

– HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT –

ELZA DINWIDDIE-BOYD

Elza Dinwiddie-Boyd is a woman of faith, creativity, and wisdom who has employed these gifts on behalf of adult learners in the School of New Resources of The College of New Rochelle and beyond. She has dedicated her exceptional gifts for writing, editing, teaching, and leadership to the education of adults who have not been previously well-served by educational institutions so that these students may more fully develop their own gifts and talents.

Born in Oklahoma, she earned a bachelor's and master's degree in education and studied linguistics at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan where she planned and implemented the Community Extension Centers for the College of Lifelong Learning.

Throughout her career in higher education, she has worked tirelessly to open the doors of higher education to the non-traditional adult student. She came to the School of New Resources New York Theological Seminary Campus as an adjunct faculty member becoming Director of Assessment before being named to the Instructional Staff in Letters, where she served for over a decade. In 2000 she was named Campus Director of the Rosa Parks Campus and in 2002 was appointed Dean of the School of New Resources.

In that same year Elza presented the New Resources student-centered model of adult education at the international research project on Women's Learning Needs and Practices developed by the National Women's Education Centre funded and hosted by the Japanese Ministry of Education. The New Resources model of education which is grounded in experiential learning and designed to be exceptionally responsive to the learning styles of adult learners has been widely acclaimed and often adapted by those who have attended Elza's authoritative presentations for the United States Department of Labor Work Force, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Universities, and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning. The significant hallmarks of this adult focused learning-teaching model which has provided opportunity for thousands of students, include student-teacher partnerships, integrated experiential learning, interdisciplinary curricula, and flexible and non-traditional scheduling. These same hallmarks have evolved over the decades since the beginning of the program in 1972, forty years ago this year. Many of the program innovations of the last decade have been the creative response of Elza's leadership to an environment increasingly hostile to adult learners and to the liberal arts so central to the foundation of quality higher education. This past year the School of New Resources received special commendation in the report of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaccreditation evaluation team, calling it "the jewel in the crown of the College."

In addition to her creative and wise administrative skills, she is an author, editor, and educator. She is the author of eight non-fiction books including, *In Our Own Words: a Treasury of Quotations from the African American Community*, and she has contributed to several other books including *Voices of Triumph: Leadership and Creative Fire* and *African American History: A Journey of Liberation*. A freelance writer and editor of books such as *Lena Horne: A Biography* authored by Jim Haskins and articles for *Essence* magazine, she is most especially a great teacher. She has led seminars and workshops for the National Urban League, Napa Valley Community College, Georgetown University English Department, Mutual of New York and the Women Writer's Guild in addition to teaching in the School of New Resources. Many of her students acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation the powerful and positive impact she has had on their own literacy development as she demanded much and to their amazement they were able to deliver.

Elza Dinwiddie-Boyd has been honored at the Harlem YMCA Annual National Salute to Black Achievers in Industry and in 2003 was named one of the "Twenty Five Influential Black Women in Business" by the *Network Journal*. She resides in Harlem, New York with her husband, Herb Boyd.

For her undaunted quest to provide access to higher education for those previously underserved by educational institutions and for her creativity and wisdom in guiding and leading the School of New Resources as a beacon of access and excellence, The College of New Rochelle confers on Elza Dinwiddie-Boyd the degree Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.

