
Shrine of the Black Madonna



62nd Anniversary



The Shrine of the Black Madonna

Dr. Woodrow Smith, Jr.
National Community Service Award

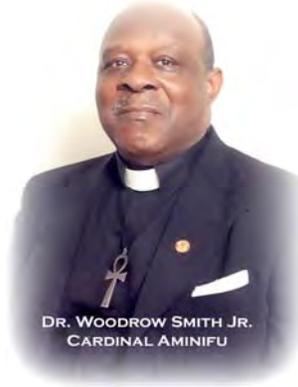
Recognitions



Sunday, October 11, 2015

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Cardinal Aminifu Waganga (Dr. Woodrow Smith Jr.) served the Nation in ways too numerous to count, and with a depth of care, excellence, and impact that has been unsurpassed in the annals of our church's 62 year history. In every region in which he served, Cardinal Aminifu became nothing short of a legend for the positive and lasting impact he left upon the people with whom he interacted. So great and so long and so consistent and so dedicated was Cardinal Aminifu's service that it is only fitting that the National Service Award given out by the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church be named in his honor.

The tangible expression of an individual's Christian faith can be measured by the difference one makes in the world with their life. This sentiment was expressed by Martin Luther King when he said, "Service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy." As a fellowship laboring to make our church a force for good in the world, we in the Shrine of the Black Madonna believe service is the highest praise. Rooted in the belief in the equality of souls, we are dedicated to creating a world where the divine value of all human beings is accepted, respected and protected. While all our members are urged to be involved in community service, there are some who by their exemplary service have distinguished themselves and profoundly enhanced our ministry. Therefore, these shining examples of service have been selected for recognition and appreciation during our Anniversary Month as a celebration of our mission and tradition. Recipients of this award exemplify the words of our founder and first Holy Patriarch, Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman, "Everything I have done with my life, I did because I was a Christian."

We are proud of their accomplishments and hold high their example.

Sister Amal

Cherolyn Rosemary “Amal” Muhammad was born in New York City where she attended high school and graduated in 1961. She moved to Detroit that same year. Amal met and married Brother Kamasi a few years later and raised two children, Saida and Shara.



Amal received a Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Technology from Mercy College and later a Master's Degree in hospital administration from Central Michigan University. She joined the Shrines of the Black Madonna in 1973. Amal was a member of the choir, one of the choir directors and a member of the creative worship team. In 1984 she started her travels. Amal traveled to West Africa visiting Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria. Because of her love for Africa, when she had an opportunity to volunteer and work with the African World Expo she said yes. The purpose of the expo was to help promote business between Africans and African Americans. This was an annual event and she worked with the committee for several years.

1991 found her working in Saudi Arabia as supervisor over the chemistry & serology departments at the military hospital in Tabuk, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She lived, worked and taught laboratory science to members of the military for 2 years. While living in Saudi Arabia she organized the 'expat' community around events that supported the African, African American and Caribbean cultures. She traveled throughout Saudi Arabia including Jeddah and Mecca. She also traveled to Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and England, fulfilling one of her lifelong dreams. She returned to the United States in 1993.

Later in the 1990's she worked on a committee that brought African Chiefs and Queen Mothers to the United States on a tour. The tour marked the beginning of Fihankra. The purpose of Fihankra was to establish a link by which African Americans could obtain land in Africa, at no cost. She was enstooled as one of the chiefs in the US. As a performer Amal danced with Ali Abdullah's African dance troupe and sang with Hakamma, women poets, historians and musicians group. She performed at many community events.

Although the Shrine taught her to love black people, Amal needed to go deeper to find that love for herself. In her search she was introduced to the Landmark forum. This body of work started her on an inward journey. In the Shrine she learned who she was as a black women and the landmark forum opened her eyes to how powerful she was as a human being. Out of her participation with landmark she started the “Goddess Circle”. The circle is a place for women to come together, using their spiritual tools to make their lives better. The circle is open to all women.

In 1999 she was introduced to the Circle of Light Ministry and in 2003 became a ministerial student. As a student she traveled to Peru, and Egypt. Under the tutelage of Carolyne 'Isis' Fugua, she studied, spiritual principles, universal laws and the use of 'A Course in Miracles' as a guide to living a life of miracles. As a student of the circle of light, part of her training was to give selfless service. She volunteered with gleaners, focus hope, forgotten harvest, the DRM and the Ronald McDonald house. She gathered clothes and donated them to the Covenant House. She is presently Treasurer of the UCC women of the DMA, treasurer and active member of the Women of Nia, the women's ministry group, treasurer and active member of the Shrine choir and treasurer and active member of IFG#2.

What she learned in her studies and her travels was how important women are in God's plan. Amal's life journey has taken her from a feeling of worthlessness to being a STAND for every woman realizing their full potential. She believes that when each woman reaches their full potential, it will positively impact their families, their community and the energy on the planet.

Reverend Ifetayo

Sharion “Ifetayo” Asabi Brown is the Chief Operating Officer of the Pan-African Orthodox Christian Church, Chair of the Board of Directors of the BCN National Training Center, and National Advisor to the Pan African Orthodox Christina Church Women of Worship Ministry. A member since 1980, Ifetayo has served in many leadership roles at Shrine 9, Atlanta (14 years) and Shrine #1 (Detroit, since 1994). In 2001, Ifetayo was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Shrine #1- the first female to hold the position. Also, she served as the National Chair of the PAOCC 60th Anniversary Synod 2013.



Professionally, Ifetayo has been working in the field of education for over 20 years, serving in both volunteer and professional capacity. She began her work in education serving as Group Leader, Mtoto House Parent, and Youth Director, Shrine 9's Alkebu land Academy in Atlanta, Georgia. Shortly after relocating to Shrine 1 in Detroit, Ifetayo began working as a corporate technology trainer, conducting workshops for Fortune 500 companies, local, state, federal agencies in metro Detroit. She has served as a program manager at Detroit Public Schools Breithaupt Career Technical Center, Business Systems Analyst, ABM-AMRO, Troy, Michigan, Visiting Professor, Marygrove College Graduate School of Education, Adjunct Professor, Wayne State University College of Education, and Education Consultant/Mentor, Teachscape. Ifetayo has also facilitated numerous workshops nationally on topics related to educating urban youth, effective integration of technology in educational settings, and educating the “*whole child*”. Ifetayo is also the Chief Operating Officer of Ifoma Enterprises, LLC, a Real Estate Investment and Management Company, located in Atlanta, GA.

For the last 14 years, Ifetayo has served as Chief Operating Officer for an educational management company in Detroit, Michigan (Evans Solutions, Inc.). In her current role she is responsible for the day-to-day operations of a multi-million dollar organization, 100+ employees, whose mission is to provide effective – targeted educational services to youth outside the educational mainstream.

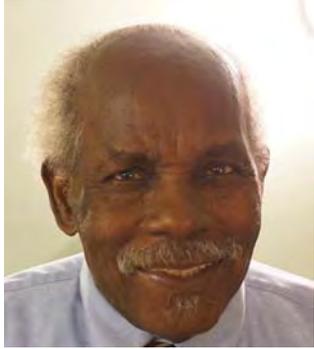
Ifetayo's volunteer/community service include serving as a mentor to aspiring teacher leaders and school administrators locally, nationally, and internationally; providing an opportunity for her to help mold and shape the future of education with a special emphasis on preparing the next generation of school leaders to effectively lead urban schools and educational entities. She also mentors young high school females providing support and assistance to ensure academic success. She is an advocate for equal access to quality educational opportunities for adjudicated youth and for quality educational programming within juvenile justice settings. Ifetayo strongly believes that “demography **does not and should not** determine one's destiny.”

A proud graduate of a historic black college (Tuskegee Institute) Ifetayo holds a Bachelors Degree in Biology, a Master's Degree in Instructional Technology (emphasis on interactive technologies), and has completed all coursework in pursuit of a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction at Wayne State University. Advanced/specialized studies include Harvard University's Graduate School of Business (Social Entrepreneurship) and Harvard's Graduate School of Education (Urban School Leadership). Ifetayo's current “passion” is carrying out the mission of her non-profit, ***The Blessing Table***, a 501 (c)(3) formed in honor of her beloved father, who's mission is to provide micro grants and loans to **aspiring social entrepreneurs** and **first generation post secondary minority students**. In 2014, Ifetayo started a new business venture, AIS Services, a turnaround management group, specializing in and dedicated to closing the achievement gap for minority students by providing quality, “wholistic” educational programming and efficient and effective school operations necessary to “*turn around*” our country's lowest performing schools, with a special emphasis on redesigning way educational institutions “*support*” their lowest performing schools. She serves as Chief Innovation Officer.

An avid gardener and “busy body”, Ifetayo is always searching for new growth opportunities both professionally and personally. She is married to the love of her life, Mwalimu Diallo Brown, and enjoys life with her immediate family- Nkenge, Isoke, Mannie, Nay'Kah - and extended church family (members of Shrine of the Black Madonna), where she currently shares her talents and skills at Shrine 1- Detroit and Shrine 9- Atlanta).

Brother Jomo

Wallace M. "Jomo" Ribbron was born August 10, 1929 to Nathaniel and



Evelyn Ribbron in Detroit, Michigan. He has been married to Emma "Makini" (Morris) Ribbron for 57 years. Believing that "nothing is more sacred than the Liberation of Black People", he joined the Nation in 1972, choosing to be reborn as "Jomo" which means "burning spear."

Brother Jomo built a career in government, education, agriculture and music. Considered by many to be a modern-day "George Washington Carver", he has served as a leader in the community and mentor to many young people by promoting collective work, responsibility and self-determination. A case in point: in the early 1970's when Detroit Public Schools first desegregated, Brother Jomo's eldest son, Oginga Kali (David) and three other young men sought his counsel on how to include culturally-relevant studies in the high school curriculum and how to achieve full inclusion for Black students in extra-curricular activities. Under his guidance, they presented their case to the school authorities and prevailed, affecting lasting change in how the school was run. This experience set the stage for the leadership positions these young men would eventually attain. Besides the late Col. Oginga Kali, the three young men are now known as General Chiri Karega, Maj./Rev. Judas Molokai and Jaramogi Menelik Kimathi.



Brother Jomo was a leader in the Boy Scouts, provided after-school tutoring in math and science, and was active in 4-H Youth Programs. These efforts were important to Jomo because they built the pride and self-confidence in our youth necessary to restore our people to a greatness damaged by American slavery and oppression.

With Brother Thomas Sykes, Jomo started a food co-op in the early 1970s that served hundreds of families in the church and community, demonstrating how cooperative economics benefits all. Jomo is also the founder of R.S.T.S Scientific Services which laid the foundation for entrepreneurial ventures started by his children and grandchildren, including RSTS Pest Control, Watchmen in the Night Security Services, r&rReproductions Media Services and Stellaleo Photography.

Jomo is a voracious reader - his house has more books than many libraries! A jazz pianist, he was the pianist at Shrine of the Black Madonna #3 and he taught many how to play as well.

Jomo's faith is born anew in each generation. It will live on through his children, grandchildren and the many lives he has influenced and continues to touch today.

Sister Nzingha



Nzingha M. Masani-Manuel was born in Detroit, with a fraternal twin sister, Janet White on January 30, 1956. Her loving, committed parents, Lonnie M. Spight and Marion Rivers Spight, are now ancestors. Nzingha has three brothers, and a dear brother-friend, Paul Lee, a historian. At the age fourteen, Nzingha was a volunteer for many local political campaigns: Senator Basil Brown, US Congressman John Conyers, Mayor Robert Blackwell and even Governor William Milken. She was a frequent visitor to Shrine #1;

and, decided to join September 1998. This was in the midst of a Recall Campaign of Mayor Dennis Archer.

The National Association of Advancement of Colored People was introduced to Nzingha as a teenager by Mr. James Sephers. She would accompany him almost every Saturday, for meetings throughout Michigan. Mr. Sephers was the motivation for Nzingha's desire to become a Precinct Delegate for Highland Park. At the young age of twenty, she competed and held the position for many years. Nzingha was also very active in the 14th Congressional Democratic District. She volunteered for numerous phone banks; helped organized many successful political campaigns: and many U.S. Presidential Elections. Nzingha was the Senior Assistant Staff and Director for Community Affairs, for the former Wayne County Chairman Arthur Blackwell II. Nzingha has travelled to Washington DC, for the Congressional Black Caucus 1987. In 1988 she participated in the National Democratic Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, when Rev. Jesse Jackson was a candidate for Office of President!

Nzingha has met and interacted with numerous black leaders, authors, historians across the country. She was an active member of Detroit's Black United Front and interacted with many noteworthy, black scholars. She loves reading black books, yoga, walking, weight training, healthy lifestyle, cooking, nature, African art and JAZZ! For many years she attended the National Black Holistic Retreat in beautiful Catskill Mountains upstate New York called and built by "Peg-Legs Bates". Dr. Betty Shabazz used to laugh and talk about her love for the City of Detroit, Shrine #1 and the legacy of Malcolm X. Nzingha has served as a community activist to close down many drug houses organized by Bro Kwame Kenyatta in 1980's and volunteer at Malcolm X School. Nzingha loves for her Nubian King Spirit mate' James Manuel - her dear high school mate, her family, soul sisters, and all Shrine members everywhere!

For many years she has supported and continues to work with the Youth Deterrent Program, Nyame Nti (Tree of Love Prison Ministry), Great Water Village Ritual Society (GWVRS), Women's of Nia, African Liberation Day (ALD) Committee and many community meetings. We pray that this active servant, on her spiritual journey, continue to assist our village. Her daily moving prayer is "Almighty God, Our Creator, I open myself to You, I bow down to your Power And I'm lifted by Your Presence within me, God of the Black Nation, God of the Covenant, Cosmic Energy and Creative Intelligence, You go before me, You are behind me, all around me And within me. Thank you Lord"-Sis Sala Adams, my dear Kua/yoga teacher.

The Shrine of the Black Madonna

~ Central Region ~

Dr. Woodrow Smith, Jr. National Community Service Award Recipients

2009

Cardinal Mbiyu William Moore
Cardinal Rashida Mary Blackmon
Cardinal Talibah Cynthia Stephens
Cardinal Karamo Ronald Hewitt
Reverend Imani Melanie Roby
Honorable Makunda Barbara Rose Collins
Sister Tene Sandra Ramsey
Bishop Kehinde Briggs

2010

Attorney Nireti Erika Butler Davis
Mama Hanifa Tonja Adjuman
Mwalimu William Diallo Brown, Jr.
Brother Kojo Anthony Darden

2011

Bishop Nkenge Juanita Jones
Dr. Kefentse Chike, Ph.D
Cardinal Baye Frank Landy

2012

Cardinal Nilaja Diana Stewart
Brother Tacuma James Ribbron
Cardinal Muthamaki Gary Bennett

2013

Bishop Sele Walter Chalmers
Sister Zwadie Mamie King Chalmers
Sister Nzapa Barbara McCarroll-Jones
Sister Abeo Judy Neal
Sister Akua Budu-Watkins

2014

Mw. Ambidwile Anthony Carter
Fd. Migozo Karen Taylor

