

# Robert Moses Receives Heinz Award



**Robert Moses**

ROBERT MOSES has received the Heinz Award in the Human Condition from the Heinz Family Foundation. This award, consisting of a medallion and \$250,000, honors individuals who have developed and implemented significant new programs to improve the human condition. Moses received the award for creating the Algebra Project, an innovative curriculum for teaching algebra to middle school students.

Born in 1935 in New York City, Moses attended Stuyvesant High School and received a bachelor's degree from Hamilton College in 1956. The following year he received a master's degree in philosophy from Harvard University. When his mother died, Moses had to leave graduate school and began teaching mathematics at a private school in New York. During the 1960s he was a field organizer with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and spent four years in the South working in the civil rights movement.

After teaching mathematics in Tanzania for eight years, Moses settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The concept for the Algebra Project was born in the 1970s when his eldest daughter was receiving mathematics instruction he felt was inadequate to prepare her for her future. A doctoral student at Harvard at the time, Moses made the decision to give up his studies and to concentrate

instead on developing his own approach to mathematics instruction. What emerged has become the Algebra Project, an innovative curriculum for middle school in which students use real-life experiences as a basis for understanding mathematical concepts. The Algebra Project builds local networks of students, parents, teachers, administrators, community activists, and professionals into policy groups that take responsibility and ownership for implementing the project in their neighborhoods. The Algebra Project currently reaches nearly 40,000 middle school students in thirteen states. In 1982 Moses received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in recognition of his work on the Algebra Project.

The Heinz Awards were established by Teresa Heinz in 1992 in honor of her late husband, H. John Heinz III. Administered by the Heinz Family Foundation, the Heinz Awards celebrate the accomplishments and spirit of John Heinz by recognizing outstanding leaders in the areas in which he was most active. The awards recognize individuals for their contributions in five areas: Arts and Humanities; the Environment; the Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy, and Employment. Award nominations are submitted by an anonymous Council of Nominators and reviewed by jurors appointed by the Foundation. Award recipients are selected by the Board of Directors of the Heinz Awards upon review of the jurors' recommendations.

—Allyn Jackson