

Merelyn Bates-Mims, a native of “bayou country” Louisiana, has lived in Cincinnati for most of her adult life. Merelyn learned the power of self-motivation, knowledge and social sustainability by overcoming adversity in her early life. Recognizing “the power of ‘I don’t know,’” Merelyn has a zest for learning. Merelyn is interested in educating herself and society as a whole about the realities and causes of social injustices. Merelyn’s endearing and genuine nature coupled with her eloquent speech gives her a truly com-

manding presence that has the power to educate and inspire in order to create more sustainable communities. Of her many accomplishments, Merelyn has a Ph.D. in Linguistics, was a Fulbright scholar, was the Director of Diversity at Xavier University, and worked as a deputy director in Ohio state government. She recently headed a racial profiling project through the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio. She is the mother of three children. She is also a grandmother and a great-grandmother.