

Mildred Summerville
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Mildred Summerville earned her Bachelor of Science degree from North Carolina's Fayetteville State University in 1975, her Master of Education degree from Ohio's Bowling Green State University in 1982, and her Principal's Certificate in Educational Administration from East Carolina University in Greenville, NC, in 1990. She is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Religion program at S.S. Harvester Bible Institute in Rocky Mount, NC.

Summerville's career in education began at Fayetteville Technical Institute and Opportunities Industrialization Center, where she was both an instructor and director of instruction from 1977-1980, and continued during her assistantship at Bowling Green State from 1981-1982. From 1982-1990, Summerville taught in North Carolina's Nash-Rocky Mount schools. She moved into educational administration at Southeast Halifax High School in Halifax, NC, during the 1990-1991 school year, and since 1991, she has served as assistant principal or principal at four different schools in the Wilson, NC, system: Darden Vick Middle; Vinson Bynum Elementary; Adams Learning Center; and Fike High School, where she continues to serve as an assistant principal. From 2002-2003, Summerville was also the part-time director of the after-school program at the Sallie B. Howard Charter School, also in Wilson, NC. She has been recognized for teaching excellence at both the high school and community college levels, and honored with two consecutive nominations for Wilson County Principal of the Year (in 1998 and 1999).

Over the years, Summerville has served as a coach, athletic director, lead teacher, curriculum specialist, and accreditation visiting committee member -- in addition to her tenure as a teacher/administrator. Furthermore, she is active in a variety of professional and civic organizations (including Phi Delta Kappa, the Principals/Assistant Principals Association, the Wilson Multicultural Business Partnership, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the Fayetteville State University Chancellor's Club, and the Darden Trojan Athletic Heritage Association). She has even founded and gone on to serve as chief executive officer for numerous organizations, most with a community outreach focus: Summerville Promotion and Production Company, Inc.; D.E.W. Productions, Inc.; Pioneers in Gospel Music Awards, Inc.; the Bishop F. C. Barnes Scholarship Fund; the Reverend James and Leanthier Summerville Scholarship Fund; the M.S. Scholarship Foundation; and the Scholarship and Emergency Assistance Program, Inc.

Perhaps Summerville's greatest professional -- and personal -- accomplishment lies in her establishment of a community-based nonprofit organization called Teaching Academics for Life Learning I Outreach Ministries, or TALL1-OM -- the "TALL1" based upon a nickname bestowed upon Summerville by her pastor (and renowned gospel singer) Shirley Caesar, alluding to Summerville's six-foot stature. The organization, created to promote education and multicultural awareness, and to address various community issues hindering students' academic success (drugs, crime, poverty, etc.), spawned both the James and Leanthier Summerville Academy and Project EXCEL. The academy, named to honor Summerville's parents, serves suspended students from Wilson County middle and high schools, offering them a second chance to continue their education in an environment where the well-trained faculty and counselors also work to modify negative behavior, thus enhancing these students' potential for success upon their return to their regular schools. Project EXCEL expands these services to include an after-school program operating at three community learning centers open both during the school year and during the summer, each site serving 50-100 students annually. Summerville is CEO of TALL1-OM (which recently partnered with Crazy Love Foundation, founded by Melvin Williams, one of members of the world-renowned Williams Brothers gospel group). She is also principal of the academy and (part-time) director of the after-school program.

As a means to sustain the academy, God gave Summerville an inspirational vision: the gospel play *Spare the Rod, Spoil the Child*, written by Summerville and Regina McCrary. The play has a twofold purpose: to raise awareness in effort to reduce both the number of new cases of HIV and the number of minority youth who start smoking. Serving as more than merely a fundraiser to sustain programs at the academy, the play's entire production process and content also provide a curriculum for the students at the James and Leanthier Summerville Academy. The academy is a community faith-based alternative school that gives students an opportunity to continue their education during a suspension, and to cultivate skills essential to their success when they are reinstated in their regular schools. Students who successfully complete the academy's program receive both attendance and academic credit, so that they may return to their "home" schools without detriment, ready to "start a fresh chapter."

Summerville's devotion to student outreach is matched only by her faith and by her passion for gospel music. An active member of Mt. Calvary Word of Faith Church in Raleigh, NC, and Armor Bearer for

Pastor Shirley Caesar, Summerville has realized a zeal and talent for concert promotion. Since 2001, she has worked to promote at least a dozen concerts, including those headlined by Pastor Caesar, Bishop F. C. Barnes, Albertina Walker, Dorothy Norwood, the Williams Brothers, Tracy Worth, Harvey Watkins, Troy Sneed, the Sensational Nightingales, Neal Roberson, and Leanne Faine.

Committed to making a difference, Summerville ministers to others through her many talents and strengths, touching lives in a variety of venues.