IU's School of Law in 1977 and established a private law practice.

Football star George Taliaferro became the first black man drafted by the National Football League in 1949. He passed on playing for the Chicago Bears to honor a contract he had previously signed with the Los Angeles Dons of the All American Football Conference. In that contract was a clause to finish his education; he graduated from IU in 1951.

He later played for numerous teams in the NFL, including the Colts — then in Baltimore. George Taliaferro was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1981.

In their retirement, the two have served on the Youth Services Bureau, Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County, Children's Organ Transplant Association, Bloomington Symphony Orchestra and the Neal-Marshall Alumni Club.

**Adrian Land**



**Viola Taliaferro**

