



*Our Community* celebrates the varied people, organizations, and institutions that make up the rich tapestry that is Tompkins County. These displays highlight the diversity of our people past and present, at work and play, and in service to each other.

---

# Club Essence

---

Founded in 1973, Club Essence is a grassroots organization that promotes unity, fellowship, and support among African American women. It awards scholarships to students of color through its fundraising efforts, and in the past, the group supported local students at sports camps and also provided functions for senior citizens.

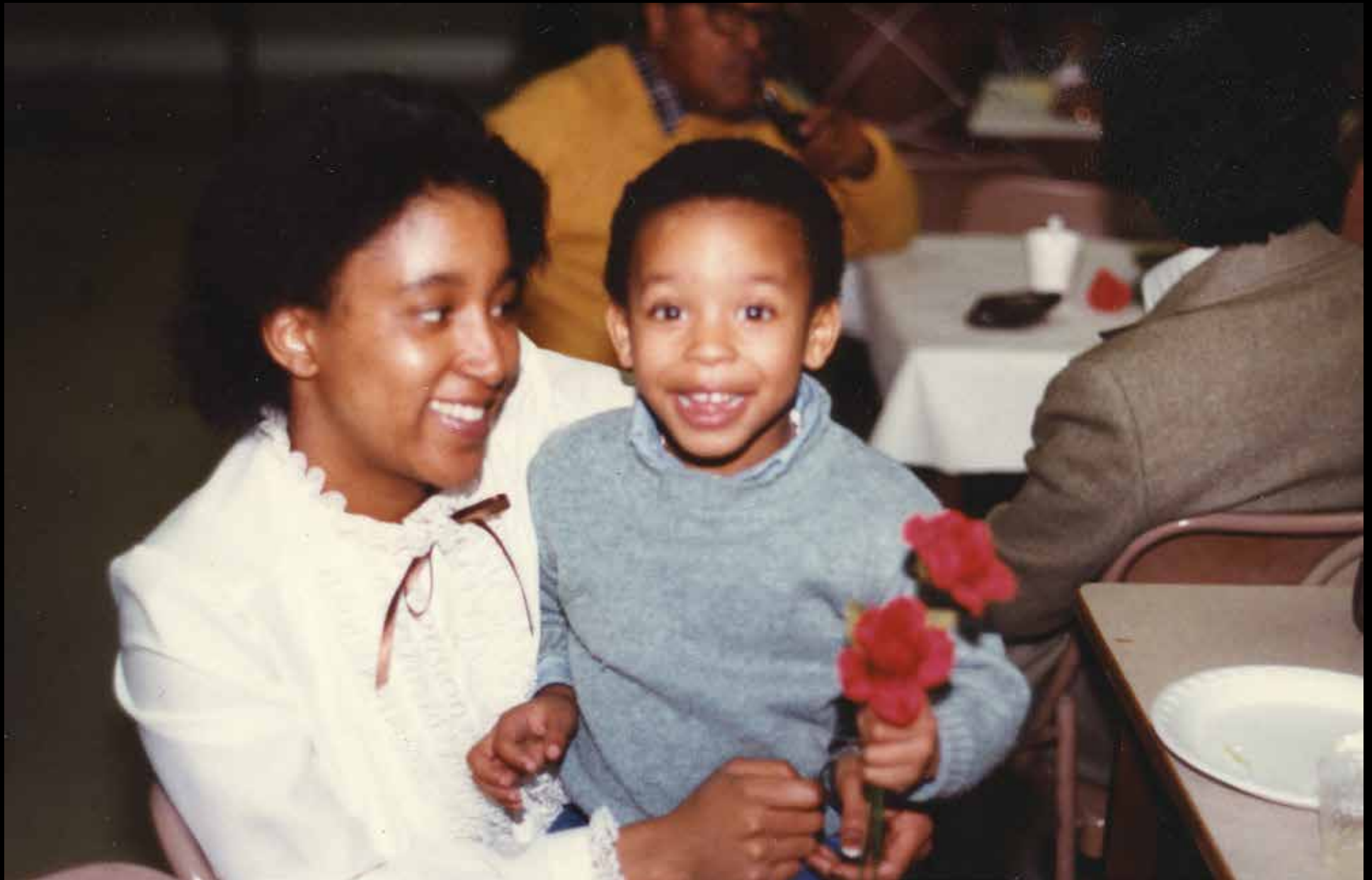
In a 1999 interview with the Ithaca Journal, then club secretary Glenda R. Walker said, "I would describe Club Essence more as a family than an organization." Financial support for Club Essence currently comes from its membership, but formerly the club had sponsored fundraising events such as an Ethnic Food Feast. Many of these events are commemorated in the History Center's Club Essence Photograph Collection, available for viewing in the Research Library.



**This photograph from the 1997 Ethnic Food Feast shows from left, Mike Garcia, Cecil Malone III, Cori Hall, Marie Hall and Leann Hall.**



**Barbara Walker (on left) and Martha Hall chat during the 1985 Christmas Party.**



**Malaya Hall and her son Corey are pictured here in 1982.**



**The 1985 Club Essence Hollywood Dance and Party at Community School of Music and Art was celebrated with festive costumes by, from left, Westa Gadsen, Phil Gadsen, and Henry Buncom.**