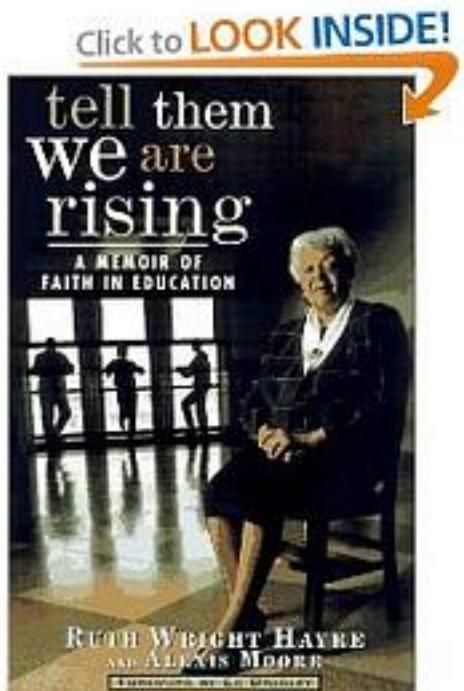


Tell Them We Are Rising



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著者:Ruth Wright Hayre

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Ruth Wright Hayre grew up in a close, genteel family that had prized learning since the days of the Civil War. At age ten, her grandfather, Richard Robert Wright, led by his remarkable mother, marched 200 miles to attend a school for emancipated slaves in a discarded railroad boxcar in Atlanta. When Union General Oliver Otis Howard came to the classroom and asked what message he should take back north, young Richard responded, in the famous exchange immortalized by poet John Greenleaf Whittier, "Sir, tell them we are rising." More than a century later, Ruth Wright Hayre, like her great-grandmother, would lead children on a life-changing journey to learning. After a distinguished career as a teacher, principal, administrator, college professor, and

finally as a member and president of the Philadelphia Board of Education, Hayre's faith in the power of education inspired her to take on her greatest challenge—to create the "Tell Them We Are Rising" program. With that program she issued a challenge of her own to the sixth-graders in two schools in Philadelphia's grittiest neighborhoods: graduate from high school, and she would pay their college tuition. This is the story of the family and traditions that inspired that phenomenal gift, which took 116 boys and girls through six years of public school life on the wings of one woman's determination to make a difference in their lives. While the problems confronting the octogenarian "grandmom" and her "Risers" were formidable—discipline, pregnancies, lack of motivation, and a disturbing acceptance of the possibility of death at an early age—Hayre forthrightly proclaims "this is a book about winning. It is also a book about loss—but not about losing." It is about overcoming fierce struggles and sorrows with newfound reserves of untapped strengths, the gift of mother wit, and the resilience of grace. Hayre introduces us to Tenisha, Wendell, Shawn, Yvonne, Latika, and Hasaan, among others, for Tell Them We Are Rising is also their story. It is the story of a young boy determined to attend the high school of his choice, even if it means trekking six hours to and from classes. It is the story of a young girl raising her brothers and sisters in a home where chaos is a constant, and still managing to graduate on time. Above all, Tell Them We Are Rising is a celebration of a dedicated teacher whose guidance, generosity, and vision transformed despair into hope for a generation of children. "Tell Them We Are Rising is a wonderful, inspiring story of service, commitment, generosity, love, and hope. It is written with the humor, wisdom, and grace of a bygone era, yet spiced with the ultra-modern savvy and the future-oriented vision of a twenty-year-old. What an extraordinary woman! What an extraordinary life!" —Chaka Fattah Congressman, 2nd District, Pennsylvania "This is a heart-warming story about struggle, survival, and achievement. If we didn't know people like this in our lives, we would want to invent them. What more could one ask? A good story told with a deft hand." —William H. Gray III President, United Negro College Fund

作者介绍:

Hayre was the first full-time black teacher, first black high school principal, and first woman president of the Philadelphia school board.

Moore is a journalist and member of the Editorial Board of The Philadelphia Inquirer.

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