## Nathaniel Allen Sweets, Sr.

Newspaper Editor/Owner

Mr. Nathaniel Allen Sweets, Sr. was born in Missouri in 1901, the youngest of 17 children. He was raised in Jefferson City in the shadow of Lincoln University where he received his undergraduate degree in 1928.

Nathaniel Sweets is most recognizable as the distinguished newspaper editor and publisher-owner of the *St. Louis American* newspaper. However, it is well known and documented that he was a fierce champion of civil rights and social equality during the racially turbulent period ranging from the 1940s to the 1970s. He used the influence of his newspaper to advance the cause of that struggle. The *St. Louis American* was a leading voice for civil rights, fair housing and employment, and black participation in politics at the local and national levels. In 1949 he founded the St. Louis American Cab Company, which is still operated by his family.

For more than 50 years, Mr. Sweets engaged the issues and interests of African Americans in St. Louis and the nation: publishing information on the lynching of Emmit Till in 1955, and hosting Malcolm X at his office in St. Louis. He was also a close friend and associate of the famous poet, Sterling Brown. Mr. Sweets served from the early 1950s until 1960 as President of the annual gathering of Lincoln alumni, which was the predecessor of the Lincoln University Alumni Association, Inc. In 2010, Mr. Sweets was inducted into the St. Louis Gateway Classic Foundation's "Walk of Fame," an honor for African American citizens that have achieved greatness in the St. Louis community.

Mr. Nathaniel A. Sweet and his wife, Melba, were inducted into the Missouri Press Association Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2011. Earlier in the same year, at the culmination of Black Press Week, Sweets was inducted into the Gallery of Distinguished Publishers at Howards University's Moorland Spingarn research Center. He was a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.