

INDUCTEE

Denise Elizabeth Ross, Ph.D.

Graduated. . . . 1989

Resides. New York, NY

During her years at Gahanna Lincoln High School, Denise was best known for her immersion in the music program as a member of the chorale, the band and the choir. She also performed in the school musicals and was active in the journalism program and participated in Gahanna community plays.

In 1993 she graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor's Degree from Spelman College in Atlanta, and was accepted at Columbia University in New York to study the special education of students with behavior disorders. She earned her Masters' Degree and her Ph.D. at Columbia, specializing in applied behavior analysis in both early childhood education and autism. During this time she taught children of various age groups in schools in New York, and served as Professional Development School Coordinator for the Autism Unit at a public school in the Bronx; all of this by the age of 26.

She was hired by Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton as an Assistant Professor of Education in the Department of Exceptional Student Education, where she remained for four years. Cynthia L. Wilson, her department chair remarked that "because of Dr. Ross' strong work ethic, dedication, and commitment to making a difference, ... she ... demonstrated an intense commitment to giving back to her community ... as faculty advisor to university student organizations and as a tutor to young children.... Dr. Ross is one of the most pleasant persons I have worked with."

Dr. Ross was recruited to return to Columbia Teachers College to teach teachers and to work with children with disabilities. She presently is an Associate Professor of Psychology and Education in the College Department of Health and Behavior Studies. She has presented numerous workshops and guest lectures, particularly about working with children with autism. She volunteers with the children themselves. She has been called upon to guest lecture, as well. She volunteers with many programs for children with special needs and has worked with students from pre-school to college.

A prolific writer Dr. Ross has produced numerous articles, book chapters, symposium presentations and has co-authored a book on language interventions for children with autism and other disabilities, which will be out in 2007. She has received an Outstanding Teacher's Award four years running at the Teachers College, Columbia University and received Merit and High Merit Awards during her time at Florida Atlantic University.

Dr. Erica N. Walker, a colleague at Teachers College, Columbia University, remarked "Her numerous articles in top-tier research journals, presentations at influential conferences and symposia, and informative interviews with media in New York City and beyond all demonstrate that Denise is recognized as a top expert in her field of special education."

In addition to her work in the community, writing and publishing, private consultation, academic instruction, mentoring and church involvement, Denise continues to enjoy her music. She works with other musicians writing, composing and singing spiritual and gospel music, and has performed her original materials.

Dr. R Douglas Greer, Coordinator of Programs in Applied Behavior Analysis at Columbia has said. "She (Denise) is among the top 1% of professionals in behavior analysis and education in her age group. This is unquestionably distinguished intellectual performance.... She is not only a real young star in her field, but she is also a fine human being who holds herself to the highest ethical and humane standards. Perhaps one of her best attributes is that she is a high achiever who manages to be a nice person."