

Phoebe (Mama Isoke) Reynolds graduated from Paine College in June 1956 and served the United Methodist Church as a missionary (US-2) and Deaconess. The interweaving of an educator immersed in community activism, curriculum development, and voluntarism mark her service. *Education from the cradle to the grave* is her motto.

She worked as an elementary teacher and dorm supervisor at Sager Brown Home and Godman School in Baldwin, LA (1956-1968). From 1968 – 1972, she served St. Matthew UMC as Director of Community Activities in Chicago, IL. This position allowed her to participate in the community's effort in selecting the first Black principal of a local school. She became a staff person with the Ecumenical Institute, aka, The Institute of Cultural Affairs (1972 – 1987). In Chicago, community development activities included working in leadership training and workshop planning and facilitation.

In Boston, Phoebe was introduced to KWANZAA and the NGUZO SABA value system which became a fixed component of her 'teaching kit'. As a VISTA worker, Phoebe assisted in developing a free Early Learning Center for Ivy City, a neighborhood in Washington, DC. She created the Homework Center at the Paul Robeson Forest Park Community in Detroit which provided free tutoring services after school and during school breaks.

At Wayne State University (1987 – 1988), Phoebe was a part of a team to develop the King-Parks-Chavez College Day Program, a series of interactive workshops designed to involve 7th graders to prepare for college. Detroit Public Schools (1988 – 2000) became the arena for teaching adult education and elementary students.

She joined the Shrine in 1992, and January 1993, Phoebe received her African name, Isoke Zene Folami. She used her talents as an educator supplying voluntary tutoring services to children of Mtoto House, the 4H Center, and the Akwaaba Center. She readily served when needed in the Nursery, as a substitute parent for Mtoto House, and in the church's summer programs.

Mama Isoke continues to support educational and mentoring programs throughout the church and community such as Conversations with Our Daughters, The Goddess Circle, Mtoto Village at the African World Festival, and D-Town Farm.

Her most recent venture has been participating in various aspects of Landmark educational programs. This has allowed Mama Isoke to reach out to the community of returning citizens through the concepts of Uhuru Village: another way of talking about community development and her concern for comprehensive care for all.