

Tuesday, June 6-edit-2023-Brief Bio

Sandra Russell-Flowers is a transformational teacher and coach who has enjoyed an extensive career in the areas of teaching and training, youth program development and execution, and community development strategies. She has taught all levels: K-12, University and adult learners from Europe, Asia, Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Her career began in 1977 as a Spanish Teacher. A few years later, she was employed by the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism as a bilingual information assistant, Industry Training Executive (BAHAMAHOST) and Hotel Licensing Inspector for the Northern Bahamas.

In 1990 she rejoined the staff at Grand Bahama Catholic High School teaching Spanish and Health Science where she consistently led students to passing scores for the BJC, and BGSCE. While there, she created the Grand Bahama Spanish Teacher's Association, and developed Spanish Spelling Bee having almost 100 percent participation from school on the island

In 2000, Sandra took her teaching passion overseas to Saint Cloud, Minnesota, (MN), mastered in English as a Second Language, then taught ESL in District 742, and as an Adjunct Professor in the Intensive English Learning Center at Saint Cloud State University (SCSU). Her work was featured at several educational conferences, during her presentation of **The Vocabulary Album, from Text to Cognition**, a language literacy tool which she developed for second-language learners. She is also a Restorative Justice Facilitator and Conflict Mediator.

Passionate about volunteerism, youth, and community, she developed Saint Cloud Youth Literacy, providing free tutoring services in collaboration with the Great River Library. Following this, was The Bahamas-SCSU Summer Camp (STEM) partnership in 2009 which allowed Bahamian Students to live on campus and receive instruction with the option to receive academic credits during their first year. Collaborating with the district education officer in Andros, she supported the opportunity for two Bahamian teachers to live with families in an eight-week cultural exchange within the Holdingford District, MN and the learning of strategies which strengthened the delivery of reading instruction in South Andros.

While in Saint Cloud, MN, she launched Parents Leading and Nurturing (P.L.A.N) an organization designed to encourage concerned parents to combat issues especially bullying which had become prevalent in school settings in The Bahamas. This resulted in the successful launch of a two-day Bullying Awareness Conference for teachers, parents and the community on Grand Bahama Island, featuring Dr. John Hoover, well respected author and international speaker on Bullying and its harmful effects. The seminar was done in collaboration with Clear Communication Solutions, The Grand Bahama Tourist Office, The Ministry of Education (GB), and The Grand Bahama Christian Council.

Mr. Dudley Seide, Executive Chairman of Outreach Ministry attended this seminar in 2009. He reported that the material was very useful to him, resulting in his program expanding and helping over 3,000 at-risk males.

Sandra's community impact has been felt on multiple islands--Bimini, where she organized a major clean-up campaign with the support of the administration and community members, introduced the first volleyball clinic for primary students, and a reading initiative to instill a love of reading in the students; Exuma, where she organized a Math competition through Math League out of the United States for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, and a garden plot in Abaco growing bell peppers and tomatoes. Mrs. Flowers believes that with the right tools, and parent /teacher collaboration, students can achieve their potential. Sandra and her team are presently engaged with an initiative, Litter-Free Bahamas: Clean it, and maintain it. As a volunteer, she recently conducted a 6-week reading program at the Resilience Center, Grand Bahama and is presently Sergeant at Arms, in the BFM Diplomats Toastmasters club. Prior to relocating, she was a consistent lector at Saint Francis Xavier Cathedral and remains unshakeable in her faith and the risen Christ.